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# [***Creativity Behind Bars and Beyond***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66G8-8CX1-JBG3-61FN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 25, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 2048 words

**Byline:** By Hilarie M. Sheets

**Body**

In 2010, in the recreation center of the Fairton Federal Correctional Institution, a medium-security prison for men in South New Jersey, an art collective was born.

Five years into a 13-year sentence on drug-related charges, Jared Owens rediscovered his childhood love of ceramics and taught himself to paint. He was overseeing the art room by the time Gilberto Rivera, a graffiti artist, and Jesse Krimes, with an art degree from Millersville University in Pennsylvania, transferred to Fairton to finish their terms. They shared art magazine subscriptions, supplies, ideas and camaraderie in resistance to their circumstances.

With the help of Owens and Rivera, Krimes covertly gathered prison bedsheets that he collaged with New York Times images, using hair gel and a spoon to lift and transfer the printed ink onto his contraband canvases. He smuggled pieces out, one by one, through the prison mail room. Over three years, the subversive practice evolved into a monumental mural, a Hieronymus Bosch-like allegory of heaven, earth and hell, that he titled ''Apokaluptein: 16389067'' -- Greek for apocalypse coupled with Krimes's inmate number. It stretched 15 feet by 40 feet when he was finally able to assemble the 39 segments for the first time upon his release in 2013, after serving six years on drug charges.

''This isn't about some outsider coming in and doing an arts program -- it was them on their own, seizing that space, whatever dignity they could craft, and then carrying that with them when they came home,'' said Alysa Nahmias, director of ''Art & Krimes by Krimes,'' a film that will be released in theaters on Sept. 30 by MTV Documentary Films and streamed by Paramount+ starting Nov. 22. It chronicles the making of ''Apokaluptein'' and Krimes's first five years out of prison as he struggles to forge a career in the art world with the support of friends. One of them is Russell Craig, who found art at age 7 while living in the foster care system. After serving 12 years on drug charges at prisons in Pennsylvania and Virginia, he met Krimes when both were newly released and working as assistants with Mural Arts Philadelphia's restorative justice program.

These artists were among several dozen in the landmark exhibition ''Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration,'' which debuted in 2020 at MoMA PS1 and has been touring since (it just opened at Brown University). Organized by Nicole Fleetwood, the MacArthur award-winning art historian, it gave new visibility to people fighting societal erasure in the U.S. carceral system, which now imprisons an estimated two million people annually -- a 500 percent increase since 1970. Black people are incarcerated for drug offenses at 10 times the rate of white people despite roughly equal use, according to the American Civil Liberties Union.

Now a small cadre of artists from the exhibition is gaining traction in the art world, with gallery representation, museum acquisitions, prestigious commissions, residencies and fellowships. With the aid of powerful donors, artists, arts leaders and activists, this vanguard is working structurally to pave the way for their peers. Whether museums nationwide will support such efforts has yet to be determined.

Fleetwood -- who described the peer mentoring at Fairton, echoed in prisons around the country, as ''inspirational'' -- hopes the exhibition ''helps to shake up cultural institutions in terms of their gate keeping around what they typically show.''

''Marking Time'' drew more than 35,000 visitors at MoMA PS1 despite Covid restrictions and won critical raves, with ''Apokaluptein'' hailed as a ''carceral magnum opus'' by Holland Cotter in The New York Times.

'''Marking Time' was definitely pivotal in all of our careers and pretty much legitimized folks who come from this incarcerated background,'' said Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter, an artist in the exhibition who was imprisoned for eight months on charges that included felony conspiracy. She is now on staff at MoMA PS1 as a project manager for learning.

She has received multiple fellowships, including a residency to examine adultification bias against Black girls -- how society tends to regard some children as older than they are, needing less protection -- as a root cause of incarceration. Baxter has just been commissioned to lead workshops with women incarcerated at Rikers Island, to culminate in a community mural.

The art dealer Barry Malin has seen a huge shift in collector interest since he started representing Krimes. In 2016, the artist walked into the new Chelsea space opened by Malin, a former surgeon with a focus on social justice, and on the basis of their personal connection, the gallerist offered to show his prison works. Nothing sold from that first exhibition, but it led to a string of grants for Krimes.

''There was a challenge to getting people to appreciate it just as art,'' said Malin, who also represents Craig and Owens. He says he has seen a new receptivity since ''Marking Time''; the 2020 national reckoning with race and justice; and shifting sympathies toward people ensnared by drugs, in the wake of the opioid crisis.

The term ''formerly incarcerated artist'' has become ''a favorable designation,'' Malin said. Owens's first solo exhibition of paintings and assemblage work just opened at 515 West 29th Street, through Nov. 19, with prices starting at $26,000.

Last month, Owens was finishing the works in his studio at Silver Art Projects, on the 28th floor of 4 World Trade Center. Co-founded by Joshua Pulman and Cory Silverstein and funded in part by Silverstein Properties, which redeveloped the World Trade Center complex, the nonprofit offers free studio spaces and career opportunities to 28 emerging artists from marginalized communities.

''Society can't really visualize prisoners as even human beings,'' Owens said. ''I'm going to bring your attention to that,'' he added. ''I'm going to keep it in your mind's eye.''

He was using shadow figures appropriated from an 18th-century diagram of the Brookes slave ship, reproducing them in rows as a serial motif across canvases that flicker between representation and smudgy abstraction and suggest the architecture of the prison.

With a grant this year from the Art for Justice Fund, founded in 2017 by the philanthropist Agnes Gund to support activists and artists working to reduce the prison population, Silver Art is now reserving several spots in the residency annually for formerly incarcerated artists. Baxter, Krimes and Craig joined Owens in the coveted studio spaces earlier this month.

''The alchemy of art as a tool for securing justice cannot be overstated,'' said Gund, who collects work by Krimes and Craig (as does the Brooklyn Museum).

In his recent first solo New York show at Malin Gallery, Craig showed autobiographical canvases often painted on leather purse fragments stitched together as a skin, referencing the Black body in the prison system.

''It took me years to decide to unpack my prison experience,'' Craig said. ''I didn't want to exploit my situation or anyone else's.'' Three-quarters of the exhibition sold, with prices starting at $35,000. Among his collectors were Tim and Stephanie Ingrassia (she is vice chair of the Brooklyn Museum).

Krimes has now had five exhibitions with the gallery. ''People aren't questioning anymore, is he an artist or is he this sort of curiosity?'' Malin said. Krimes's series of ''Elegy Quilts,'' pieced together from the clothing of incarcerated individuals and depicting their remembrances of home, started at $25,000 and sold out quickly to collectors including Beth Rudin DeWoody.

Malin has gradually raised Krimes's prices to $75,000. ''The next hurdle to overcome,'' Malin said, ''is, are people going to take it seriously enough to go above this price point?''

During a recent public discussion called ''Confronting Mass Incarceration'' at the Anderson Ranch in Aspen, the Brooklyn Museum's director, Anne Pasternak, who led the acquisition of works by Craig and Krimes, apologized to Krimes for an earlier comment about his work having gotten expensive.

''In retrospect, I realized that could have sounded like, because he had been incarcerated, he didn't merit the prices of other artists, which is not what I intended,'' she said in a recent interview, adding, ''It requires us all to be more conscientious of our biases that we may not be aware of.''

Early on, Krimes noticed he was often the only artist included in shows about incarceration who had actually served time. ''I'm a white guy from eastern Pennsylvania, I should definitely not be the only face of incarceration,'' said Krimes, who grew up in a ***working-class*** community in Lancaster.

The documentary compares the lighter sentence Krimes received (six years) to that of a Black man sentenced the same day for the same crime (20 years), from the same judge, who said he saw ''potential'' in Krimes. The artist said he experienced how penitentiaries intentionally stoked racial divisions between rival gangs as a means of control. He pointed out that visual artists were respected prisonwide for the tangible records of humanity, such as portraits, they could provide to other inmates.

''That's where I realized I could use artwork as a collective building tool to cross racial barriers,'' Krimes said.

Krimes and Craig received a grant from Open Philanthropy to co-found the Right of Return USA in 2017, which offers $20,000 fellowships to a half dozen formerly incarcerated artists each year.

Baxter received one of these inaugural fellowships after prison, when she had less than $5 in her bank account, and described the support as life-changing. ''It gave me an opportunity to find stable housing and revisit my art aspirations,'' she said. The grant funded her musical film ''Ain't I a Woman,'' in which Baxter told her life story, including giving birth in prison while shackled to a gurney.

(Other Right of Return fellows include the poet Reginald Dwayne Betts; the artist Sherrill Roland, represented by the Tanya Bonakdar Gallery; Gilberto Rivera; and Tameca Cole, whose 2016 collage of a face shrouded in a gray cloud, titled ''Locked in a Dark Calm,'' is the opening image in ''Marking Time.'')

Krimes and Craig recently received $1.1 million from the Mellon Foundation, to help expand Right of Return from a fellowship to a nonprofit called the Art and Advocacy Society, which will hire staff and encompass a school and residency program.

They are working with Kate Fowle, former director of MoMA PS1, who brought ''Marking Time'' to the museum, on the school's pilot program, being hosted by MoMA PS1 with $300,000 in additional funding from Gund's Art for Justice and the Ford Foundation. A cohort of six artists -- Krimes, Craig, Owens, Baxter, Cole and Rivera -- are receiving professional development and one-on-one mentorship from Sterling Ruby, Hank Willis Thomas, Rashid Johnson, Lorna Simpson, Derrick Adams and Rafael Domenech.

When asked why a limited number of opportunities seem to keep going to the same handful of artists, Fowle said, ''They are going to be the support structure for future artists coming through school, the mentors, the ones able to guide how these types of programs expand.'' She and Krimes envision an entry-level tier for artists getting out of prison to learn studio skills and art history. The Art and Advocacy Society would develop the core curriculum, to be implemented at museums across the country.

Whether museums broadly will fund such an initiative is an open question. MoMA PS1, for example, received the top end of what Art for Justice gives -- $200,000 -- but it was not enough to pay for both tiers of the school.

In November, Christie's will auction works by Johnson and Mickalene Thomas, among others, to benefit the Art and Advocacy Society and a permanent residency program. ''Our goal is to create a multiracial national movement that is foundational and lasts,'' Krimes said. His biggest fear is that the art world's interest will move on to the next thing before anything structural has changed.

''I recognize the power of calling yourself a 'formerly incarcerated artist,''' he said. But ultimately, he added, ''you want to be known as just an artist.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/22/arts/design/prison-art-gallery-museum.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/22/arts/design/prison-art-gallery-museum.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top from left, the once-incarcerated artists Tameca Cole, Russell Craig, Jared Owens, Jesse Krimes, Gilberto Rivera and Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter. Right, an installation view of Krimes's ''Apokaluptein: 16389067'' (2010-13) at ''Marking Time,'' MoMA PS 1, in 2020. Below, Owens's studio in the Silver Art Project residency space. Bottom center, Craig's ''Idol Time'' (2022) was shown at the Malin Gallery. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER GREGORY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMESï¿½ï¿½

RUSSELL CRAIG

VIA MALIN GALLERY)

**Load-Date:** September 25, 2022

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[***Barbara Ehrenreich Contains Multitudes. They’re All Ticked Off.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60BV-S0H1-JBG3-62M8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2020 Thursday 01:16 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1010 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Szalai

**Highlight:** The essays in “Had I Known” cover four decades in Ehrenreich’s varied career, and reveal that one commonality has been her tough, acerbic voice.

**Body**

Despite her unwavering radicalism, there are almost as many Barbara Ehrenreichs as there are Barbara Ehrenreich books. There’s the muckraking undercover journalist (“Nickel and Dimed,” “Bait and Switch”); the participant-observer of the professional-managerial class (“Fear of Falling”); the autodidact pursuing her expansive curiosity by studying enormous subjects as varied as war and collective joy (“Blood Rites,” “Dancing in the Streets”). Ehrenreich has written about her experiences as a breast cancer patient (“Bright-Sided,” “Natural Causes”) and as a sullen teenager who was desperately searching for meaning (“Living With a Wild God”). In the early 1990s she even published “Kipper’s Game,” a novel of environmental degradation and suburban malaise.

“Had I Known” is billed as a collection of essays from the past four decades, but the Ehrenreich in these pages will be mostly familiar to the [*million-plus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/14/us/14labor.html) readers of “Nickel and Dimed,” which began as an article for Harper’s Magazine that is reprinted here. The subjects of these pieces include sexism and health, science and religion, but almost all of them share her repeated warnings about growing poverty and worsening inequality, even when she was writing during the go-go decades of the ’80s and ’90s — what she calls “the fat years.”

Ehrenreich recalls how after “Nickel and Dimed” was published in 2001, she was initiated into the rarefied world of ample royalties and lavish speaking fees. At the same time, “the world of journalism as I had known it was beginning to crumble.” The number of established outlets was shrinking. News sites may have proliferated online, but they didn’t pay much, if at all. Corporatization and technological upheaval were hollowing out yet another middle-class profession.

As one of the haves, Ehrenreich could afford to write what she wanted, but she was bothered by a dispensation that allowed an affluent person like her to produce articles about homelessness and hunger while those who truly struggled couldn’t afford to write about what they understood firsthand. She created a nonprofit organization called the Economic Hardship Reporting Project to support the work of journalists “who otherwise might never be heard from on account of their poverty or skin color, gender or sexual orientation,” and dedicates this new book to them.

It’s a surprisingly earnest introduction for a writer who once offered a modest proposal titled “Liposuction: The Key to Energy Independence,” in which excised body fat would serve as a replacement for fossil fuels (all those dinosaur bones processed into “corpse juice,” in her memorable formulation). But this collection also shows how Ehrenreich’s sincere activist efforts have always contained a vein of dark wit. The reigning neoliberal order, she argues, is not only harmful but absurd; just as some pharmaceutical companies profit from pesticides that arguably contribute to the cancers they offer to treat, Silicon Valley stokes attention disorders while piously peddling mindfulness apps. In “Nickel and Dimed,” she recalls getting “interviewed” by a computer for a job that paid peanuts at the Winn-Dixie.

Sexism provides another rich target. The “new man” of the 1980s wasn’t so much a true ally of feminist struggle as he was a self-regarding soul whose vaunted “sensitivity” was most often expressed in a “fatuous volubility on the subject of fathering.” In a satirical essay from the same decade, written from the depths of [*the pornography wars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/14/us/14labor.html), she describes organizing a “little group of citizens” plucked from the P.T.A. and the local aerobics class to read one of the most obscene books they could find — the Bible. “We were soon rewarded with examples of sexism so crude and so nasty that they would make ‘The Story of O’ look like suffragist propaganda.”

There’s a consistent tone to all of the essays: tough and acerbic, crusty to the point of imperturbable. When she was undergoing treatment for breast cancer, Ehrenreich wasn’t fazed by the corporate-sponsored pink ribbon kitsch; she was simply repulsed by it. “Let me be hacked to death by a madman,” she deadpans, looking askance at the infantilizing objects that festooned the hospital where she was “squished” for her mammography; “anything but suffocation by the pink sticky sentiment embodied in that bear and oozing from the walls of the changing room.”

Ehrenreich credits her parents — lifelong Democrats and resolute atheists — for her radical politics and “all-around bad attitude.” They grew up ***working-class***: Her father was a copper miner in Butte, Mont., before getting a degree and changing careers, eventually becoming a corporate executive. Ehrenreich was only 2 when the family left Montana, but to hear her tell it, it was almost as if she never left. From her parents she absorbed a distrust of “phonies” and rich people, along with a staunch insistence on a steady diet of greasy food. (In [*a recent interview with The New Yorker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/14/us/14labor.html), Ehrenreich talked about mayonnaise not only as a delicious condiment but a matter of ***working-class*** solidarity.)

Her upbringing was painful — though you wouldn’t know it by reading the essays in this book. In “Living With a Wild God” — a roving and candid exploration of her intellectual coming-of-age — she described a philandering, alcoholic father and a miserable, hypercritical mother. None of that rippling complexity comes through in “Had I Known,” in which her parents inevitably appear as hardy blue-collar types: honorable, gruff, no-nonsense.

But then the Ehrenreich of this collection is Ehrenreich the activist, the author of startlingly prescient essays and scabrous op-eds. She was writing about the splintering middle class during the self-congratulatory Reagan years, and about problems of trickle-down feminism long before well-heeled women were exhorted to lean in. These pieces weren’t the place for her to parse any ambivalence. After all, she had a job to do.

Follow Jennifer Szalai on Twitter: @jenszalai. Had I Known: Collected Essays By Barbara Ehrenreich 384 pages. Twelve. $28.

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***A Walk Through Gay History***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66XF-K8W1-JBG3-649D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 22, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2546 words

**Byline:** By Michael Kimmelman

**Body**

The architectural historian Andrew Dolkart leads a walk past landmarks like the Stonewall Inn, Julius' bar and the home of Lorraine Hansberry.

The fountainhead of American bohemia, Greenwich Village has always departed from the straight and narrow. Its entanglements of winding streets, defying the city grid, include remnants of cow paths and property lines from when the area was a sprawl of Dutch, then English, farms.

The Village as a historically gay neighborhood has long been a source of local pride, but it seemed mostly unremarkable to me and to my childhood friends who were native Villagers because it was simply another fact of daily life. Long before our time, Macdougal Street had been an early hub for L.G.B.T.Q. clubs and tearooms like the Black Rabbit. By the 1970s, the neighborhood's gay epicenter had shifted toward Christopher Street, the oldest street in the Village, its irregular route tracing the border of what had been the British admiral Peter Warren's Colonial-era estate.

Not long ago I asked Andrew Dolkart, an architectural historian at Columbia University, to construct an L.G.B.T.Q. tour of the Village. Dolkart is a co-founder of the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project and a co-author of the nomination for Stonewall to the National Register of Historic Places. What follows is an edited excerpt of our conversation, which appears in my new book, ''The Intimate City: Walking New York.'' The book grew out of walks I organized across the city with various architects, historians and others during the early months of Covid-19, a number of which were published by The Times. This Village walk was one of several written for the book.

MICHAEL KIMMELMAN Andrew, during the summer of 1969, police raided a bar at 51-53 Christopher Street called the Stonewall Inn.

ANDREW DOLKART In the 1960s, the Stonewall Inn was a Mafia-controlled bar, as were almost all gay and lesbian bars, because the State Liquor Authority decreed that the mere presence of a homosexual in a bar constituted disorderly conduct. The Mafia ran these bars and paid off the police. But there were still raids every now and then. In June of 1969, there was one on Stonewall. Usually with these raids the police arrested a few people, everybody left and things went back to normal. But in this case, the patrons of the bar fought back and a crowd developed outside. People started throwing things. Some police eventually had to barricade themselves in the bar. Demonstrations continued for several nights. The authorities didn't really know how to handle the situation.

Why there and then?

There had been earlier incidents in San Francisco and Los Angeles, where L.G.B.T.Q. people fought back. They were clearly fed up and saw all of these other liberation movements in the country gaining traction -- women's liberation, civil rights, the antiwar protests. David Carter, who wrote a book about Stonewall and helped us get Stonewall on the National Register, pointed out that the police tactical group that raided the bar that night was not familiar with the layout of Greenwich Village, and so when officers tried to clear the crowd, the crowd simply ran down all these irregular streets and circled right back, which kept the action going. That's why the National Register listing includes the Stonewall building, Christopher Park, and all of the streets around it, as far east as Sixth Avenue.

The register in a sense nods to the Village at large as a gay haven.

Its gay history goes back at least to the early 20th century, when Greenwich Village was becoming a bohemian capital. Back then, there were lots of unmarried people living together in the Village, which made it attractive to same-sex couples because they could live more openly.

Was there something distinct about the architecture or the physical layout of the Village that attracted outliers?

The Village's housing stock was a big factor. We now think of multimillion-dollar sales of old rowhouses in the Village, so it's hard for some people to imagine that the Village used to be cheap and rundown. Those old rowhouses were not always beloved, and a lot of them were subdivided into cold-water flats or had become rooming houses. The associated low rents, of course, are why the bohemians initially gravitated to Greenwich Village.

For the same reasons, the Village also became a magnet for immigrants and working people escaping disease and overcrowding in Lower Manhattan.

You can still see some of these early houses on streets like Grove and Bedford, where affluent people moved during the early 19th century after outbreaks of malaria and yellow fever farther downtown. Then came waves of development in the 1830s and '40s, and with it, increasing class stratification. Fifth Avenue and the northern side of Washington Square become prestigious. Then houses become increasingly more modest as you approach the Hudson River waterfront.

The waterfront had Newgate Prison. There were taverns and lumberyards and meat processing warehouses. I've always been struck by how the Village remained fairly isolated from the rest of the city partly because for a long time it was not connected to uptown districts by the big north-south avenues.

Seventh and Sixth Avenues sliced through the neighborhood only with the construction of the subways, which is why there are now all these crazy little triangle sites where you see the backs of old houses facing onto the avenues. We'll get to them later. You mentioned immigrants. The Village morphed into a neighborhood for Italians in the South Village, Germans and others to the west, with clusters of African Americans in the so-called Minettas and around Cornelia Street. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were several very different Villages.

It was still an Italian, ***working-class*** neighborhood where I grew up. We were talking about the Stonewall Inn and I led us off track. What was that building before it was a bar?

It was a pair of two-story horse stables. Then in 1930, the facade was redone, with brick on the bottom, stucco and flower-box balconies on top, which you see in old photographs. In 1934, it became Bonnie's Stonewall Inn, a restaurant and bar, which closed in 1964. Shortly after, the gay bar that took over adopted the old name and kept the exterior signage.

A bar for both men and women?

Occasionally women, mostly younger men, some of whom were gender nonconforming. Lesbians patronized various Mafia-run lesbian bars elsewhere in the Village, like the Sea Colony and Kooky's.

Stonewall is now a landmark but clearly not for its architecture.

Another way to say this is that buildings have lives. When we advocated for the city to designate Stonewall a landmark, I remember a guy speaking up at a public hearing, saying he was in favor of designation, but that we should not forget that Stonewall was in fact a dreary dump.

But as Lillian Faderman, a historian of lesbian history, has put it, Stonewall ''sounded the rally for the movement,'' leading to the founding of organizations like the Gay Liberation Front, the Gay Activists Alliance, and the Radicalesbians. The Christopher Street Liberation Day march, on the one-year anniversary of Stonewall, became the annual Pride Parade, which now happens in dozens of countries.

Just west of Stonewall, I also want to point out 59 Christopher Street, a building that housed the last headquarters of the New York City chapter of the Mattachine Society, an early national gay rights organization -- at the time the phrase was ''homophile organization'' -- founded in Los Angeles in 1950. After Stonewall, the Mattachine Society was supplanted by more radical groups, but it was important pre-Stonewall for doing many significant things, as we will see when we get to Julius' bar, just up the street. I want to stop first at 15 Christopher, where the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop relocated in 1973.

A Federal rowhouse. I would pass it on my way to and from P.S. 41, my elementary school.

The casement windows on the second floor were probably added in the 1920s -- casement windows became popular then -- and those very large ground-floor picture windows came later. They made the bookstore welcoming, but vulnerable. Someone threw a brick through them at one point. The shop had been founded in 1967 by Craig Rodwell, originally in a tiny storefront on Mercer Street, near Waverly Place. Then Rodwell moved it to Christopher to make it more conspicuous and central to the gay community. The goal was to be a relaxed, friendly place where young people would feel comfortable, where everybody was welcome. Among his papers at the New York Public Library are touching letters from people who describe standing outside the bookshop for an hour trying to get up the courage to go in. It became a second home for many gay people. Alison Bechdel said that she came to the shop as a young lesbian, not sure what she wanted to do with her life, and saw all these gay and lesbian comic books, and that inspired her to become a graphic novelist.

Rodwell also hired a multiracial staff, which was a statement in itself at the time.

It lasted until 2009, when the internet was beginning to kill independent bookstores, and general-interest bookshops were selling L.G.B.T.Q. literature.

Julius', just a few steps away, is at the corner of Waverly and 10th Street.

One of the oldest gay bars in New York.

In the mid-60s the Mattachine Society decided to challenge the New York State Liquor Authority policy that a bar could be closed down if it knowingly served a homosexual. Dick Leitsch, the Mattachine Society president; Rodwell, the bookstore owner, who was its vice president; and John Timmons, another society member, decided to go to bars along with newspaper reporters, announce they were gay, ask for a drink, and wait to be denied. They went to a Ukrainian American place on St. Marks Place that had a sign: ''If you are gay, please go away.'' One of the reporters apparently tipped off the bar beforehand, so it closed before the group arrived. Then they went to a Howard Johnson's on Sixth Avenue.

I remember that Howard Johnson's.

They sat down, asked to see the manager, said ''We're homosexuals,'' and then ordered drinks. The manager just laughed and served them. So that didn't work. They tried a Polynesian-themed bar called Waikiki and the same thing happened. Finally, they decided to go to Julius' because Julius' had recently been raided, and they figured the bar owners would probably be wary. They were right. There's a photograph of the bartender refusing to serve them.

Fred McDarrah's famous picture. In the photo you see the bartender with his hand over one of the glasses.

Heading west on Christopher toward Seventh Avenue South, there's the wonderful 1930s ''taxpayer'' at the corner, which was once home to Stewart's Cafeteria.

What's a taxpayer?

A building built to cover the site's property taxes until the owner could afford to construct something more extravagant. There had been a plan to put up an apartment house on this corner, designed by George & Edward Blum, but with the Depression it was never built and instead we still have this wonderful two-story Art Deco building, whose first tenant was Stewart's Cafeteria. Stewart's was a popular chain of the era and this branch became a famous haunt for a flamboyantly gay and lesbian crowd, performing for tourists who would sometimes stand three or four people deep, staring through the windows. Further west, down Christopher Street, I wanted to point out 337 Bleecker Street, where Lorraine Hansberry wrote ''A Raisin in the Sun.''

A simple, three-story Italianate-style building from the 1860s.

The building is fine, but I mention it because of Hansberry. She was a writer and also a civil rights activist. She moved into the apartment on the third floor with her husband in 1953, and when they separated in 1957, she privately comes out among a circle of lesbians, writing under a pseudonym for a journal called ''The Ladder,'' which was the national monthly magazine of the Daughters of Bilitis, the lesbian equivalent of the Mattachine Society. Hansberry's social circle at the time included lesbian writers like Patricia Highsmith, who lived with her parents from 1940 to 1942 at 48 Grove Street while she was a student at Barnard. A few blocks from there, the journalist Anna Rochester and Grace Hutchins, a fellow labor reformer, lived in an apartment at 85 Bedford Street from 1924 through Anna's death in 1966, until Grace's death in 1969. Rochester and Hutchins had what historians now would refer to as a Boston marriage, a term that derives from Henry James's ''The Bostonians'' -- they were women from affluent backgrounds who lived together in very close, loving relationships. A few doors down from their building, the poet Edna St. Vincent Millay lived at 75½ Bedford, a tourist attraction today because it's just about nine feet wide. Millay lived there during the 1920s with her husband when she was openly bisexual.

And around the corner from 75½ Bedford is the Cherry Lane Theater, in a former brewery on Commerce Street, which over the years became closely associated with gay playwrights like Edward Albee.

You said you wanted to talk about all those vestigial triangles and other remnants along Seventh Avenue South.

They were created when the avenue was cut through the neighborhood, exposing the rear facades of buildings like 70 Bedford Street, whose back became 54 Seventh Avenue South. That's where the Women's Coffeehouse, a lesbian-owned coffeehouse, opened in 1974. Judy O'Neil and Shari Thaler were its owners. They wanted to provide a feminist alternative to the Mafia-controlled lesbian bars. They were committed to issues around women and children, especially the rights of lesbian mothers in divorce cases involving custody. Across the street was another lesbian bar called Crazy Nanny's, which occupied the ground floor of 21 Seventh Avenue South.

An unadorned brick building from the mid-1950s, on one of those triangular sites. The bar advertised itself as ''100 percent women owned and 100 percent women managed,'' and like the Oscar Wilde bookshop its staff and clientele were racially diverse.

That was significant because back then Black women didn't feel welcome at a lot of lesbian bars (or Black men at men's bars, for that matter). Crazy Nanny's advertised itself as ''a place for women, biological or otherwise,'' meaning it welcomed trans women, at a time when that was controversial in lesbian circles. During the AIDS epidemic, lesbians also really stepped up -- Crazy Nanny's was a prime example -- in ways that helped bring the gay and lesbian communities together.

Andrew, may I ask, do you have a Village story of your own?

I grew up in Midwood, Brooklyn, and I had no notion that gay communities existed in the world. I went to the Village to look at buildings and saw all these gay people on the street. I hadn't come out yet. But this got me thinking. So I made up a story for my parents, and I went back to explore the neighborhood at night.

And that was transformative?

It was an awakening.

''Intimate City: Walking New York,'' by Michael Kimmelman, will be published on Nov. 29 by Penguin Press.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/21/arts/design/greenwich-village-history.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/21/arts/design/greenwich-village-history.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village is a landmark, noted for its role in the gay rights movement. (C1)

Christopher Park in Greenwich Village, which features a sculpture by George Segal, is still a gathering spot in the neighborhood. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZACK DeZON)

Near right, the Stonewall Inn, on Christopher Street, in 1966. Far right, people gathered near the Stonewall Inn in July 1969 during an uprising against police raids. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARRY C. MORRIS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

In 1970, participants in the Christopher Street Liberation Day parade for gay rights marched from Greenwich Village to Central Park. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL EVANS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C4)

In 1966, a bartender at Julius' bar, near left, refused to serve members of the Mattachine Society, a gay rights group. Far left, Julius', at the corner of Waverly and West 10th Street, is now one of the oldest gay bars in the city. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZACK DeZON

FRED W. McDARRAH/GETTY IMAGES) (C5) This article appeared in print on page C1, C4, C5.

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2022

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[***An Activist Writer Mines a Deep Vein of Acerbic Wit***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YSV-PKT1-DXY4-X37H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 1023 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Szalai

**Body**

Despite her unwavering radicalism, there are almost as many Barbara Ehrenreichs as there are Barbara Ehrenreich books. There's the muckraking undercover journalist (''Nickel and Dimed,'' ''Bait and Switch''); the participant-observer of the professional-managerial class (''Fear of Falling''); the autodidact pursuing her expansive curiosity by studying enormous subjects as varied as war and collective joy (''Blood Rites,'' ''Dancing in the Streets''). Ehrenreich has written about her experiences as a breast cancer patient (''Bright-Sided,'' ''Natural Causes'') and as a sullen teenager who was desperately searching for meaning (''Living With a Wild God''). In the early 1990s she even published ''Kipper's Game,'' a novel of environmental degradation and suburban malaise.

''Had I Known'' is billed as a collection of essays from the past four decades, but the Ehrenreich in these pages will be mostly familiar to the million-plus readers of ''Nickel and Dimed,'' which began as an article for Harper's Magazine that is reprinted here. The subjects of these pieces include sexism and health, science and religion, but almost all of them share her repeated warnings about growing poverty and worsening inequality, even when she was writing during the go-go decades of the '80s and '90s -- what she calls ''the fat years.''

Ehrenreich recalls how after ''Nickel and Dimed'' was published in 2001, she was initiated into the rarefied world of ample royalties and lavish speaking fees. At the same time, ''the world of journalism as I had known it was beginning to crumble.'' The number of established outlets was shrinking. News sites may have proliferated online, but they didn't pay much, if at all. Corporatization and technological upheaval were hollowing out yet another middle-class profession.

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Her upbringing was painful -- though you wouldn't know it by reading the essays in this book. In ''Living With a Wild God'' -- a roving and candid exploration of her intellectual coming-of-age -- she described a philandering, alcoholic father and a miserable, hypercritical mother. None of that rippling complexity comes through in ''Had I Known,'' in which her parents inevitably appear as hardy blue-collar types: honorable, gruff, no-nonsense.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/29/books/review-barbara-ehrenreich-had-i-known-essays.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/29/books/review-barbara-ehrenreich-had-i-known-essays.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2020

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[***High Inflation Complicates Deliberations on Student Debt Relief***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65S1-VPR1-DXY4-X3BR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 23, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 1592 words

**Byline:** By Zolan Kanno-Youngs, Jim Tankersley and Stacy Cowley

**Body**

The president is trying to balance his campaign promise to cancel thousands of dollars in student debt for tens of millions of borrowers with concerns such a move would be seen as a handout.

WASHINGTON -- The soaring cost of food, gasoline and other staples is further complicating a fraught debate among President Biden and his closest advisers over whether to follow through on his campaign pledge to cancel thousands of dollars of student loan debt for tens of millions of people.

While Mr. Biden has signaled to Democratic lawmakers that he will probably move forward with some form of student loan relief, he is still pressing his team for details about the economic ramifications of wiping out $10,000 of debt for some -- or all -- of the nation's 43 million federal student loan recipients.

In meetings this spring, Mr. Biden repeatedly asked for more data on whether the move would primarily benefit well-off borrowers from private universities who might not need the help, according to people involved in the process. The country's 8.6 percent inflation rate, a four-decade high, has added another layer of complexity to the decision: What would it mean for the economy if the government forgives some $321 billion in loans?

''You're talking about millions, possibly billions of dollars that could be spent. You should do it with eyes wide open,'' said Cedric Richmond, who stepped down as a senior adviser to Mr. Biden last month. ''He wants to make sure that it's based in equity and it doesn't exacerbate disparities.''

While Mr. Biden has yet to make a decision on student debt cancellation, his aides say he will before the end of August. The White House has been deeply divided over the political and economic effects of loan forgiveness. Mr. Biden's chief of staff, Ron Klain, has argued that it would galvanize a base of young voters increasingly frustrated with the president. Other aides have presented data showing that many Americans who saved money to pay off tuition for themselves or their children would resent the move.

Some economic advisers have made the case to Mr. Biden that the move might actually relieve inflation, at least a little, if he pairs debt forgiveness to a restart of the interest payments on student loans, which have been paused since early in the pandemic.

Mr. Biden's deliberations are emblematic of his attempts to straddle deep ideological divides in the country, often within his party. According to people familiar with his thinking, Mr. Biden is struggling to balance his promise to deliver sweeping proposals to address racial and economic disparities with concerns that loan cancellation would exacerbate inflation and be seen as a giveaway, undermining his image as a champion for labor and the ***working class***.

Mr. Biden is considering a framework for student debt relief that his economic aides have assured him would not exacerbate inflation and could potentially ease price growth slightly.

Under the plan, Mr. Biden would cancel some debt for certain borrowers, likely up to $10,000 each, which would effectively give some of those borrowers more money to spend on goods and services, like buying furniture or dining out, potentially creating additional demand that could further push up prices. Any move to relieve debt would include some type of income limits on those who qualify.

But at the same time, he would end a pause on student loan interest payments for all borrowers, which was imposed in March 2020 and has been extended seven times, most recently until Aug. 31. That would effectively force many of those borrowers to spend less on goods and services to resume their loan payments.

Mr. Biden's aides believe that pairing the two policies could pull a small amount of consumer buying power out of the economy. By some administration estimates, the two policies could bring inflation down very slightly. At minimum, aides say, they would cancel each other out.

''Given that fighting inflation is the president's top domestic priority,'' Jared Bernstein, a member of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, said in an interview, ''the key economic fact here is that if debt payment restart and debt relief were to occur at roughly the same time, the net inflationary effect should be neutral.''

Designing a plan to be inflation-neutral, at worst, under the administration's accounting would require limiting the debt relief to far less than what more liberal Democrats have pushed Mr. Biden to grant.

Opponents of debt cancellation would prefer Mr. Biden restart loan payments and not forgive any debt, which they say would have a better chance of dampening inflation. And they say the administration is making its inflation math appear rosier by looking at the resumption of interest payments as a new policy that could work as a counterbalance to canceling some debt, when the pause was always intended to be only temporary.

The administration's math showing the paired policies to be neutral for inflation ''is not the way I would prefer to think about it,'' said Marc Goldwein, the senior policy director at the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a nonpartisan fiscal watchdog group in Washington, and a critic of cancellation proposals. ''But it's not totally bizarre for somebody to think about it that way.''

Mr. Biden told reporters this week that he was close to making a decision on student debt. A White House official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal discussions, said the administration wanted to wait until the end of August to assess how much of a problem inflation is by then, as well as any legislative movement in Congress.

The White House has said it would prefer that Congress pass legislation on student loan relief, but Senate Democrats lack the votes, leaving executive action as the only apparent pathway. And pressure is building from Democrats who want Mr. Biden to make good on his campaign promise.

During a White House meeting in May, Senators Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Chuck Schumer of New York and Raphael Warnock of Georgia, all Democrats, presented data to Mr. Biden showing that debt cancellation would benefit borrowers who failed to obtain a degree to rebut the notion that relief would be a giveaway to the privileged, according to a person briefed on the meeting. Vice President Kamala Harris has also met with Mr. Biden to break down the groups that would benefit, another official said.

Democrats have often cited a report from Temple University showing that nearly 40 percent of full-time undergraduates who enrolled in the 2011-12 academic year accumulated some debt but did not have a degree after six years.

Republicans in Congress have attacked the White House as fiscally irresponsible. Representative Virginia Foxx of North Carolina, the top Republican on the Education and Labor Committee, said in a letter to the Education Department this month that she was ''gravely concerned the department will further harm borrowers and taxpayers if it acts on student loan forgiveness, in part because of its inability to follow through on its grandiose proposals.''

The department's loan servicers are dreading a replay of what happened last year, when they sent borrowers a series of notices saying payments would restart after Jan. 31 -- only to have the resumption of payments repeatedly delayed.

''Official direction is to march ahead as if it's happening, since that's what's going to occur unless we actively hear otherwise,'' said Scott Buchanan, the executive director of the Student Loan Servicing Alliance, a trade group, adding that servicers would start outreach to borrowers ''in the next couple of months.''

The president might find less political gain than some aides imagine should he pursue the $10,000 forgiveness plan.

Some advocates for borrowers and labor groups have warned that moving forward with a limited form of relief with income caps could fuel more frustration among civil rights organizations and younger voters.

William E. Spriggs, a professor of economics at Howard University and chief economist for the A.F.L.-C.I.O., said that forgiving only $10,000 of debt would run counter to Mr. Biden's commitment to racial equity. He said the limited cancellation would not be enough to address racial disparities in the economy, citing reports showing Black and other nonwhite borrowers end up with higher average loan balances than their white peers.

''You are answering the problem of white people,'' Mr. Spriggs said. ''If you do $10,000, you essentially are telling white people: 'You're OK. You don't have any debt.' That's not the case with Black people.''

Debt forgiveness would benefit families of low-income households, he said, because they do not have as much access to universities with higher endowments and more lavish financial aid packages.

''This is the issue of everyday, regular Americans who went to their local, poorly supported state university who had to pay tuition,'' Mr. Spriggs said. ''And that means Black people.''

But by delaying the decision on student loan relief for months, others said Mr. Biden had already fueled a perception that student loan relief would be a giveaway to the privileged, rather than a matter of racial equity.

''By emphasizing these mythical Ivy Leaguers, he's kind of put the wrong thought in people's heads,'' said Astra Taylor, a founder of the Debt Collective, which has lobbied the White House to cancel student loan debt. ''If people believe that, I kind of blame the president.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/22/us/politics/biden-student-debt-inflation.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/22/us/politics/biden-student-debt-inflation.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Student borrowers gathered near the White House last month. Some critics argue that debt forgiveness would worsen inflation and be seen as a giveaway. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL MORIGI/GETTY IMAGES FOR WE, THE 45 MILLION)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2022

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[***What Does 'Vex Money' Do to Love?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6655-7FD1-DXY4-X523-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 14, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 12; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1746 words

**Byline:** By Naomi Jackson

**Body**

Vex money. Noun. Origin: Anglophone Caribbean. Meaning: money stashed on your person or in a secret place (a brassiere, a bank account, your grandmother's Bible, your sneakers). To be spent only in case of emergency brought upon by a once stable situation suddenly becoming vexed -- usually but not always because of a man. See: the need for a swift exit in response to the threat of sexual assault. See also: the dissolution of a relationship, the loss of a job or being displaced from your home. Related to but not the same as the threat often uttered by an Afro-Caribbean woman: ''Don't get me vex.'' Or ''She/he/they get me vex, get me on my nerves.''

I can't remember a time when I didn't know about vex money. I heard the phrase, like many things whispered by my mothers and grandmothers and aunties, when I was a little girl, but I wasn't sure what it was. As a child, I dared not ask too many questions about it, for fear of being labeled ''fast'' or its cousin ''too nuff.'' To insert yourself into big people's conversations was to welcome admonishment, a turned shoulder, a ferrying back out into the world of children where you belonged.

I grew up in New York City in the 1980s and '90s, splitting time between my West Indian parents, who divorced when I was young. In my Afro-Caribbean immigrant community, there were many married couples around, but I sensed tension within them. Few seemed truly happy to me. There were whispers about outside women and illegitimate children, clucked tongues about men who gambled away both their own earnings and their family's savings. I was taught that it was preferable to remain married even in the face of profound betrayal. But I also came to understand that staying married didn't mean foolishly depending on a man who was unable or unwilling to provide for his family.

I saw women demand that their husbands hand over their paychecks before they went out to spend money on booze, betting and more. Others devotedly saved money through ''susu,'' an informal savings club. Some stashed money in secret bank accounts or carried substantial amounts of cash in their purses to keep it out of reach of their spouses.

Even as a child, I wondered about how these whispers about terrible husbands seemed to echo harmful stereotypes about Black men. They didn't jibe with the father that I knew and loved -- an honest, reliable provider who cooked dinner, shopped for groceries and changed his schedule to be more available for his children.

But even he reinforced a similar message. My father drilled home the idea that my sister and I should never wait on a man to provide for us financially. He fiercely encouraged us to attain advanced degrees (he had bachelor's and master's degrees and wanted even more for us both), take up meaningful careers, save our money, invest in property and more. In the words of Billie Holiday, ''God bless the child that's got his own.'' In the words of a friend with an upbringing similar to mine, the Columbia University historian Natasha Lightfoot, ''You are your own safety net.''

When I was in high school, my father and stepmother bought a home in South Brooklyn -- a comfortable three-bedroom home that felt palatial compared with the apartments we lived in before. We were one of the first Black families to buy a house on our block; our presence seemed to prompt the white flight of our neighbors. As homeowners, my family was part of the Black middle class, but I always felt the tenuous nature of our success.

My community believed in the gospels of education and work. They held fast to their faith in the American dream and in meritocracy and to the myth of West Indian exceptionalism. Opportunities and advancement were always available, these gospels proclaimed, to people who were willing and able to work hard. Some members of my community wrongly believed that personal failings and a lack of ambition, rather than structural racism and a history of enslavement, were what held back the progress of other Black Americans.

The spring after my 14th birthday, my stepmother took me to get working papers at an office in Downtown Brooklyn lorded over by a legendarily cranky woman. I spent the previous summers with my family in Barbados, where my mother is from, and in Antigua, where my dad is from. Those carefree days of counting mosquito bites, telling ghost stories, playing video games, sucking flavored ice out of plastic bags sold by our neighbors and trading the penance of Sunday church service for the promise of Sunday beach afternoons came to a swift end with my coming-of-age as a worker.

My first job was through New York City's Summer Youth Employment Program. I was paid minimum wage, $4.25 an hour, to answer phones at a legal nonprofit, make copies and stay out of the way. My weekly paycheck was around $92 after taxes. With the roughly $1,000 I earned that summer, I bought myself a green Tommy Hilfiger jacket, an orange Nautica coat and Timberland boots. Other girls in our neighborhood wore clothes that were gifts from the guys they dated, but I was never allowed to accept gifts or money from anyone outside our family, especially not boys. My parents were keenly aware of the ways that boys and men might try to use money to control their girls.

Being a chubby, nerdy and occasionally self-righteous teenager meant that I didn't have to refuse many gifts. I was 17 by the time I went on my first date. The unlucky young man, a classmate from middle school whose name I've forgotten, invited me to a movie at the mall. My date knew that my stoic West Indian father would not appreciate his honking the horn to signal that I should meet him outside, so he came to the door and made polite, awkward conversation in our kitchen. Before I left that night, I stashed a $20 bill in my bra -- some vex money of my own. I wanted to make sure that I had carfare home in case he tried any funny business that separated me from my purse, or my dignity.

Stashing money in your bra when meeting a relatively unfamiliar young man for a first date still strikes me as a reasonable, harmless precaution. But as I got older, I began to see that the idea of vex money had an uncomfortable hold on me.

I met my husband in Harlem in the winter of 2017. Just before we got married, we moved into an apartment I bought in Brooklyn 11 years earlier, a modest studio. To afford it, I had cobbled together my savings, resources from first-time home-buyer programs and a $200 gift from my parents for the inspection. I felt protective and proprietary about the apartment, which had been both a sanctuary and a point of pride for me over the years. I bristled as he bought new cutlery and plates, as he insisted on buying new bedding, even though there were perfectly good sheets and comforters I'd handpicked over the years. I tried to make more physical and emotional space for him, but I struggled to consider the apartment ours. I felt afraid to commit to the full intimacy of our bond, lest he prove unreliable.

The self-sufficiency of West Indian women and their suspicion of others, particularly men, are bound up together. For many of us, marriage is a worthy ideal to aspire to, but a truly wise woman doesn't count on it. She has to know how she'd make a way for herself and her children should a relationship go south. Part and parcel of this is making sure that you always work and hold back something for yourself. Vex money is the manifestation of our unwillingness to trust.

I rarely borrow even $20 from my husband or my friends because I hate feeling indebted to anyone. I still keep cash on hand at all times, even as it falls out of fashion. I am wary of unfamiliar people and the world at large, and I still believe that having a bit of cash to ''keep my pocket alive,'' as my friend's grandmother often said, is a safeguard against the dangers of being Black and a woman -- though I know it's not enough. Often in my marriage I have argued for making a purchase by insisting that I'm using ''my own money'' to pay for it. I know that these disagreements open fissures between us that cannot be easily repaired.

There is something tragic about living like this, with one foot out the door of intimate relationships. But it is the only way I know how to live, a coping mechanism that helps me feel vulnerable enough to remain in a committed relationship but safe enough to know that staying isn't my only option.

Every woman, every person, should have at least this: the ability to leave the table when, in the words of Nina Simone, ''love's no longer being served.'' So many Americans do not have the resources to respond to emergencies, as we often live one missed paycheck or medical problem away from financial ruin. The Black middle class, which was always small, has struggled even more in recent years in response to factors like predatory lending, gentrification, the Covid pandemic. The overturning of Roe v. Wade will have devastating consequences for poor and ***working-class*** women who need abortions but don't have the money to travel to a clinic out of state.

Now as ever, safety is in short supply for Black women and girls. We must protect ourselves. Still, I wish I could relax into the plush comfort of a relationship; perhaps one day I won't feel the need for vex money.

Recently, as I walked in the park with my son on a perfect Brooklyn day, I thought of my grandmothers, my beloved Ruth Jackson and Oriel Brewster. The women in my family were stalwart. I laughed remembering how they stashed money around their houses, ready to hide it from a burglar or offer it to a grandchild. I wondered whether it was vex money that had allowed Oriel to walk away from a marriage that was less than ideal. On that sunny day, I was glad to push those heavier thoughts aside as I looked in my purse for a few dollars to buy a cherry mango ice for me and my son. As we shared our first taste of summer, I allowed myself to appreciate the sweetness of a bit of cash to keep your pocket alive.

Naomi Jackson is the author of ''The Star Side of Bird Hill'' and an assistant professor of English and creative writing at Rutgers University, Newark.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Antoine Cossé FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 14, 2022

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[***Greenwich Village, Storied Home of Bohemia and Gay History***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66X8-0GK1-JBG3-6348-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 21, 2022 Monday 00:52 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 2698 words

**Byline:** Michael Kimmelman

**Highlight:** The architectural historian Andrew Dolkart leads a walk past landmarks like the Stonewall Inn, Julius’ bar and the home of Lorraine Hansberry.

**Body**

The architectural historian Andrew Dolkart leads a walk past landmarks like the Stonewall Inn, Julius’ bar and the home of Lorraine Hansberry.

The fountainhead of American bohemia, Greenwich Village has always departed from the straight and narrow. Its entanglements of winding streets, defying the city grid, include remnants of cow paths and property lines from when the area was a sprawl of Dutch, then English, farms.

The Village as a historically gay neighborhood has long been a source of local pride, but it seemed mostly unremarkable to me and to my childhood friends who were native Villagers because it was simply another fact of daily life. Long before our time, Macdougal Street had been an early hub for L.G.B.T.Q. clubs and tearooms like the Black Rabbit. By the 1970s, the neighborhood’s gay epicenter had shifted toward Christopher Street, the oldest street in the Village, its irregular route tracing the border of what had been the British admiral Peter Warren’s Colonial-era estate.

Not long ago I asked Andrew Dolkart, an architectural historian at Columbia University, to construct an L.G.B.T.Q. tour of the Village. Dolkart is a co-founder of the [*NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project*](https://www.nyclgbtsites.org/) and a co-author of the nomination for Stonewall to the National Register of Historic Places. What follows is an edited excerpt of our conversation, which appears in my new book, “[*The Intimate City: Walking New York*](https://www.publishersweekly.com/9780593298411).” The book grew out of [*walks I organized*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/05/arts/design/bronx-virtual-tour.html?action=click&amp;module=card&amp;pageType=walkingToursLink) [*across the city*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/20/arts/design/brooklyn-virtual-tour-virus.html?action=click&amp;module=card&amp;pageType=walkingToursLink) with various architects, historians and others during the early months of Covid-19, a [*number of which*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/arts/design/nyc-museums-architecture-tour-virus.html?action=click&amp;module=card&amp;pageType=walkingToursLink) were [*published*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/12/02/arts/design/new-york-city-walking-tours.html#card5) by The Times. This Village walk was one of several written for the book.

MICHAEL KIMMELMAN Andrew, during the summer of 1969, police raided a bar at 51-53 Christopher Street called the Stonewall Inn.

ANDREW DOLKART In the 1960s, [*the Stonewall Inn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/27/nyregion/stonewall-inn-nyc-1969.html) was a Mafia-controlled bar, as were almost all gay and lesbian bars, because the State Liquor Authority decreed that the mere presence of a homosexual in a bar constituted disorderly conduct. The Mafia ran these bars and paid off the police. But there were still raids every now and then. In June of 1969, there was one on Stonewall. Usually with these raids the police arrested a few people, everybody left and things went back to normal. But in this case, the patrons of the bar fought back and a crowd developed outside. People started throwing things. Some police eventually had to barricade themselves in the bar. Demonstrations continued for several nights. The authorities didn’t really know how to handle the situation.

Why there and then?

There had been earlier incidents in San Francisco and Los Angeles, where L.G.B.T.Q. people fought back. They were clearly fed up and saw all of these other liberation movements in the country gaining traction — women’s liberation, civil rights, the antiwar protests. [*David Carter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/16/nyregion/david-carter-dead.html), who wrote a book about Stonewall and helped us get Stonewall on the National Register, pointed out that the police tactical group that raided the bar that night was not familiar with the layout of Greenwich Village, and so when officers tried to clear the crowd, the crowd simply ran down all these irregular streets and circled right back, which kept the action going. That’s why the National Register listing includes the Stonewall building, Christopher Park, and all of the streets around it, as far east as Sixth Avenue.

The register in a sense nods to the Village at large as a gay haven.

Its gay history goes back at least to the early 20th century, when Greenwich Village was becoming a bohemian capital. Back then, there were lots of unmarried people living together in the Village, which made it attractive to same-sex couples because they could live more openly.

Was there something distinct about the architecture or the physical layout of the Village that attracted outliers?

The Village’s housing stock was a big factor. We now think of multimillion-dollar sales of old rowhouses in the Village, so it’s hard for some people to imagine that the Village used to be cheap and rundown. Those old rowhouses were not always beloved, and a lot of them were subdivided into cold-water flats or had become rooming houses. The associated low rents, of course, are why the bohemians initially gravitated to Greenwich Village.

For the same reasons, the Village also became a magnet for immigrants and working people escaping disease and overcrowding in Lower Manhattan.

You can still see some of these early houses on streets like Grove and Bedford, where affluent people moved during the early 19th century after outbreaks of malaria and yellow fever farther downtown. Then came waves of development in the 1830s and ’40s, and with it, increasing class stratification. Fifth Avenue and the northern side of Washington Square become prestigious. Then houses become increasingly more modest as you approach the Hudson River waterfront.

The waterfront had Newgate Prison. There were taverns and lumberyards and meat processing warehouses. I’ve always been struck by how the Village remained fairly isolated from the rest of the city partly because for a long time it was not connected to uptown districts by the big north-south avenues.

Seventh and Sixth Avenues sliced through the neighborhood only with the construction of the subways, which is why there are now all these crazy little triangle sites where you see the backs of old houses facing onto the avenues. We’ll get to them later. You mentioned immigrants. The Village morphed into a neighborhood for Italians in the South Village, Germans and others to the west, with clusters of African Americans in the so-called Minettas and around Cornelia Street. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were several very different Villages.

It was still an Italian, ***working-class*** neighborhood where I grew up. We were talking about the Stonewall Inn and I led us off track. What was that building before it was a bar?

It was a pair of two-story horse stables. Then in 1930, the facade was redone, with brick on the bottom, stucco and flower-box balconies on top, which you see in old photographs. In 1934, it became Bonnie’s Stonewall Inn, a restaurant and bar, which closed in 1964. Shortly after, the gay bar that took over adopted the old name and kept the exterior signage.

A bar for both men and women?

Occasionally women, mostly younger men, some of whom were gender nonconforming. Lesbians patronized various Mafia-run lesbian bars elsewhere in the Village, like the Sea Colony and Kooky’s.

Stonewall is now a landmark but clearly not for its architecture.

Another way to say this is that buildings have lives. When we advocated for the city to designate Stonewall a landmark, I remember a guy speaking up at a public hearing, saying he was in favor of designation, but that we should not forget that Stonewall was in fact a dreary dump.

But as Lillian Faderman, a historian of lesbian history, has put it, Stonewall “sounded the rally for the movement,” leading to the founding of organizations like the Gay Liberation Front, the Gay Activists Alliance, and the Radicalesbians. The Christopher Street Liberation Day march, on the one-year anniversary of Stonewall, became the annual Pride Parade, which now happens in dozens of countries.

Just west of Stonewall, I also want to point out 59 Christopher Street, a building that housed the last headquarters of the New York City chapter of the Mattachine Society, an early national gay rights organization — at the time the phrase was “homophile organization” — founded in Los Angeles in 1950. After Stonewall, the Mattachine Society was supplanted by more radical groups, but it was important pre-Stonewall for doing many significant things, as we will see when we get to Julius’ bar, just up the street. I want to stop first at 15 Christopher, where the Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop relocated in 1973.

A Federal rowhouse. I would pass it on my way to and from P.S. 41, my elementary school.

The casement windows on the second floor were probably added in the 1920s — casement windows became popular then — and those very large ground-floor picture windows came later. They made the bookstore welcoming, but vulnerable. Someone threw a brick through them at one point. The shop had been founded in 1967 by Craig Rodwell, originally in a tiny storefront on Mercer Street, near Waverly Place. Then Rodwell moved it to Christopher to make it more conspicuous and central to the gay community. The goal was to be a relaxed, friendly place where young people would feel comfortable, where everybody was welcome. Among his papers at the New York Public Library are touching letters from people who describe standing outside the bookshop for an hour trying to get up the courage to go in. It became a second home for many gay people. Alison Bechdel said that she came to the shop as a young lesbian, not sure what she wanted to do with her life, and saw all these gay and lesbian comic books, and that inspired her to become a graphic novelist.

Rodwell also hired a multiracial staff, which was a statement in itself at the time.

It lasted until 2009, when the internet was beginning to kill independent bookstores, and general-interest bookshops were selling L.G.B.T.Q. literature.

Julius’, just a few steps away, is at the corner of Waverly and 10th Street.

One of the oldest gay bars in New York.

In the mid-60s the Mattachine Society decided to challenge the New York State Liquor Authority policy that a bar could be closed down if it knowingly served a homosexual. Dick Leitsch, the Mattachine Society president; Rodwell, the bookstore owner, who was its vice president; and John Timmons, another society member, decided to go to bars along with newspaper reporters, announce they were gay, ask for a drink, and wait to be denied. They went to a Ukrainian American place on St. Marks Place that had a sign: “If you are gay, please go away.” One of the reporters apparently tipped off the bar beforehand, so it closed before the group arrived. Then they went to a Howard Johnson’s on Sixth Avenue.

I remember that Howard Johnson’s.

They sat down, asked to see the manager, said “We’re homosexuals,” and then ordered drinks. The manager just laughed and served them. So that didn’t work. They tried a Polynesian-themed bar called Waikiki and the same thing happened. Finally, they decided to go to Julius’ because Julius’ had recently been raided, and they figured the bar owners would probably be wary. They were right. There’s a photograph of the bartender refusing to serve them.

Fred McDarrah’s famous picture. In the photo you see the bartender with his hand over one of the glasses.

Heading west on Christopher toward Seventh Avenue South, there’s the wonderful 1930s “taxpayer” at the corner, which was once home to Stewart’s Cafeteria.

What’s a taxpayer?

A building built to cover the site’s property taxes until the owner could afford to construct something more extravagant. There had been a plan to put up an apartment house on this corner, designed by George &amp; Edward Blum, but with the Depression it was never built and instead we still have this wonderful two-story Art Deco building, whose first tenant was Stewart’s Cafeteria. Stewart’s was a popular chain of the era and this branch became a famous haunt for a flamboyantly gay and lesbian crowd, performing for tourists who would sometimes stand three or four people deep, staring through the windows. Further west, down Christopher Street, I wanted to point out 337 Bleecker Street, where Lorraine Hansberry wrote “A Raisin in the Sun.”

A simple, three-story Italianate-style building from the 1860s.

The building is fine, but I mention it because of Hansberry. She was a writer and also a civil rights activist. She moved into the apartment on the third floor with her husband in 1953, and when they separated in 1957, she privately comes out among a circle of lesbians, writing under a pseudonym for a journal called “The Ladder,” which was the national monthly magazine of the Daughters of Bilitis, the lesbian equivalent of the Mattachine Society. Hansberry’s social circle at the time included lesbian writers like Patricia Highsmith, who lived with her parents from 1940 to 1942 at 48 Grove Street while she was a student at Barnard. A few blocks from there, the journalist Anna Rochester and Grace Hutchins, a fellow labor reformer, lived in an apartment at 85 Bedford Street from 1924 through Anna’s death in 1966, until Grace’s death in 1969. Rochester and Hutchins had what historians now would refer to as a Boston marriage, a term that derives from Henry James’s “The Bostonians” — they were women from affluent backgrounds who lived together in very close, loving relationships. A few doors down from their building, the poet Edna St. Vincent Millay lived at 75\xC2 Bedford, a tourist attraction today because it’s just about nine feet wide. Millay lived there during the 1920s with her husband when she was openly bisexual.

And around the corner from 75\xC2 Bedford is the Cherry Lane Theater, in a former brewery on Commerce Street, which over the years became closely associated with gay playwrights like Edward Albee.

You said you wanted to talk about all those vestigial triangles and other remnants along Seventh Avenue South.

They were created when the avenue was cut through the neighborhood, exposing the rear facades of buildings like 70 Bedford Street, whose back became 54 Seventh Avenue South. That’s where the Women’s Coffeehouse, a lesbian-owned coffeehouse, opened in 1974. Judy O’Neil and Shari Thaler were its owners. They wanted to provide a feminist alternative to the Mafia-controlled lesbian bars. They were committed to issues around women and children, especially the rights of lesbian mothers in divorce cases involving custody. Across the street was another lesbian bar called Crazy Nanny’s, which occupied the ground floor of 21 Seventh Avenue South.

An unadorned brick building from the mid-1950s, on one of those triangular sites. The bar advertised itself as “100 percent women owned and 100 percent women managed,” and like the Oscar Wilde bookshop its staff and clientele were racially diverse.

That was significant because back then Black women didn’t feel welcome at a lot of lesbian bars (or Black men at men’s bars, for that matter). Crazy Nanny’s advertised itself as “a place for women, biological or otherwise,” meaning it welcomed trans women, at a time when that was controversial in lesbian circles. During the AIDS epidemic, lesbians also really stepped up — Crazy Nanny’s was a prime example — in ways that helped bring the gay and lesbian communities together.

Andrew, may I ask, do you have a Village story of your own?

I grew up in Midwood, Brooklyn, and I had no notion that gay communities existed in the world. I went to the Village to look at buildings and saw all these gay people on the street. I hadn’t come out yet. But this got me thinking. So I made up a story for my parents, and I went back to explore the neighborhood at night.

And that was transformative?

It was an awakening.

“Intimate City: Walking New York,” by Michael Kimmelman, will be published on Nov. 29 by Penguin Press.

PHOTOS: The Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village is a landmark, noted for its role in the gay rights movement. (C1); Christopher Park in Greenwich Village, which features a sculpture by George Segal, is still a gathering spot in the neighborhood. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZACK DeZON); Near right, the Stonewall Inn, on Christopher Street, in 1966. Far right, people gathered near the Stonewall Inn in July 1969 during an uprising against police raids. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LARRY C. MORRIS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); In 1970, participants in the Christopher Street Liberation Day parade for gay rights marched from Greenwich Village to Central Park. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL EVANS/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C4); In 1966, a bartender at Julius’ bar, near left, refused to serve members of the Mattachine Society, a gay rights group. Far left, Julius’, at the corner of Waverly and West 10th Street, is now one of the oldest gay bars in the city. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZACK DeZON; FRED W. McDARRAH/GETTY IMAGES) (C5) This article appeared in print on page C1, C4, C5.

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2022

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[***Inflation Complicates Biden’s Deliberations on Student Loan Forgiveness***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65RX-KC11-JBG3-6511-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 22, 2022 Wednesday 11:01 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1614 words

**Byline:** Zolan Kanno-Youngs, Jim Tankersley and Stacy Cowley

**Highlight:** The president is trying to balance his campaign promise to cancel thousands of dollars in student debt for tens of millions of borrowers with concerns such a move would be seen as a handout.

**Body**

The president is trying to balance his campaign promise to cancel thousands of dollars in student debt for tens of millions of borrowers with concerns such a move would be seen as a handout.

WASHINGTON — The soaring cost of food, gasoline and other staples is further complicating a fraught debate among President Biden and his closest advisers over whether to [*follow through on his campaign pledge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/26/business/biden-student-loans.html) to cancel thousands of dollars of student loan debt for tens of millions of people.

While Mr. Biden has signaled to Democratic lawmakers that he will probably move forward with some form of student loan relief, he is still pressing his team for details about the economic ramifications of wiping out $10,000 of debt for some — or all — of the nation’s 43 million federal student loan recipients.

In meetings this spring, Mr. Biden repeatedly asked for more data on whether the move would primarily benefit well-off borrowers from private universities who might not need the help, according to people involved in the process. The country’s [*8.6 percent inflation rate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/10/business/economy/may-2022-cpi-inflation.html), a four-decade high, has added another layer of complexity to the decision: What would it mean for the economy if the government forgives some [*$321 billion in loans*](https://libertystreeteconomics.newyorkfed.org/2022/04/who-are-the-federal-student-loan-borrowers-and-who-benefits-from-forgiveness/)

“You’re talking about millions, possibly billions of dollars that could be spent. You should do it with eyes wide open,” said Cedric Richmond, who [*stepped down as a senior adviser to Mr. Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/25/us/politics/cedric-richmond-biden-white-house.html) last month. “He wants to make sure that it’s based in equity and it doesn’t exacerbate disparities.”

While Mr. Biden has yet to make a decision on student debt cancellation, his aides say he will before the end of August. The White House has been deeply [*divided over the political and economic effects of loan forgiveness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/26/business/biden-student-loans.html). Mr. Biden’s chief of staff, Ron Klain, has argued that it would galvanize a base of young voters increasingly frustrated with the president. Other aides have presented data showing that many Americans who saved money to pay off tuition for themselves or their children would resent the move.

Some economic advisers have made the case to Mr. Biden that the move might actually relieve inflation, at least a little, if he pairs debt forgiveness to a restart of the interest payments on student loans, which have been paused since early in the pandemic.

Mr. Biden’s deliberations are emblematic of his attempts to straddle deep ideological divides in the country, often within his party. According to people familiar with his thinking, Mr. Biden is struggling to balance his promise to deliver sweeping proposals to address racial and economic disparities with concerns that loan cancellation would exacerbate inflation and be seen as a giveaway, undermining his image as a champion for labor and the ***working class***.

Mr. Biden is considering a framework for student debt relief that his economic aides have assured him would not exacerbate inflation and could potentially ease price growth slightly.

Under the plan, Mr. Biden would cancel some debt for certain borrowers, likely up to $10,000 each, which would effectively give some of those borrowers more money to spend on goods and services, like buying furniture or dining out, potentially creating additional demand that could further push up prices. Any move to relieve debt would include some type of income limits on those who qualify.

But at the same time, he would end a pause on student loan interest payments for all borrowers, which was imposed in March 2020 and has been extended seven times, [*most recently until Aug. 31*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/05/business/student-loan-pause-pandemic.html). That would effectively force many of those borrowers to spend less on goods and services to resume their loan payments.

Mr. Biden’s aides believe that pairing the two policies could pull a small amount of consumer buying power out of the economy. By some administration estimates, the two policies could bring inflation down very slightly. At minimum, aides say, they would cancel each other out.

“Given that fighting inflation is the president’s top domestic priority,” Jared Bernstein, a member of the White House Council of Economic Advisers, said in an interview, “the key economic fact here is that if debt payment restart and debt relief were to occur at roughly the same time, the net inflationary effect should be neutral.”

Designing a plan to be inflation-neutral, at worst, under the administration’s accounting would require limiting the debt relief to far less than what more liberal Democrats have pushed Mr. Biden to grant.

Opponents of debt cancellation would prefer Mr. Biden restart loan payments and not forgive any debt, which they say would have a better chance of dampening inflation. And they say the administration is making its inflation math appear rosier by looking at the resumption of interest payments as a new policy that could work as a counterbalance to canceling some debt, when the pause was always intended to be only temporary.

The administration’s math showing the paired policies to be neutral for inflation “is not the way I would prefer to think about it,” said Marc Goldwein, the senior policy director at the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a nonpartisan fiscal watchdog group in Washington, and a critic of cancellation proposals. “But it’s not totally bizarre for somebody to think about it that way.”

Mr. Biden told reporters this week that he was close to making a decision on student debt. A White House official, speaking on the condition of anonymity to discuss internal discussions, said the administration wanted to wait until the end of August to assess how much of a problem inflation is by then, as well as any legislative movement in Congress.

The White House has said it would prefer that Congress pass legislation on student loan relief, but Senate Democrats lack the votes, leaving executive action as the only apparent pathway. And pressure is building from Democrats who want Mr. Biden to make good on his campaign promise.

During a White House meeting in May, Senators Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Chuck Schumer of New York and Raphael Warnock of Georgia, all Democrats, presented data to Mr. Biden showing that debt cancellation would [*benefit borrowers who failed to obtain a degree*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/your-money/student-loan-debt-degree.html) to rebut the notion that relief would be a giveaway to the privileged, according to a person briefed on the meeting. Vice President Kamala Harris has also met with Mr. Biden to break down the groups that would benefit, another official said.

Democrats have often cited a report from Temple University showing that [*nearly 40 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/your-money/student-loan-debt-degree.html) of full-time undergraduates who enrolled in the 2011-12 academic year accumulated some debt but did not have a degree after six years.

Republicans in Congress have attacked the White House as fiscally irresponsible. Representative Virginia Foxx of North Carolina, the top Republican on the Education and Labor Committee, said in a letter to the Education Department this month that she was “gravely concerned the department will further harm borrowers and taxpayers if it acts on student loan forgiveness, in part because of its inability to follow through on its grandiose proposals.”

The department’s loan servicers are dreading a replay of what happened last year, when they sent borrowers a series of notices saying payments would restart after Jan. 31 — only to have the resumption of payments repeatedly delayed.

“Official direction is to march ahead as if it’s happening, since that’s what’s going to occur unless we actively hear otherwise,” said Scott Buchanan, the executive director of the Student Loan Servicing Alliance, a trade group, adding that servicers would start outreach to borrowers “in the next couple of months.”

The president might find less political gain than some aides imagine should he pursue the $10,000 forgiveness plan.

Some advocates for borrowers and labor groups have warned that moving forward with a limited form of relief with income caps could fuel more frustration among civil rights organizations and younger voters.

William E. Spriggs, a professor of economics at Howard University and chief economist for the A.F.L.-C.I.O., said that forgiving only $10,000 of debt would run counter to Mr. Biden’s commitment to racial equity. He said the limited cancellation would not be enough to address racial disparities in the economy, citing reports showing [*Black and other nonwhite borrowers end up with higher average loan balances*](https://educationdata.org/student-loan-debt-by-race) than their white peers.

“You are answering the problem of white people,” Mr. Spriggs said. “If you do $10,000, you essentially are telling white people: ‘You’re OK. You don’t have any debt.’ That’s not the case with Black people.”

Debt forgiveness would benefit families of low-income households, he said, because they do not have as much access to universities with higher endowments and more lavish financial aid packages.

“This is the issue of everyday, regular Americans who went to their local, poorly supported state university who had to pay tuition,” Mr. Spriggs said. “And that means Black people.”

But by delaying the decision on student loan relief for months, others said Mr. Biden had already fueled a perception that student loan relief would be a giveaway to the privileged, rather than a matter of racial equity.

“By emphasizing these mythical Ivy Leaguers, he’s kind of put the wrong thought in people’s heads,” said Astra Taylor, a founder of the Debt Collective, which has lobbied the White House to cancel student loan debt. “If people believe that, I kind of blame the president.”

PHOTO: Student borrowers gathered near the White House last month. Some critics argue that debt forgiveness would worsen inflation and be seen as a giveaway. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL MORIGI/GETTY IMAGES FOR WE, THE 45 MILLION)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Can I Confront My Dad About His Possibly Secret Relationship?; Social Q’s***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:646T-37S1-DXY4-X3HY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 2, 2021 Thursday 15:48 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 839 words

**Byline:** Philip Galanes

**Highlight:** A reader asks for advice on talking to her father about his new romantic life.

**Body**

A reader asks for advice on talking to her father about his new romantic life.

My dad came out as gay to my mom and me two years ago, and my parents got divorced. Since then, he befriended another gay man. When I was last visiting my dad, his friend called. The phone was on speaker, and I could hear every word of their conversation — though I don’t think my dad knew that. At the end of the call, the friend said: “I love you.” I knew they were close; he cared for my father after a recent surgery, and they sometimes cook dinner together. But my dad has told me they’re just friends. Should I tell him what I overheard? He has the right to keep the true nature of their relationship to himself, but if I keep quiet, I will be misleading him. Right?

DAUGHTER

I have a couple of friends whom I feel close enough to that we end our calls by saying “I love you.” I have never slept with any of them. We don’t know anything about the “true nature” of your father’s relationship based on a single endearment. The friend may simply have supported your father through his coming out and surgery. That’s a kind of love, though not necessarily romantic.

More important, it isn’t “misleading” people to respect the limits of their comfort in revealing themselves to us — even if we know more than they say. Coming out seems to have been hard for your dad. He waited to do it. Better to let him know you support his loving relationships than to quiz him about them. It’s kinder (and more effective) to let people work through sensitive issues at their own pace.

Now, I don’t mean to minimize any distress that you and your mother felt at your father’s coming out. It may have been very upsetting. I can imagine it also heightened your desire for honesty from him. Pressing him to tell you things before he’s ready, though, may only lead to further obfuscation and half-truths. Be patient.

What, I’m Not Good Enough for You?

I went to a state school in the Midwest. Most of the people I met there were from ***working-class*** backgrounds like mine. After graduation, two of my best friends moved to the West Coast and got big jobs in the tech industry. I’ve seen them several times over the years, and we’ve spoken on the phone sporadically. During the past year, though, I’ve reached out to them repeatedly without response. (One of them butt dials me frequently; it hurts to see her calling me by mistake.) Since college, I’ve mostly worked at blue-collar jobs. People like me have been lauded during the pandemic, but we’re used to being brushed off as unimportant. My friends’ lives are different: Their jobs impress people. I’m happy with my choices. But am I wrong to think my friends ditched me because they think I’m not good enough?

FRIEND

I’m really sorry that you’ve taken the (sadly) common experience of losing touch with old friends as a personal indictment. As we get older, making time for people from the ever-increasing old days — childhood, college, former jobs — requires commitment. And many people feel pinched for time and energy.

During the pandemic especially, when a simple grocery run could be exhausting, many people’s worlds grew smaller. Your friends may not have the bandwidth to respond to you now. And nothing in your letter hints at snobbishness before.

Write them a substantive note. (No “What’s up?” texts.) Tell them you’ve missed them, and ask them to call you when they have the energy so you can catch up. I can’t promise they will, but it’s a more generous posture than assuming that old friends have suddenly dropped you because you’re not fancy.

Thanks, but No Thanks

Any day now, I will receive a booze-soaked fruitcake from a close relative who sends them every year. While appreciated, they are not enjoyed. And I hate that she spends her hard-earned money on them. May I ask her to stop sending them without sounding ungrateful?

S.R.V.

My answer is no — even in spite of the many letters I will receive from readers who believe the cost of these fruitcakes should be redirected to charity. (No one is stopping anyone from donating to charitable causes!) Your relative chooses to express her affection for you with a fruitcake. Why try to control her or her budget? Simply accept the gift in the loving spirit it was given, then deploy it elsewhere.

About That One-Night Stand …

Right before break, I hooked up with a girl in my dorm. It was a one-time thing. Since then, I found out I have an S.T.I. But we used a condom during sex. Do I still have to tell her about possible exposure?

ANONYMOUS

I know this ranks high among awkward calls, but you still have to make it. Intercourse is not the only way that S.T.I.s are transmitted. (I hope you know that.) Even if it’s unlikely that your partner was exposed, you have a duty to tell her so she can be tested. Who knows? She may be the person who transmitted the S.T.I. to you.

For help with your awkward situation, send a question to [*SocialQ@nytimes.com*](mailto:SocialQ@nytimes.com), to Philip Galanes on Facebook or [*@SocialQPhilip*](https://twitter.com/SocialQPhilip) on Twitter.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Miguel Porlan FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***From Prison to the Art Gallery***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66FG-CTD1-DXY4-X1VJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 22, 2022 Thursday 09:53 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 2112 words

**Byline:** Hilarie M. Sheets

**Highlight:** Formerly incarcerated artists are making waves in the collecting world, hoping to create pathways, and dignity, for their peers.

**Body**

In 2010, in the recreation center of the Fairton Federal Correctional Institution, a medium-security prison for men in South New Jersey, an art collective was born.

Five years into a 13-year sentence on drug-related charges, [*Jared Owens*](https://www.easternstate.org/explore/artist-installations/jared-scott-owens-sepulture) rediscovered his childhood love of ceramics and taught himself to paint. He was overseeing the art room by the time [*Gilberto Rivera*](https://www.themarshallproject.org/2021/03/15/the-museum-of-modern-art-highlights-the-ingenuity-of-artists-behind-bars), a graffiti artist, and [*Jesse Krimes*](https://www.malingallery.com/artists/jesse-krimes), with an art degree from Millersville University in Pennsylvania, transferred to Fairton to finish their terms. They shared art magazine subscriptions, supplies, ideas and camaraderie in resistance to their circumstances.

With the help of Owens and Rivera, Krimes covertly gathered prison bedsheets that he collaged with New York Times images, using hair gel and a spoon to lift and transfer the printed ink onto his contraband canvases. He smuggled pieces out, one by one, through the prison mail room. Over three years, the subversive practice evolved into a monumental mural, a [*Hieronymus Bosch-like allegory*](https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-decoding-boschs-wild-whimsical-garden-earthly-delights) of heaven, earth and hell, that he titled “Apokaluptein: 16389067” — Greek for apocalypse coupled with Krimes’s inmate number. It stretched 15 feet by 40 feet when he was finally able to assemble the 39 segments for the first time upon his release in 2013, after serving six years on drug charges.

“This isn’t about some outsider coming in and doing an arts program — it was them on their own, seizing that space, whatever dignity they could craft, and then carrying that with them when they came home,” said [*Alysa Nahmias*](https://www.ajnafilms.com/), director of [*“Art &amp; Krimes by Krimes,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z78Hl-pu5i8) a film that will be released in theaters on Sept. 30 by MTV Documentary Films and streamed by Paramount+ starting Nov. 22. It chronicles the making of “Apokaluptein” and Krimes’s first five years out of prison as he struggles to forge a career in the art world with the support of friends. One of them is [*Russell Craig*](https://www.malingallery.com/exhibitions/russell-craig), who found art at age 7 while living in the foster care system. After serving 12 years on drug charges at prisons in Pennsylvania and Virginia, he met Krimes when both were newly released and working as assistants with [*Mural Arts Philadelphia’s restorative justice program*](https://www.muralarts.org/program/restorative-justice/).

These artists were among several dozen in the landmark exhibition [*“Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration,”*](https://markingtimeart.com/) which debuted in 2020 at MoMA PS1 and has been touring since (it just opened at [*Brown University*](https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/arts/bell-gallery/exhibitions/marking-time-art-age-mass-incarceration)). Organized by Nicole Fleetwood, the MacArthur award-winning art historian, it gave new visibility to people fighting societal erasure in the U.S. carceral system, which now imprisons an estimated [*two million people annually — a 500 percent increase since 1970*](https://www.aclu.org/issues/smart-justice/mass-incarceration). Black people are incarcerated for drug offenses at 10 times the rate of white people despite roughly equal use, according to the American Civil Liberties Union.

Now a small cadre of artists from the exhibition is gaining traction in the art world, with gallery representation, museum acquisitions, prestigious commissions, residencies and fellowships. With the aid of powerful donors, artists, arts leaders and activists, this vanguard is working structurally to pave the way for their peers. Whether museums nationwide will support such efforts has yet to be determined.

Fleetwood — who described the peer mentoring at Fairton, echoed in prisons around the country, as “inspirational” — hopes the exhibition “helps to shake up cultural institutions in terms of their gate keeping around what they typically show.”

“Marking Time” drew more than 35,000 visitors at MoMA PS1 despite Covid restrictions and won critical raves, with “Apokaluptein” hailed as a [*“carceral magnum opus” by Holland Cotter in The New York Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/24/arts/design/marking-time-review-moma-ps1.html).

“‘Marking Time’ was definitely pivotal in all of our careers and pretty much legitimized folks who come from this incarcerated background,” said [*Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter*](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-O-jJ-gaeSCjbrQx2oA3wA), an artist in the exhibition who was imprisoned for eight months on charges that included felony conspiracy. She is now on staff at MoMA PS1 as a project manager for learning.

She has received multiple fellowships, including a residency to examine adultification bias against Black girls — how society tends to regard some children as older than they are, needing less protection — as a root cause of incarceration. Baxter has just been commissioned to lead workshops with women incarcerated at Rikers Island, to culminate in a community mural.

The art dealer [*Barry Malin*](https://www.malingallery.com/) has seen a huge shift in collector interest since he started representing Krimes. In 2016, the artist walked into the new Chelsea space opened by Malin, a former surgeon with a focus on social justice, and on the basis of their personal connection, the gallerist offered to show his prison works. Nothing sold from that first exhibition, but it led to a string of grants for Krimes.

“There was a challenge to getting people to appreciate it just as art,” said Malin, who also represents Craig and Owens. He says he has seen a new receptivity since “Marking Time”; the 2020 national reckoning with race and justice; and shifting sympathies toward people ensnared by drugs, in the wake of the opioid crisis.

The term “formerly incarcerated artist” has become “a favorable designation,” Malin said. Owens’s first solo exhibition of paintings and assemblage work just opened at 515 West 29th Street, through Nov. 19, with prices starting at $26,000.

Last month, Owens was finishing the works in his studio at Silver Art Projects, on the 28th floor of 4 World Trade Center. Co-founded by Joshua Pulman and Cory Silverstein and funded in part by Silverstein Properties, which redeveloped the World Trade Center complex, the nonprofit offers free studio spaces and career opportunities to 28 emerging artists from marginalized communities.

“Society can’t really visualize prisoners as even human beings,” Owens said. “I’m going to bring your attention to that,” he added. “I’m going to keep it in your mind’s eye.”

He was using shadow figures appropriated from an [*18th-century diagram of the Brookes slave ship*](https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/diagram-of-the-brookes-slave-ship), reproducing them in rows as a serial motif across canvases that flicker between representation and smudgy abstraction and suggest the architecture of the prison.

With a grant this year from the [*Art for Justice Fund*](https://artforjusticefund.org/), founded in 2017 by the philanthropist [*Agnes Gund to support activists and artists*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/11/arts/design/agnes-gund-sells-a-lichtenstein-to-start-criminal-justice-fund.html) working to reduce the prison population, Silver Art is now reserving several spots in the residency annually for formerly incarcerated artists. Baxter, Krimes and Craig joined Owens in the coveted studio spaces earlier this month.

“The alchemy of art as a tool for securing justice cannot be overstated,” said Gund, who collects work by Krimes and Craig (as does the Brooklyn Museum).

In his recent first solo New York show at Malin Gallery, Craig showed autobiographical canvases often painted on leather purse fragments stitched together as a skin, referencing the Black body in the prison system.

“It took me years to decide to unpack my prison experience,” Craig said. “I didn’t want to exploit my situation or anyone else’s.” Three-quarters of the exhibition sold, with prices starting at $35,000. Among his collectors were [*Tim and Stephanie Ingrassia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/27/arts/design/show-us-your-wall-stephanie-tim-ingrassia.html) (she is vice chair of the Brooklyn Museum).

Krimes has now had five exhibitions with the gallery. “People aren’t questioning anymore, is he an artist or is he this sort of curiosity?” Malin said. Krimes’s series of “Elegy Quilts,” pieced together from the clothing of incarcerated individuals and depicting their remembrances of home, started at $25,000 and sold out quickly to collectors including [*Beth Rudin DeWoody*](https://www.thebunkerartspace.com/).

Malin has gradually raised Krimes’s prices to $75,000. “The next hurdle to overcome,” Malin said, “is, are people going to take it seriously enough to go above this price point?”

During a recent public discussion [*called “Confronting Mass Incarceration”*](https://www.andersonranch.org/events/critical-dialog-confronting-mass-incarceration/) at the Anderson Ranch in Aspen, the Brooklyn Museum’s director, Anne Pasternak, who led the acquisition of works by Craig and Krimes, apologized to Krimes for an earlier comment about his work having gotten expensive.

“In retrospect, I realized that could have sounded like, because he had been incarcerated, he didn’t merit the prices of other artists, which is not what I intended,” she said in a recent interview, adding, “It requires us all to be more conscientious of our biases that we may not be aware of.”

Early on, Krimes noticed he was often the only artist included in shows about incarceration who had actually served time. “I’m a white guy from eastern Pennsylvania, I should definitely not be the only face of incarceration,” said Krimes, who grew up in a ***working-class*** community in Lancaster.

The documentary compares the lighter sentence Krimes received (six years) to that of a Black man sentenced the same day for the same crime (20 years), from the same judge, who said he saw “potential” in Krimes. The artist said he experienced how penitentiaries intentionally stoked racial divisions between rival gangs as a means of control. He pointed out that visual artists were respected prisonwide for the tangible records of humanity, such as portraits, they could provide to other inmates.

“That’s where I realized I could use artwork as a collective building tool to cross racial barriers,” Krimes said.

Krimes and Craig received a grant from [*Open Philanthropy*](https://www.openphilanthropy.org/) to co-found the [*Right of Return USA*](https://www.rightofreturnusa.com/)in 2017, which offers $20,000 fellowships to a half dozen formerly incarcerated artists each year.

Baxter received one of these inaugural fellowships after prison, when she had less than $5 in her bank account, and described the support as life-changing. “It gave me an opportunity to find stable housing and revisit my art aspirations,” she said. The grant funded her musical film “Ain’t I a Woman,” in which Baxter told her life story, including giving birth in prison while shackled to a gurney.

(Other Right of Return fellows include the poet [*Reginald Dwayne Betts*](https://www.dwaynebetts.com/); the artist [*Sherrill Roland,*](https://www.tanyabonakdargallery.com/artists/85-sherrill-roland/)represented by the Tanya Bonakdar Gallery; Gilberto Rivera; and Tameca Cole, whose 2016 collage of a face shrouded in a gray cloud, titled “Locked in a Dark Calm,” is the opening image in “Marking Time.”)

Krimes and Craig recently received $1.1 million from the [*Mellon Foundation*](https://mellon.org/), to help expand Right of Return from a fellowship to a nonprofit called the Art and Advocacy Society, which will hire staff and encompass a school and residency program.

They are working with Kate Fowle, former director of MoMA PS1, who brought “Marking Time” to the museum, on the school’s pilot program, being hosted by MoMA PS1 with $300,000 in additional funding from Gund’s Art for Justice and the Ford Foundation. A cohort of six artists — Krimes, Craig, Owens, Baxter, Cole and Rivera — are receiving professional development and one-on-one mentorship from [*Sterling Ruby*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/14/arts/design/sterling-ruby-ceramics-review-museum-of-arts-and-design.html), [*Hank Willis Thomas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/23/arts/design/Hank-Willis-Thomas-retrospective-portland.html), [*Rashid Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/23/arts/design/rashid-johnson-met-opera-mosaic.html), [*Lorna Simpson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/13/arts/design/lorna-simpson-paintings-hauser-wirth.html), [*Derrick Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/19/arts/design/how-an-artist-learned-about-freedom-from-the-negro-motorist-green-book.html) and [*Rafael Domenech*](https://cmoa.org/2022-carnegie-international/rafael-domenech/).

When asked why a limited number of opportunities seem to keep going to the same handful of artists, Fowle said, “They are going to be the support structure for future artists coming through school, the mentors, the ones able to guide how these types of programs expand.” She and Krimes envision an entry-level tier for artists getting out of prison to learn studio skills and art history. The Art and Advocacy Society would develop the core curriculum, to be implemented at museums across the country.

Whether museums broadly will fund such an initiative is an open question. MoMA PS1, for example, received the top end of what Art for Justice gives — $200,000 — but it was not enough to pay for both tiers of the school.

In November, Christie’s will auction works by Johnson and Mickalene Thomas, among others, to benefit the Art and Advocacy Society and a permanent residency program. “Our goal is to create a multiracial national movement that is foundational and lasts,” Krimes said. His biggest fear is that the art world’s interest will move on to the next thing before anything structural has changed.

“I recognize the power of calling yourself a ‘formerly incarcerated artist,’” he said. But ultimately, he added, “you want to be known as just an artist.”

PHOTOS: Top from left, the once-incarcerated artists Tameca Cole, Russell Craig, Jared Owens, Jesse Krimes, Gilberto Rivera and Mary Enoch Elizabeth Baxter. Right, an installation view of Krimes’s “Apokaluptein: 16389067” (2010-13) at “Marking Time,” MoMA PS 1, in 2020. Below, Owens’s studio in the Silver Art Project residency space. Bottom center, Craig’s “Idol Time” (2022) was shown at the Malin Gallery. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER GREGORY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; RUSSELL CRAIG; VIA MALIN GALLERY)

**Load-Date:** September 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Journalists At Daily News Form a Union, Joining a Trend***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61Y0-S391-DXY4-X1V0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 6, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 3

**Length:** 620 words

**Byline:** By Marc Tracy

**Body**

The organizing effort at the century-old New York tabloid comes roughly 25 years after its editorial union was effectively broken.

Journalists at The Daily News, the 101-year-old New York tabloid that has fallen on hard times after an ownership change, pay cuts and sweeping layoffs, said on Friday that they had formed a union.

Newsroom employees at the paper, once a significant voice for the city's ***working class***, have not had representation since the mid-1990s, when its owner, Mortimer B. Zuckerman, effectively broke their affiliation with the Newspaper Guild of New York.

Workers at The Daily News said they had secured the signatures of more than 80 percent of newsroom staff members and had organized under the same union, now called the NewsGuild of New York. They said they had asked the newspaper's owner, Tribune Publishing, for voluntary recognition.

''We're thrilled to welcome our hometown paper back into the Guild,'' Susan DeCarava, the president of the NewsGuild of New York, said in a statement.

Tribune Publishing did not immediately reply to a request for comment on Friday.

Union representation for newsroom employees took a hit in the 1990s. Mr. Zuckerman forced journalists to reapply for their old jobs when he bought the struggling Daily News, and Rupert Murdoch, the owner of the rival New York Post, managed to publish daily editions even as the paper's staff members stood on a picket line. At the same time, journalists started to view themselves as professionals who had little in common with union laborers.

That attitude has shifted in recent years. Writers, editors, fact checkers and editorial assistants at The New Yorker, BuzzFeed News, Slate, Salon and other publications have formed unions, and the same trend has come to Tribune Publishing. Since 2018, newsrooms operated by the company that have gone union include The Chicago Tribune, The Hartford Courant and The Orlando Sentinel.

Newsroom employees at The Arizona Republic, owned by Gannett, and The Miami Herald, owned by Chatham Asset Management, formed unions in 2019. Many newsroom workers have had union representation for generations, including those at The New York Times, under the NewsGuild.

At The Daily News, discussions about rejoining the NewsGuild formally started in April, about a month after staff members started working remotely because of the coronavirus pandemic. Last summer, with workers continuing to do their jobs away from the office, Tribune Publishing said it had permanently closed The Daily News's newsroom in Lower Manhattan.

By year's end the company had closed newsrooms at many other publications, including The Courant. In addition to the newsroom shutdowns, Tribune Publishing permanently cut pay for employees making more than $67,000 annually and instituted three-week furloughs for those making between $40,000 and $67,000.

Tribune Publishing's largest shareholder, the hedge fund Alden Global Capital, known for slashing costs at the newspapers it controls, has increased its influence over the company. In a letter to the Tribune board in December, Alden proposed buying the remaining shares in the company for $14.25 apiece. That offer is still pending.

''Alden has been hanging over The Daily News for a while now,'' said Larry McShane, a reporter at the tabloid. ''But regardless of who owns the paper, I think it's important for us to be able to sit down and talk with them about decisions that impact our future and our livelihoods.''

The Daily News has struggled in recent years. In 2017, Mr. Zuckerman sold the paper to Tribune Publishing, then known as Tronc, for $1. The next year, the company cut the newsroom's staff in half and ousted its top editor, Jim Rich.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/05/business/media/new-york-daily-news-union.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/05/business/media/new-york-daily-news-union.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Newsroom employees, whose office was shut down, haven't had representation since the mid-1990s. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2021

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[***Pennsylvania Stakes Its Claim as the Center of the Political Universe***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:669C-V6P1-JBG3-63GT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 3, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1777 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Few states feature as many high-stakes, competitive races, each pulsing with the political currents that are shaping midterm campaigns across the country.

WILKES-BARRE, Pa. -- Pennsylvania, the site of crucial victories and devastating defeats for both political parties in recent elections, has emerged as the nation's center of political gravity and its ultimate battleground as peak campaign season arrives.

Perhaps no other state features as many high-stakes, competitive races, each pulsing with political currents shaping midterm campaigns across the country. The open race for governor between a right-wing political outsider and a veteran of the Democratic establishment may determine both the future of abortion rights and of free and fair elections in a large presidential swing state.

The personality-driven, increasingly ugly Senate contest -- shaped by clashes over celebrity and elitism, crime and crudités, and a candidate's health -- could decide control of the chamber.

And in races up and down the ballot, Pennsylvania is poised to test whether the political realignment of the Trump era can hold, after the moderate Philadelphia suburbs overwhelmingly rejected the former president's brand of politics, while many white ***working-class*** voters abandoned the Democrats to embrace him.

It's no surprise, then, that President Biden, whose 2020 success in Pennsylvania propelled him to the White House, delivered two speeches in the state this week, lashing Trumpism as an urgent threat to the nation in Philadelphia and also speaking in Wilkes-Barre, a northeastern city in politically competitive Luzerne County. He is expected in Pittsburgh on Monday for a Labor Day appearance.

Former President Donald J. Trump, who in 2016 became the first Republican presidential nominee to win Pennsylvania in nearly three decades, is also kicking off the unofficial start to the general election in the state. He's scheduled to appear in the Wilkes-Barre area on Saturday for a rally with Republican candidates. It is his first major public appearance since the F.B.I. searched his Palm Beach, Fla., home.

''It's always a heavily contested state in presidential elections as well as statewide elections, and this year, we happen to have two of the biggest races in the country,'' said Senator Bob Casey, Democrat of Pennsylvania. ''The nation's watching to see what will happen.''

In a sprawling, politically complex place where voters historically have often elevated consensus-minded statewide candidates, state Attorney General Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, is running for governor against State Senator Doug Mastriano, the right-wing, election-denying Republican nominee who strenuously opposes abortion rights.

The Senate race has pitted Lt. Gov. John Fetterman, a shorts-wearing, social media-savvy official who is recovering from a stroke, against Dr. Mehmet Oz, the celebrity television physician.

The Democratic candidates have led in fund-raising and the polls. But party and campaign officials expect both races to tighten, given the closely divided nature of the state.

That may especially be the case in the Senate race, as a flood of money from national groups comes in to support Dr. Oz (Mr. Fetterman has benefited from outside spending too), and as voters think about political control of Washington, beyond their attitudes toward individual candidates. Many voters remain furious about the cost of living, and are inclined to take it out on the party in power.

''Have you gone food shopping lately? Have you filled your car with gas?'' said Sue Sullivan, 61, in an interview on Biden Street in Scranton, Pa., the city of the president's birth. ''Nothing is going well.''

Ms. Sullivan, a Republican from Garnet Valley, Pa., said she was unenthusiastic about the Republican nominees but intended to back them anyway.

''With the way the country's going, I would probably vote for a Republican I didn't like versus voting for a Democrat that I did like,'' she said.

As of Friday, the average gas price in Pennsylvania was $4.04 a gallon, according to AAA -- less than the average a month ago, but still more than the $3.29 of a year ago. The state's unemployment rate in July was 4.3 percent, higher than the national rate but slightly lower than that of states including New York.

There are signs of an improving political environment for Democrats.

Outrage over the overturning of Roe v. Wade has helped them close a once-yawning enthusiasm gap. While Mr. Biden has suffered months of abysmal approval ratings, his numbers are ticking up. Mr. Trump, who has strongly unfavorable ratings, has re-emerged in the headlines thanks to the F.B.I. effort to retrieve classified documents from his home. And in several key Senate races, Republican candidates have stumbled.

In Pennsylvania, where Mr. Fetterman has a strong personal brand, the Democrat has used his prolific social media presence to cast Dr. Oz as an out-of-touch carpetbagger more at home in New Jersey, which had been his longtime principal residence, than in Pennsylvania, where he says he now lives. Mr. Fetterman has maintained a light public schedule since his stroke in May, but he has kept up an active presence on the airwaves, and there are signs that the messaging has resonated.

''Fetterman is like for the working man,'' said Robert Thompson, 63, a retired firefighter and passionate defender of Mr. Biden's, in an interview this week across the street from the office of the Republican Party of Luzerne County. ''Dr. Oz, that's Mr. Hollywood.''

Dr. Oz is trying to paint Mr. Fetterman as a far-left Democrat who is soft on crime. Mr. Fetterman has released his own ad stressing his public safety bona fides, a sign that the issue has the potential to become a flash point in the race.

The Republican Dr. Oz, trained as a heart surgeon, and his campaign, have begun to mock Mr. Fetterman over the pace of his recovery, offering pointed debate ''concessions,'' like a promise to pay for additional medical personnel. A spokeswoman said that if Mr. Fetterman ''had ever eaten a vegetable in his life, then maybe he wouldn't have had a major stroke.''

In an interview on MSNBC this week, Mr. Fetterman -- who has said that he almost died -- blasted the Oz campaign for appealing ''to folks that get their jollies, you know, making fun of the stroke dude.''

''I might miss a word every now and then, or I might mush two words together,'' he said, but stressed that he was expected to make a full recovery.

Mr. Fetterman is still using closed captions for interviews and other business conducted by video, his spokesman, Joe Calvello, confirmed, saying that it ''helps him keep conversations moving fast.'' A number of Democrats have argued that his health scare is a relatable episode for many voters.

But his decision to decline a debate next week has brought questions about his health back into public focus.

''Mr. Fetterman has to show a presence so that he can show people that he's healthy and he's able to fill that position without a health issue,'' said Mayor George C. Brown of Wilkes-Barre, adding that he expected Mr. Fetterman, whom he supports, would do so more visibly as the race unfolds. ''Come out, do some rallies, talk to people.''

''Unfortunately, the way that some of this campaigning is going, it shows that there's an issue with Mr. Fetterman's health, and I can't say that, because I've never really spoken to the man,'' he added in a Wednesday interview.

Mr. Calvello, the Fetterman spokesman, said that the candidate was pursuing an increasingly busy campaign schedule, though he stopped short of committing to debating.

''John has been and will continue to be open about his health and his struggles with auditory processing,'' Mr. Calvello said. ''He is going to be doing more and more events and will continue to draw large crowds.''

Mr. Fetterman is planning a ''Women for Fetterman'' rally in the Philadelphia suburbs for next Sunday -- which is Sept. 11 -- focused on abortion rights.

After the overturning of Roe vs. Wade, which handed control over abortion rights back to the states, the matter has become a top-tier issue in major races, including in Pennsylvania. The state has a Republican-led legislature and Mr. Shapiro has cast himself as a bulwark against any effort to enact the kind of bans that have taken hold in other states.

Abortion has a been major focus in the governor's race as Mr. Shapiro works to brand Mr. Mastriano as far too extreme for the state. Mr. Shapiro has so far spent $18 million on television advertising this year, his campaign said, with plans for a significant fall advertising campaign.

Mr. Mastriano's campaign, which rarely engages with mainstream media outlets, did not respond to a request for comment. As of Thursday, Mr. Mastriano had not been on the airwaves in the general election, according to AdImpact. The Republican Governors Association has also not yet reserved airtime to boost Mr. Mastriano.

A growing number of Republicans have announced their support for Mr. Shapiro, with some citing their concerns about Mr. Mastriano's efforts to spread lies about the 2020 election and warning of the threat they believe he poses to a state that is home to the birthplace of American democracy.

But for all of Mr. Mastriano's structural challenges, and scrutiny over incidents like his appearance in a Confederate uniform or backing from an antisemitic ally, the race may wind up being highly competitive.

''The real professionals know it's going to be very tough,'' Shanin Specter, a Philadelphia lawyer and son of the late Senator Arlen Specter, said. Mr. Shapiro, he said, was meeting the race with appropriate seriousness. But he warned that some live in an ''echo chamber'' and believe ''Shapiro couldn't possibly lose. And they're just dead wrong.''

Mr. Casey, the senator, suggested that Mr. Mastriano's ascent in the Republican Party indicated that ''few, if any'' of the state's successful former Republican governors would have won the nomination today.

Indeed, the G.O.P. has been increasingly remade in the image of Mr. Trump, who will rally Saturday in a county that he flipped in 2016.

Pennsylvania ''plays an important part in both the former president's history and narrative as well as the current president's,'' said David Urban, a Republican strategist who helped run Mr. Trump's Pennsylvania operation in 2016.

Nodding to the possibility that both Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump may seek the presidency in 2024, he added, ''Past may be prologue here. You may see both the former president and the current president duking it out in Pennsylvania again.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/02/us/politics/pennsylvania-midterm-elections.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/02/us/politics/pennsylvania-midterm-elections.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: John Fetterman, the Democratic nominee for Senate, appeared at a rally in Erie in August, but he has otherwise kept a light schedule since having a stroke in May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF SWENSEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Dr. Mehmet Oz, Mr. Fetterman's Republican opponent, in August in Swatara Township, Pa. He has begun to mock Mr. Fetterman for the pace of his recovery. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN SIMMERS/THE PATRIOT-NEWS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

State Senator Doug Mastriano, the right-wing, election-denying Republican nominee for governor, after a campaign event on Friday in New Bethlehem, Pa. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Josh Shapiro, the state's attorney general and the Democratic nominee for governor, at an event in Lock Haven, Pa. Abortion has a been major focus in the race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KRISTON JAE BETHEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 3, 2022

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[***The Decisive Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:664H-2121-DXY4-X22G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 11, 2022 Thursday 10:34 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1777 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** Now that Joe Manchin has saved the Democratic agenda, how should liberals think about him?

**Body**

Now that Joe Manchin has saved the Democratic agenda, how should liberals think about him?

Joe Manchin has spent much of the past year as the villain of liberal America, receiving the kind of criticism that’s usually reserved for Donald Trump, Mitch McConnell or a conservative Supreme Court justice.

Activists aggressively protested against Manchin, some in kayaks outside his houseboat in Washington, others surrounding his car and [*chanting a vulgarity at him*](https://twitter.com/haunt4climate/status/1456230892322627590). One Democratic House member [*called*](https://thehill.com/homenews/house/579515-cori-bush-rips-manchin-on-spending-bill-opposition-anti-black-anti-child-anti/) him “anti-Black, anti-child, anti-woman and anti-immigrant,” while others called him untrustworthy. Bernie Sanders [*accused*](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/week-transcript-17-22-sen-bernie-sanders-rep/story?id=86944872) Manchin of “intentionally sabotaging the president’s agenda” and suggested that Manchin’s wealthy donors were the reason. Other critics [*called him*](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-features/joe-manchin-big-coal-west-virginia-1280922/) a shill for the energy industry, noting that he personally owns a coal company.

And then Manchin made it possible for the Senate to pass the most aggressive climate bill in American history.

That bill seems likely to accomplish almost as much greenhouse-gas reduction as President Biden’s original proposal would have. As Paul Krugman, the Times columnist, [*has written*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/opinion/climate-inflation-bill.html), “Actual experts on energy and the environment are giddy over what has been accomplished.” Tomorrow, the House is expected to pass the same bill — which will also [*reduce inequities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/briefing/health-care-provisions-senate-climate-bill.html) in health care access — and Biden plans to sign it soon afterward.

In today’s newsletter, I want to reconsider Manchin’s place in American politics given his ultimate support for the Senate bill. What were his critics right about? What were they wrong about? And what are the larger political lessons?

M.V.D.

The simplest fact about Manchin is that he is the most electorally successful member of Congress: Nobody else has won a seat as difficult as his.

Trump won West Virginia by 39 percentage points in 2020, more than any in other state except Wyoming. Yet Manchin has repeatedly won statewide elections in West Virginia as a Democrat. This chart highlights Manchin’s uniqueness:

He is one of only four current senators whose victories truly defied their state’s partisan lean. And his victory was much more difficult than those of the other three — Jon Tester of Montana, Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Susan Collins of Maine. “Having a Democratic senator in 2021 in a state like West Virginia — where neither Hillary Clinton nor Biden could crack 30 percent of the vote — is a remarkable bit of good fortune” for Democrats, Hans Noel, a Georgetown University political scientist, has written.

Without Manchin in the Senate, Biden’s presidency would look very different. The climate bill would almost certainly have failed. So would have the expansion of health care. Biden would also have a harder time getting judges and other nominees confirmed.

Manchin’s liberal critics sometimes imagine that they know more about winning a West Virginia election than he does — and that he could keep winning even if he behaved like most Democrats. As Ruy Teixeira, another political scientist, [*wrote*](https://thedemocraticstrategist.org/2021/06/teixeira-joe-manchin-the-peoples-hero/), “If only he was not the actually-existing Joe Manchin from the actually-existing conservative state of West Virginia but instead some other Joe Manchin from some other, much more liberal, West Virginia!”

It’s true that Manchin has helped defeat some Democratic priorities over the past two years. He doomed the extension of an expanded child tax credit that would have reduced child poverty. He [*refused*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/19/us/politics/democrats-filibuster-sinema-manchin.html) to abandon the filibuster to pass changes to voting rights (although he wasn’t the only Senate Democrat opposed to doing so). He helped block two highly qualified Biden nominees, Sarah Bloom Raskin as a top Federal Reserve official and Neera Tanden as the budget director.

But these Democratic disappointments were not shocking. Manchin has survived by being a loyal Democrat on some issues — like health care, labor issues, taxes on the wealthy and, for the most part, climate policy — and defying the party in high-profile ways on other issues. His criticisms of Biden’s proposals over the past year increased his approval rating in West Virginia, [*polls showed*](https://morningconsult.com/2022/04/25/joe-manchins-approach-paying-off/).

“It should be possible for Democrats to hold two thoughts at once about the West Virginia politician,” as Noel [*explained in The Washington Post*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/06/09/manchin-filibuster-bonus-senate-seat/?fbclid=IwAR0RPODUN__tS7GmRnGSkLMlImJCUM4CVeS9UfwpkiXpv_PmAbkspnw98AM). First, Manchin is more conservative than most Democrats and sometimes damages the party’s agenda. Second, he nonetheless may be [*the most valuable Democrat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/15/briefing/beyonce-grammy-winners-joe-manchin.html) in Washington today. (If you believe Biden was the only plausible 2020 nominee who would have beaten Trump, then perhaps Manchin is in second place.)

Did the critics help?

With all this said, I understand some of the intensity of the liberal criticism in recent months. Had Manchin blocked the climate bill, as he seemed on the verge of doing, it would have represented a bigger break with his party than anything he had done before. It would have come on an issue of signature importance to the country and the world.

The obvious question is whether the criticism itself helped change Manchin’s mind. I think that many of the harshest attacks probably didn’t matter: After all, he has heard similar criticism about his positions on the filibuster and voting rights, and he hasn’t budged. But the specific argument that he alone could be responsible for climate damage may have helped sway him. That, at least, is [*the impression*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/us/politics/manchin-schumer-climate-tax-deal.html) of many observers on Capitol Hill.

“He always signaled he was open to going big on climate,” Representative Ro Khanna, a progressive California Democrat, [*told SFGate*](https://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/ro-khanna-talks-joe-manchin-17361675.php) this week. And Carl Hulse, The Times’s chief Washington correspondent, told me: “Manchin did not want to be the man Democrats blamed for single-handedly letting the planet go up in flames. He was the one returning to Chuck Schumer looking to make a deal after the onslaught of criticism.”

Ultimately, Manchin is much more of a positive than a negative for Democrats. The party’s bigger problem is that it does not have more versions of Joe Manchin, because it struggles so mightily to win elections in [*heavily* ***working-class*** *regions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/briefing/democrats-election-working-class-voters.html) outside major metropolitan areas. With even one more Democrat in the Senate, Manchin’s progressive apostasy would be far less consequential than it is. His vote would no longer be vital.

THE LATEST NEWS

Politics

* Donald Trump [*invoked his Fifth Amendment rights*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/08/10/nyregion/trump-testimony-investigation-news) at a deposition, refusing to answer questions about his business practices.

1. As president, Trump tried to weaponize law enforcement. Now, he’s [*claiming to be a victim of those same tactics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/us/politics/trump-fbi-justice-department.html), The Times’s Peter Baker writes.
2. The Justice Department charged a member of Iran’s Revolutionary Guard with [*plotting to kill John Bolton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/us/politics/iranian-john-bolton-assassination-charges.html), a Trump national security adviser.
3. “Chaos and confusion”: Abortion providers and patients are navigating [*rules that change by the day*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/11/us/abortion-states-legal-illegal.html).

The Economy

* Gas prices in the U.S. [*fell below $4 a gallon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/business/gas-prices-4-a-gallon.html), back to where they were in March.

1. Inflation slowed in July, partly because of lower gas prices and airfares. [*Rent and food are still getting more expensive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/business/economy/july-inflation-biden-fed.html).

Other Big Stories

* Tuesday’s blasts in Russian-occupied Crimea [*caused more destruction than the Kremlin claimed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/world/europe/crimea-explosions-ukraine.html): They damaged dozens of apartment buildings, local officials say.

1. “Everybody is armed”: More than 1,400 people [*have been shot in Philadelphia this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/us/philadelphia-gun-violence-shootings.html), more than in New York or Los Angeles.
2. The actress Anne Heche, 53, is still in a coma, [*five days after a car crash*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/us/anne-heche-coma-crash.html).

Opinions

Readers lose [*when big book publishers merge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/opinion/penguin-simon-schuster-publishing.html), the bookseller Richard Howorth writes.

A white supremacist injured Constance Paige Young in Charlottesville. [*Strangers lifted her up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/opinion/white-supremacist-charlottesville-robert-lee-statue.html).

Preparing for a war over Taiwan is [*the best way for the U.S. to deter one*](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/united-states/america-must-prepare-war-over-taiwan), Elbridge Colby argues in Foreign Affairs.

Spencer Bokat-Lindell asks: Is there [*an end in sight*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/opinion/is-there-any-end-to-the-ukraine-war-in-sight.html) for the war in Ukraine?

MORNING READS

Young kings of Silicon Valley: The [*boy bosses are on their way out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/business/silicon-valley-boy-boss.html).

Skin deep: Foundation is dead. [*It’s time for self-acceptance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/style/foundation-skin-self-acceptance.html).

Achoo: Watch [*a sponge sneeze*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/science/sea-sponges-sneezing.html).

A Times classic: Is seltzer [*as healthy as still water*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/well/eat/seltzer-water-benefits.html)

Advice from Wirecutter: [*Donate old clothes*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/guides/how-to-get-rid-of-old-clothes/).

Lives Lived: Days after Sept. 11, the C.I.A. asked Gary Schroen to postpone his retirement and lead a team into Afghanistan to hunt for Osama bin Laden. Schroen [*died at 80*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/world/middleeast/gary-schroen-dead.html).

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

A very New York M.L.B. free agency: The best hitter and the best pitcher (when healthy) on the planet [*will be free agents*](https://theathletic.com/3487682/2022/08/10/mlb-free-agents-2023-top-30/) this fall — and the former, Aaron Judge, [*just keeps slugging*](https://theathletic.com/3496522/2022/08/10/aaron-judges-home-run-all-time-yankees/) his way toward a megadeal. The Yankees get a big oops in the chat.

The World Cup gets altered: FIFA [*is moving*](https://theathletic.com/3494370/2022/08/10/qatar-world-cup-2022-start-date-fifa/) the biggest event in sports this year up one day so that the host country, Qatar, can kick things off. The U.S. men’s national team may add [*a late-blooming goalscorer*](https://theathletic.com/3496418/2022/08/10/brandon-vazquez-usmnt-fc-cincinnati/) in time for the tournament.

Taking care of business: Kentucky’s Oscar Tshiebwe can’t yet capitalize on most NIL opportunities in the U.S. So the reigning college basketball national player of the year is utilizing a team trip to the Bahamas for a [*$500,000 NIL blitz*](https://theathletic.com/3493805/2022/08/10/kentucky-oscar-tshiebwe-nil-bahamas/).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Too darn hot

Climate change is taking a toll on outdoor summer performances.

Last August, wildfire smoke forced the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to cancel almost every performance of a show about Fannie Lou Hamer. The theater now has a smoke team, which decides daily on whether to proceed with the show. In France last month, heat and smoke at a Pearl Jam concert damaged the throat of the lead singer, Eddie Vedder. And in Spring Green, Wis., a theater asks costume designers to eliminate wigs, jackets and other heavy outerwear.

[*Here’s the story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/arts/climate-change-outdoor-theater.html), by the theater reporter Michael Paulson.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Upside-down cakes are easy and beautiful, [*no matter what fruit you use*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023374-peach-upside-down-cake).

Theater

At festivals in Edinburgh, Ian McKellen and Alan Cumming star in marquee productions, while [*smaller shows deal with contemporary life*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/theater/edinburgh-festival-ian-mckellen-alan-cumming.html).

What to Read

Elizabeth Hand’s “Hokuloa Road” and two other riveting [*new psychological thrillers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/10/books/review/new-thrillers.html).

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from yesterday’s Spelling Bee were demonize and demonized. 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: Crucial (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. — David

P.S. The Times won a Pulitzer last year [*for its Covid coverage*](https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/new-york-times-6). The pandemic kept the medal from going on display at the Times Building — until now.

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/08/11/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about abortion.

Matthew Cullen, 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: Senator Joe Manchin on Capitol Hill last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Haiyun Jiang/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 15, 2022

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[***Obstacle or Savior? Rethinking Joe Manchin.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:664P-CV61-JBG3-63K7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 12, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1784 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

Now that Joe Manchin has saved the Democratic agenda, how should liberals think about him?

Joe Manchin has spent much of the past year as the villain of liberal America, receiving the kind of criticism that's usually reserved for Donald Trump, Mitch McConnell or a conservative Supreme Court justice.

Activists aggressively protested against Manchin, some in kayaks outside his houseboat in Washington, others surrounding his car and chanting a vulgarity at him. One Democratic House member called him ''anti-Black, anti-child, anti-woman and anti-immigrant,'' while others called him untrustworthy. Bernie Sanders accused Manchin of ''intentionally sabotaging the president's agenda'' and suggested that Manchin's wealthy donors were the reason. Other critics called him a shill for the energy industry, noting that he personally owns a coal company.

And then Manchin made it possible for the Senate to pass the most aggressive climate bill in American history.

That bill seems likely to accomplish almost as much greenhouse-gas reduction as President Biden's original proposal would have. As Paul Krugman, the Times columnist, has written, ''Actual experts on energy and the environment are giddy over what has been accomplished.'' Tomorrow, the House is expected to pass the same bill -- which will also reduce inequities in health care access -- and Biden plans to sign it soon afterward.

In today's newsletter, I want to reconsider Manchin's place in American politics given his ultimate support for the Senate bill. What were his critics right about? What were they wrong about? And what are the larger political lessons?

M.V.D.

The simplest fact about Manchin is that he is the most electorally successful member of Congress: Nobody else has won a seat as difficult as his.

Trump won West Virginia by 39 percentage points in 2020, more than any in other state except Wyoming. Yet Manchin has repeatedly won statewide elections in West Virginia as a Democrat. This chart highlights Manchin's uniqueness:

He is one of only four current senators whose victories truly defied their state's partisan lean. And his victory was much more difficult than those of the other three -- Jon Tester of Montana, Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Susan Collins of Maine. ''Having a Democratic senator in 2021 in a state like West Virginia -- where neither Hillary Clinton nor Biden could crack 30 percent of the vote -- is a remarkable bit of good fortune'' for Democrats, Hans Noel, a Georgetown University political scientist, has written.

Without Manchin in the Senate, Biden's presidency would look very different. The climate bill would almost certainly have failed. So would have the expansion of health care. Biden would also have a harder time getting judges and other nominees confirmed.

Manchin's liberal critics sometimes imagine that they know more about winning a West Virginia election than he does -- and that he could keep winning even if he behaved like most Democrats. As Ruy Teixeira, another political scientist, wrote, ''If only he was not the actually-existing Joe Manchin from the actually-existing conservative state of West Virginia but instead some other Joe Manchin from some other, much more liberal, West Virginia!''

It's true that Manchin has helped defeat some Democratic priorities over the past two years. He doomed the extension of an expanded child tax credit that would have reduced child poverty. He refused to abandon the filibuster to pass changes to voting rights (although he wasn't the only Senate Democrat opposed to doing so). He helped block two highly qualified Biden nominees, Sarah Bloom Raskin as a top Federal Reserve official and Neera Tanden as the budget director.

But these Democratic disappointments were not shocking. Manchin has survived by being a loyal Democrat on some issues -- like health care, labor issues, taxes on the wealthy and, for the most part, climate policy -- and defying the party in high-profile ways on other issues. His criticisms of Biden's proposals over the past year increased his approval rating in West Virginia, polls showed.

''It should be possible for Democrats to hold two thoughts at once about the West Virginia politician,'' as Noel explained in The Washington Post. First, Manchin is more conservative than most Democrats and sometimes damages the party's agenda. Second, he nonetheless may be the most valuable Democrat in Washington today. (If you believe Biden was the only plausible 2020 nominee who would have beaten Trump, then perhaps Manchin is in second place.)

Did the critics help?

With all this said, I understand some of the intensity of the liberal criticism in recent months. Had Manchin blocked the climate bill, as he seemed on the verge of doing, it would have represented a bigger break with his party than anything he had done before. It would have come on an issue of signature importance to the country and the world.

The obvious question is whether the criticism itself helped changed Manchin's mind. I think that many of the harshest attacks probably didn't matter: After all, he has heard similar criticism about his positions on the filibuster and voting rights, and he hasn't budged. But the specific argument that he alone could be responsible for climate damage may have helped sway him. That, at least, is the impression of many observers on Capitol Hill.

''He always signaled he was open to going big on climate,'' Representative Ro Khanna, a progressive California Democrat, told SFGate this week. And Carl Hulse, The Times's chief Washington correspondent, told me: ''Manchin did not want to be the man Democrats blamed for single-handedly letting the planet go up in flames. He was the one returning to Chuck Schumer looking to make a deal after the onslaught of criticism.''

Ultimately, Manchin is much more of a positive than a negative for Democrats. The party's bigger problem is that it does not have more versions of Joe Manchin, because it struggles so mightily to win elections in heavily ***working-class*** regions outside major metropolitan areas. With even one more Democrat in the Senate, Manchin's progressive apostasy would be far less consequential than it is. His vote would no longer be vital.

THE LATEST NEWS

Politics

Donald Trump invoked his Fifth Amendment rights at a deposition, refusing to answer questions about his business practices.

As president, Trump tried to weaponize law enforcement. Now, he's claiming to be a victim of those same tactics, The Times's Peter Baker writes.

The Justice Department charged a member of Iran's Revolutionary Guard with plotting to kill John Bolton, a Trump national security adviser.

''Chaos and confusion'': Abortion providers and patients are navigating rules that change by the day.

The Economy

Gas prices in the U.S. fell below $4 a gallon, back to where they were in March.

Inflation slowed in July, partly because of lower gas prices and airfares. Rent and food are still getting more expensive.

Other Big Stories

Tuesday's blasts in Russian-occupied Crimea caused more destruction than the Kremlin claimed: They damaged dozens of apartment buildings, local officials say.

''Everybody is armed'': More than 1,400 people have been shot in Philadelphia this year, more than in New York or Los Angeles.

The actress Anne Heche, 53, is still in a coma, five days after a car crash.

Opinions

Readers lose when big book publishers merge, the bookseller Richard Howorth writes.

A white supremacist injured Constance Paige Young in Charlottesville. Strangers lifted her up.

Preparing for a war over Taiwan is the best way for the U.S. to deter one, Elbridge Colby argues in Foreign Affairs.

Spencer Bokat-Lindell asks: Is there an end in sight for the war in Ukraine?

MORNING READS

Young kings of Silicon Valley: The boy bosses are on their way out.

Skin deep: Foundation is dead. It's time for self-acceptance.

Achoo: Watch a sponge sneeze.

A Times classic: Is seltzer as healthy as still water?

Advice from Wirecutter: Donate old clothes.

Lives Lived: Days after Sept. 11, the C.I.A. asked Gary Schroen to postpone his retirement and lead a team into Afghanistan to hunt for Osama bin Laden. Schroen died at 80.

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

A very New York M.L.B. free agency: The best hitter and the best pitcher (when healthy) on the planet will be free agents this fall -- and the former, Aaron Judge, just keeps slugging his way toward a megadeal. The Yankees get a big oops in the chat.

The World Cup gets altered: FIFA is moving the biggest event in sports this year up one day so that the host country, Qatar, can kick things off. The U.S. men's national team may add a late-blooming goalscorer in time for the tournament.

Taking care of business: Kentucky's Oscar Tshiebwe can't yet capitalize on most NIL opportunities in the U.S. So the reigning college basketball national player of the year is utilizing a team trip to the Bahamas for a $500,000 NIL blitz.

ARTS AND IDEAS

Too darn hot

Climate change is taking a toll on outdoor summer performances.

Last August, wildfire smoke forced the Oregon Shakespeare Festival to cancel almost every performance of a show about Fannie Lou Hamer. The theater now has a smoke team, which decides daily on whether to proceed with the show. In France last month, heat and smoke at a Pearl Jam concert damaged the throat of the lead singer, Eddie Vedder. And in Spring Green, Wis., a theater asks costume designers to eliminate wigs, jackets and other heavy outerwear.

Here's the story, by the theater reporter Michael Paulson.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Upside-down cakes are easy and beautiful, no matter what fruit you use.

Theater

At festivals in Edinburgh, Ian McKellen and Alan Cumming star in marquee productions, while smaller shows deal with contemporary life.

What to Read

Elizabeth Hand's ''Hokuloa Road'' and two other riveting new psychological thrillers.

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from yesterday's Spelling Bee were demonize and demonized. Here is today's puzzle.

Here's today's Mini Crossword, and a clue: Crucial (three letters).

And here's today's Wordle. After, use our bot to get better.

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. -- David

P.S. The Times won a Pulitzer last year for its Covid coverage. The pandemic kept the medal from going on display at the Times Building -- until now.

Here's today's front page.

''The Daily'' is about abortion.

Matthew Cullen, 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/2022/08/11/briefing/joe-manchin-liberals-democratic-climate-bill.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/11/briefing/joe-manchin-liberals-democratic-climate-bill.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Joe Manchin on Capitol Hill last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Haiyun Jiang/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 12, 2022

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[***Students Deserve a Loan Bailout***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GB-Y2R1-DXY4-X16W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 18, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1543 words

**Byline:** By Charlie Eaton, Amber Villalobos and Frederick Wherry

**Body**

At least 43 million Americans have student loan debt, ranging from hundreds to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Until now, there's been no hope of a bailout.

Just as some argued that the subprime mortgage crisis was a matter of millions of people choosing to borrow too much, others have said that the student debt crisis is primarily the fault of the debtors. This myth hides that it was a harmful policy decision to encourage disadvantaged students to borrow for college in the first place. In 2008, the federal government was willing to bail out banks after their risky lending practices devastated the economy. We need a similar such bailout today. But unlike in 2008, this bailout would go to the victims of a crisis, not its perpetrators.

For the last three decades, our government's lending practices devoured borrowers' incomes, prevented homeownership, and contributed to despairing anxiety. Lenders have denied borrowers access to loan relief programs and for-profit colleges have hounded prospective student borrowers, even when they knew graduates would get little return on their investments. By the time President Barack Obama left office, student loans were just as speculative and commonplace as subprime mortgages.

President Biden has signaled that we must make amends for this debt trap by bailing out the generation of borrowers who have been wronged. But the $10,000 of debt cancellation per borrower that he's suggested will not be enough.

In 1975, only an estimated one in eight college students used federal student loans to pay for college. During that period, Pell Grants covered much of the cost of attending most public universities, and grants were available to anyone from middle- or low-income families.

But a surge of economically disadvantaged students pursued higher education in the 1980s as factory closures, automation and union-busting decimated the middle class. At the same time, President Ronald Reagan persuaded Congress to cut Pell Grant awards.

In his speech accepting the Democratic nomination for President in 1992, Bill Clinton described a ''New Covenant'' with America that would include the largest-ever expansion of federal student loans. Until that point, loans had played a relatively small role in funding U.S. higher education. With student loans for all, he said, ''the doors of colleges are thrown open once again to the sons and daughters of stenographers and steelworkers.''

The future president made Americans a promise: If they borrowed to pay for school, their debt would pave a path to economic mobility.

When Mr. Clinton and Democrats won control of the presidency and Congress, they allowed students to borrow unprecedented amounts from the government to pay for college. But this wasn't altruism: A new accounting trick counted federal student loans as profitable assets instead of expenditures, which gave the administration a shortcut in balancing the budget.

Today, 63 percent of Americans over 25 have attended at least some college, and most of them have borrowed to pay for it. From the time of Mr. Clinton's expansion of federal student loan programs in 1993, total borrowing quintupled to a peak of almost $120 billion in 2010.

The cost of college grew too. In the early 2000s, state governments reduced higher education funding per student, knowing that students could get federal loans to pay for increased tuition. Many students had to take on debt to attend even the public universities and community colleges that enroll most undergraduates.

Predatory for-profit colleges -- which often went after Black undergraduates and low-income Pell recipients -- especially plundered the expanded federal loan program, which paid them tens of billions of dollars for worthless diplomas or no degree at all. A promise of upward mobility quickly became a debt trap for borrowers and a financial bonanza for those receiving federal dollars to educate them.

What's more, compound interest doesn't pause just because loans aren't being repaid. While new borrowing by students has declined since 2010, total unpaid student debt has doubled. In 2016, more than one-third of borrowers who started college in 2004 still owed more than they originally borrowed. Those numbers are worse for Black borrowers -- two-thirds of them owed more than they initially borrowed more than a decade after they started school.

Borrowers are increasingly unable to repay their debts, not because of their mistakes but because of negligent government policies. Instead of expanding Pell Grants and affordable schools for these disproportionately Black and ***working class*** students, the government threw them to for-profit college recruiters and corporate loan servicers. Thirty years after Mr. Clinton's speech, the promise of loan-financed college as a source of mobility for all has proved to be empty words.

The government's attempted remedies have often made the problem worse. Under one program, borrowers were supposed to get forgiveness after they steadily made their loan payments for 20 to 25 years. But out of an estimated 4.4 million people who have been in repayment for that long, as of last year, only 32 people had ever managed to have their loans canceled.

Another program, put in place during George W. Bush's presidency, promised to forgive public servants' debts after 10 years of payments. As of September, 1.3 million public servants had applied for the program. Only 1 percent of them had ever received loan forgiveness.

Now, Mr. Biden has signaled that he intends to cancel at least $10,000 worth of student loan debt per borrower, which would, according to the Department of Education, eliminate the balances of 33 percent of all federal borrowers. That still leaves too many in debt, especially among those whose debts have increased since leaving school -- based on our analysis, 86 percent of them would still owe money.

Mr. Biden's proposed income eligibility requirements would also exclude upwardly mobile borrowers with low net worths, including many Black professionals. Worse still, verifying income for debt forgiveness would likely offer false hope of cancellation for millions of low-income borrowers who qualify, as the process, again a bureaucratic gantlet, may very well fail them.

Instead, Mr. Biden must bail out borrowers from the trap of unpayable debts. To do right by at least half of borrowers, he would need to cancel $30,000 per borrower. But to fulfill the promise of higher education, to narrow the racial wealth gap, and to foster an opportunity society, the administration should cancel at least $50,000 per borrower. This would completely bail out 36 million from student debt, according to our analysis, including 67 percent of those who still owe more than they originally borrowed.

A $50,000 bailout per borrower would eliminate only a portion of the $1.6 trillion in outstanding student debt. The government has done fine without collections for two years during the existing repayment pause. And the Department of Education expects that a third of this sum will never be collected anyway.

And no, debt cancellation would not disproportionately benefit the rich, who rarely borrow to pay for school -- only 4 percent of the most wealthy have any student debt at all.

To protect future generations, Americans need forward-looking reforms for our higher education financing system. Congress should finally pass a proposal that guarantees enough Pell Grants and other debt-free financial aid for any student trying to earn a college degree. Several of these proposals would sensibly cap the tuition and attendance expenses that would otherwise increase in response to another well-intended policy gone wrong.

But unlike these debt-free college proposals, student debt cancellation does not require passage by a deadlocked Congress. Legal scholars say the Higher Education Act gives Mr. Biden the authority to cancel existing student debts by executive order. Doing so will put Congress on notice that it has to act.

Mr. Biden should make a major address on what it means to keep one's promises, and announce that he's bailing out borrowers. At his side could stand the military service members, the public-school teachers and the non-college goers who borrowed for their kids. They can testify that they are now able do things that were not possible before.

On that day, tens of millions of borrowers could log onto their federal loan accounts and read the same message: ''Your debts are forgiven. Please forgive our failures.''

Charlie Eaton (@CharlieEatonPhd) is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of California, Merced and the author of ''Bankers in the Ivory Tower.'' Amber Villalobos (@Amber\_D\_Villa) is a postdoctoral scholar at University of California, Merced. Frederick Wherry (@ProfessorWherry) is a professor of sociology and African-American studies at Princeton and the director of the Dignity + Debt Network.

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/2022/05/17/opinion/student-debt-forgiveness.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/opinion/student-debt-forgiveness.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL MORIGI/GETTY IMAGES FOR WE, THE 45 MILLION)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

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[***Pennsylvania Stakes Its Claim as Center of the Political Universe***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6698-C971-DXY4-X1K8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 2, 2022 Friday 13:32 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1899 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Few states feature as many high-stakes, competitive races, each pulsing with the political currents that are shaping midterm campaigns across the country.

**Body**

Few states feature as many high-stakes, competitive races, each pulsing with the political currents that are shaping midterm campaigns across the country.

WILKES-BARRE, Pa. — Pennsylvania, the site of crucial victories and devastating defeats for both political parties in recent elections, has emerged as the nation’s center of political gravity and its ultimate battleground as peak campaign season arrives.

Perhaps no other state features as many high-stakes, competitive races, each pulsing with political currents shaping midterm campaigns across the country. The open race for governor between a [*right-wing political outsider*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/us/politics/doug-mastriano-pa-governor-gop.html) and a veteran of the Democratic establishment may determine both the [*future of abortion rights*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/us/politics/midterms-abortion-pennsylvania.html) and of free and fair elections in a large presidential swing state.

The personality-driven, increasingly ugly Senate contest — shaped by clashes over celebrity and elitism, crime and [*crudités*](https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/story/2022-08-17/dr-oz-crudite-respond-backlash-john-fetterman), and a [*candidate’s health*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/12/us/politics/fetterman-oz-senate-pennsylvania.html) — could decide control of the chamber.

And in races [*up and down*](https://www.cookpolitical.com/ratings/house-race-ratings) the ballot, Pennsylvania is poised to test whether the political realignment of the Trump era can hold, after the [*moderate Philadelphia suburbs*](https://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/the-county-thats-ground-zero-for-trumps-suburban-struggles-229843) [*overwhelmingly rejected*](https://www.politico.com/news/2019/11/06/pennsylvania-suburbs-trump-067078) the former president’s brand of politics, while many white ***working-class*** voters abandoned the Democrats to embrace him.

It’s no surprise, then, that President Biden, whose 2020 success in Pennsylvania [*propelled him to the White House*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/07/us/elections/pennsylvania-counties-battleground-state.html), delivered two speeches in the state this week, lashing Trumpism as an [*urgent threat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/01/us/politics/biden-speech-trump-maga.html) to the nation in Philadelphia and also [*speaking in Wilkes-Barre*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/30/us/politics/biden-speech-gun-control-crime.html), a northeastern city in politically competitive Luzerne County. He is expected in Pittsburgh on Monday for a Labor Day appearance.

Former President Donald J. Trump, who in 2016 became the [*first Republican presidential nominee*](https://www.pennlive.com/nation-world/2016/11/trump_wins_pa_cnn_says.html) to win Pennsylvania in nearly three decades, is also kicking off the unofficial start to the general election in the state. He’s scheduled to appear in the Wilkes-Barre area on Saturday for a rally with Republican candidates. It is his first major public appearance since the [*F.B.I. searched*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/08/08/us/trump-fbi-raid) his Palm Beach, Fla., home.

“It’s always a heavily contested state in presidential elections as well as statewide elections, and this year, we happen to have two of the biggest races in the country,” said Senator Bob Casey, Democrat of Pennsylvania. “The nation’s watching to see what will happen.”

In a sprawling, politically complex place where voters historically have often elevated [*consensus-minded*](https://www.ydr.com/story/news/local/2019/09/18/former-pa-governors-ed-rendell-mark-schweiker-visit-york-college/2343847001/) statewide candidates, state Attorney General Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, is running for governor against State Senator Doug Mastriano, the [*right-wing, election-denying*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/us/politics/doug-mastriano-pa-governor-gop.html) Republican nominee who strenuously opposes abortion rights.

The Senate race has pitted Lt. Gov. John Fetterman, a [*shorts-wearing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/14/us/politics/fetterman-pennsylvania-democratic-primary.html), social media-savvy official who is recovering from a stroke, against Dr. Mehmet Oz, the celebrity television physician.

The Democratic candidates have led in [*fund-raising*](https://www.inquirer.com/politics/election/fetterman-oz-senate-house-fundraising-pennsylvania-20220716.html) and [*the polls*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/2022/pennsylvania/). But party and campaign officials expect both races to tighten, given the closely divided nature of the state.

That may especially be the case in the Senate race, as a [*flood of money*](https://www.inquirer.com/politics/election/senate-pennsylvania-super-pac-money-fetterman-oz-20220809.html) from national groups comes in to support Dr. Oz (Mr. Fetterman has benefited from outside spending too), and as voters think about political control of Washington, beyond their attitudes toward individual candidates. Many voters remain furious about the cost of living, and [*are inclined*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/docs/2022/Topline-PAStatewide-Aug2022.pdf) to take it out on the party in power.

“Have you gone food shopping lately? Have you filled your car with gas?” said Sue Sullivan, 61, in an interview on Biden Street in Scranton, Pa., the city of the president’s birth. “Nothing is going well.”

Ms. Sullivan, a Republican from Garnet Valley, Pa., said she was unenthusiastic about the Republican nominees but intended to back them anyway.

“With the way the country’s going, I would probably vote for a Republican I didn’t like versus voting for a Democrat that I did like,” she said.

As of Friday, the average gas price in Pennsylvania was $4.04 a gallon, according to AAA — [*less than*](https://gasprices.aaa.com/?state=PA) the average a month ago, but still more than the $3.29 of a year ago. The state’s unemployment rate in July was [*4.3 percent*](https://www.media.pa.gov/pages/Labor-and-Industry-details.aspx?newsid=717#:~:text=Pennsylvania's%20Unemployment%20Rate%20Down%20To%204.3%20Percent%20in%20July), higher than the national rate but [*slightly lower*](https://dol.ny.gov/labor-statistics-new-york-city-region) than that of states including New York.

There are signs of an improving political environment for Democrats.

Outrage over the overturning of Roe v. Wade has [*helped them close*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/24/us/politics/ny-special-election-abortion.html) a once-yawning enthusiasm gap. While Mr. Biden has suffered months of abysmal approval ratings, his numbers are [*ticking up*](https://news.gallup.com/interactives/185273/presidential-job-approval-center.aspx). Mr. Trump, who has [*strongly unfavorable*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/favorability/donald-trump/) ratings, has re-emerged in the headlines thanks to the F.B.I. effort to retrieve classified documents from his home. And in several key Senate races, Republican candidates [*have stumbled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/06/us/politics/democratic-senate-candidates-biden.html).

In Pennsylvania, where Mr. Fetterman has a strong personal brand, the Democrat has used his prolific social media presence to cast Dr. Oz as an out-of-touch carpetbagger more at home in New Jersey, which had been his [*longtime principal residence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/us/politics/dr-oz-senate-run-pennsylvania.html), than in Pennsylvania, where he says he now lives. Mr. Fetterman has maintained a light public schedule since his [*stroke in May*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/15/us/politics/john-fetterman-stroke.html), but he has kept up an active presence on the airwaves, and there are signs that [*the messaging*](https://host2.adimpact.com/admo/#/viewer/8d975b32-e988-4607-8c96-9ae7dc3a9661/) has resonated.

“Fetterman is like for the working man,” said Robert Thompson, 63, a retired firefighter and passionate defender of Mr. Biden’s, in an interview this week across the street from the office of the Republican Party of Luzerne County. “Dr. Oz, that’s Mr. Hollywood.”

Dr. Oz is trying to paint Mr. Fetterman as a far-left Democrat who is soft on crime. Mr. Fetterman has released [*his own ad*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9FBX8S3uHrI) stressing his public safety bona fides, a sign that the issue has the potential to become a flash point in the race.

The Republican Dr. Oz, trained as a heart surgeon, and his campaign, have begun to mock Mr. Fetterman over the pace of his recovery, offering pointed debate “concessions,” like a promise to pay for additional medical personnel. A spokeswoman [*said that*](https://www.businessinsider.com/oz-on-fetterman-if-hed-eaten-vegetable-wouldnt-have-stroke-2022-8) if Mr. Fetterman “had ever eaten a vegetable in his life, then maybe he wouldn’t have had a major stroke.”

In an interview on MSNBC this week, Mr. Fetterman — who [*has said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/03/us/politics/john-fetterman-heart-condition.html) that he almost died — blasted the Oz campaign for appealing “to folks that get their jollies, you know, making fun of the stroke dude.”

“I might miss a word every now and then, or I might mush two words together,” he said, but stressed that he was expected to make a full recovery.

Mr. Fetterman is still using closed captions for interviews and other business conducted by video, his spokesman, Joe Calvello, confirmed, saying that it “helps him keep conversations moving fast.” A number of Democrats have argued that his health scare is a relatable episode for many voters.

But his decision to [*decline a debate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/us/politics/fetterman-health-oz-pennsylvania.html) next week has brought questions about his health back [*into public focus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/us/politics/fetterman-health-oz-pennsylvania.html).

“Mr. Fetterman has to show a presence so that he can show people that he’s healthy and he’s able to fill that position without a health issue,” said Mayor George C. Brown of Wilkes-Barre, adding that he expected Mr. Fetterman, whom he supports, would do so more visibly as the race unfolds. “Come out, do some rallies, talk to people.”

“Unfortunately, the way that some of this campaigning is going, it shows that there’s an issue with Mr. Fetterman’s health, and I can’t say that, because I’ve never really spoken to the man,” he added in a Wednesday interview.

Mr. Calvello, the Fetterman spokesman, said that the candidate was pursuing an increasingly busy campaign schedule, though he stopped short of committing to debating.

“John has been and will continue to be open about his health and his struggles with auditory processing,” Mr. Calvello said. “He is going to be doing more and more events and will continue to draw [*large crowds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/12/us/politics/fetterman-oz-senate-pennsylvania.html).”

Mr. Fetterman is planning a “Women for Fetterman” rally in the Philadelphia suburbs for next Sunday — which is Sept. 11 — focused on abortion rights.

After the overturning of Roe vs. Wade, which handed control over abortion rights back to the states, the matter has become a top-tier issue in major races, [*including in*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/docs/2022/Topline-PAStatewide-Aug2022.pdf) Pennsylvania. The state has a Republican-led legislature and Mr. Shapiro has [*cast himself*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/us/politics/midterms-abortion-pennsylvania.html) as a bulwark against any effort to enact the kind of bans that have taken hold in other states.

Abortion has a been major focus in the governor’s race as Mr. Shapiro works to brand Mr. Mastriano as far too extreme for the state. Mr. Shapiro has so far spent $18 million on television advertising this year, his campaign said, with plans for a significant fall advertising campaign.

Mr. Mastriano’s campaign, which [*rarely engages*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/31/us/politics/doug-mastriano-social-media-rise.html) with mainstream media outlets, did not respond to a request for comment. As of Thursday, Mr. Mastriano had not been on the airwaves in the general election, according to AdImpact. The Republican Governors Association has also not yet reserved airtime to boost Mr. Mastriano.

A [*growing number*](https://www.post-gazette.com/news/politics-state/2022/08/30/gop-officials-support-josh-shapiro-pennsylvania-governors-race-michael-chertoff-jim-kelly/stories/202208300061) of Republicans have announced their support for Mr. Shapiro, with some citing their concerns about Mr. Mastriano’s efforts to [*spread lies*](https://whyy.org/articles/doug-mastriano-election-lies-disinformation-jan-6/) about the 2020 election and [*warning of the threat*](https://www.phillymag.com/news/2022/08/29/james-schultz-doug-mastriano-josh-shapiro/) they believe he poses to a state that is home to [*the birthplace*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/09/01/us/biden-speech-philadelphia#philadelphia-the-birthplace-of-democracy-holds-special-significance-for-biden) of American democracy.

But for all of Mr. Mastriano’s structural challenges, and scrutiny over incidents like [*his appearance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/26/us/politics/doug-mastriano-confederate-uniform-army.html) in a Confederate uniform or [*backing from*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/us/politics/doug-mastriano-gab.html) an antisemitic ally, the race may wind up being highly competitive.

“The real professionals know it’s going to be very tough,” Shanin Specter, a Philadelphia lawyer and son of the late Senator Arlen Specter, said. Mr. Shapiro, he said, was meeting the race with appropriate seriousness. But he warned that some live in an “echo chamber” and believe “Shapiro couldn’t possibly lose. And they’re just dead wrong.”

Mr. Casey, the senator, suggested that Mr. Mastriano’s ascent in the Republican Party indicated that “few, if any” of the state’s successful former Republican governors would have won the nomination today.

Indeed, the G.O.P. has been increasingly remade in the image of Mr. Trump, who will rally Saturday in a county that he flipped in 2016.

Pennsylvania “plays an important part in both the former president’s history and narrative as well as the current president’s,” said David Urban, a Republican strategist who helped run Mr. Trump’s Pennsylvania operation in 2016.

Nodding to the possibility that both Mr. Biden and Mr. Trump may seek the presidency in 2024, he added, “Past may be prologue here. You may see both the former president and the current president duking it out in Pennsylvania again.”

PHOTOS: John Fetterman, the Democratic nominee for Senate, appeared at a rally in Erie in August, but he has otherwise kept a light schedule since having a stroke in May. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF SWENSEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Dr. Mehmet Oz, Mr. Fetterman’s Republican opponent, in August in Swatara Township, Pa. He has begun to mock Mr. Fetterman for the pace of his recovery. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN SIMMERS/THE PATRIOT-NEWS, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS); State Senator Doug Mastriano, the right-wing, election-denying Republican nominee for governor, after a campaign event on Friday in New Bethlehem, Pa. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DUSTIN FRANZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Josh Shapiro, the state’s attorney general and the Democratic nominee for governor, at an event in Lock Haven, Pa. Abortion has a been major focus in the race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KRISTON JAE BETHEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Park Built for Children Is Now Used for Drug Deals***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65Y6-2841-DXY4-X32V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 17, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1622 words

**Byline:** By Winnie Hu

**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, 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. ''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 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 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'' 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, 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 was fatally stabbed there. Concerns about anti-Asian violence in the area also increased after a woman was stabbed to death in her apartment across from the park in February by a homeless man.

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, 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, was attended by thousands and broadcast over the radio from Maine to Virginia. The site had been intended for low-cost housing but was later turned over for ''playgrounds and resting places for mothers and children.''

City officials insisted on naming the park for the mother of Franklin D. Roosevelt, then president, though she tried to decline the honor, saying that she ''wished to stay in the background.''

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 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.

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.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/15/nyregion/sara-roosevelt-park-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/15/nyregion/sara-roosevelt-park-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

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)

**Load-Date:** July 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Años Viejos: Torching the Old Year to Toast the New One***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64DR-HRY1-JBG3-647T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 30, 2021 Thursday 11:15 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1058 words

**Byline:** Isabella Grullón Paz

**Highlight:** In parts of Latin America, the traditional burning of rag dolls was used to symbolically banish the woes of the year gone by. Nowadays, it’s not uncommon to see TV hosts and ex-presidents going up in flames.

**Body**

In parts of Latin America, the traditional burning of rag dolls was used to symbolically banish the woes of the year gone by. Nowadays, it’s not uncommon to see TV hosts and ex-presidents going up in flames.

Every December, Jaime Ivan Salazar and his family, like many in Colombia, Ecuador and other parts of Latin America, construct an “año viejo”: a human-size doll stuffed with rags, newspaper or wood scraps and styled with old clothes that is burned on New Year’s Eve to symbolically cast off the old year and bring in the new.

“It’s usually a very collective activity,” said Mr. Salazar, 24, who lives in Pasto, Colombia, about 50 miles northeast of the border with Ecuador. Family members coordinate which old clothing they would want to use on the año viejo (“old year” in Spanish); an uncle will bring an old pair of pants, a cousin an old shirt, and maybe someone has a hat to top it off. It often becomes something entire neighborhoods do together, Mr. Salazar said. Whenever he asks the family next door for extra sawdust to stuff the doll, they happily oblige, he said.

“It’s not really about burning it,” Mr. Salazar said. “For us, building it is almost as important as our family dinner on the 24th of December,” he added, referring to the traditional celebration the night before Christmas.

According to Odi Gonzales, a professor of Latin American and Andean studies at New York University, the burning of años viejos started in Ecuador, and like many traditions in Latin America today, it is a product of mestizaje — the racial and cultural mixing of Spanish and Indigenous peoples.

“The concept of años viejos comes from European influence,” Professor Gonzales said, adding that unlike European cultures, which experience time with a beginning and an end, Andean cultures conceive of time as “continuous.”

But rituals to expel epidemics or ailments are prehistoric and Indigenous, Professor Gonzales said.

María Belén Calvache, a specialist in politics and traditions in Ecuador, said in an interview that “there are historical records in Ecuador that show that Indigenous populations, specifically the people from Otavalo, would burn a doll symbolizing a feudal leader during the celebration of the solstice in December, March and June.”

She added, “They were burned as a symbol of regeneration.”

The first años viejos as we know them today were burned along the Andean sierra in major Ecuadorean cities like Quito and Guayaquil in the 19th century, historians explained. The burnings were the climax of a 10-day Catholic celebration marking the end of the year, running from Dec. 28, the Day of the Innocents, to Three Kings Day, on Jan. 6.

During those days, people wore masks and costumes on the streets. On Dec. 31, large rag dolls representing drunken old men were carried through the streets by masked people dressed in white to represent their weeping widows, Ms. Calvache explained. Because the drunks didn’t leave wills, the widows would roam about asking for money. At midnight, the rag doll would be burned, “and a humorous testament where different things are left to the mourners is read,” Ms. Calvache added. Those things were usually satirical omens or wishes for prosperity.

“For a fundamentally ***working-class*** society, end-of-the-year celebrations were an opportunity to forget about sorrows through parties,” said Alfonso Ortiz Crespo, a historian and architect from Ecuador. “It was a time to make fun of the other — not only civil authority, but also make fun of the neighbor, the friend and the relative, or the political enemy.”

Today in Ecuador, años viejos are burned mostly by teenagers and young adults, Ms. Calvache said. But for the last two years, the burning of años viejos has been prohibited across the country to prevent large gatherings amid the coronavirus pandemic.

Today, it’s more common to see papier-mâché años viejos modeled after superheroes or comic book monsters than effigies made of rags, but some parts of Ecuador and Colombia still keep to tradition.

In Pasto, every Dec. 31, there’s a parade of años viejos made by the city’s artists. “During this parade, many artisans use años viejos to pose a cultural and political critique of the country,” Mr. Salazar said. That usually means parading around likenesses of politicians.

Former President Álvaro Uribe of Colombia, former President Donald J. Trump of the United States and Hugo Chávez, the Venezuelan leader who died in 2013, are some of the most common faces. Steve Harvey, the television host, had a surge in popularity after [*he wrongly crowned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/21/us/steve-harvey-flubs-miss-universe-crowning.html) Miss Colombia the winner of the 2015 Miss Universe pageant.

Last year, there were many años viejos wearing masks and holding hand sanitizer, a nod to the raging coronavirus pandemic, Mr. Salazar said.

The main reason the tradition continues, though, is because of families.

Mr. Salazar remembers building años viejos with his grandfather when he was little. “We used to fill them with fireworks,” he said, a practice that is now illegal in Colombia. “The loudest año viejo meant that you were the most macho in the neighborhood.”

Nicolás Franco, a civil engineer from Bogotá, Colombia’s capital, began making años viejos six years ago. He and his family would spend Christmas in Pereira, in the coffee-growing region of Colombia. In Bogotá, “you really don’t see años viejos,” he said. But when he traveled to Pereira, they lined the streets.

Mr. Franco, 60, really enjoyed the idea of burning away the bad things of the year. “It’s like a cleansing,” he said.

Camila Pava of Cali, Colombia, who works in user experience, says años viejos are a way to reset with her family. Around 11:30 p.m. on New Year’s Eve, her entire family sits around and writes what they want to get rid of. “It can be personal, like about love, or about the world, like Covid,” Ms. Pava, 28, explained.

Everyone then tucks the notes in the hat, pants and shirt of the año viejo, a small rag doll given by her aunt. As they light the año viejo, after eating 12 grapes and making 12 wishes, she and her family talk to one another about what they want to accomplish and change in the next year. To Ms. Pava, it feels grounding and cathartic.

“I love believing in that little bit of magic,” she said.

PHOTO: “Años viejos” for sale on a sidewalk in Guayaquil, Ecuador. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dolores Ochoa/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 31, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Government Gave Out Bad Loans. Students Deserve a Bailout.; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G5-8601-DXY4-X01G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 17, 2022 Tuesday 23:17 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1543 words

**Byline:** Charlie Eaton, Amber Villalobos and Frederick Wherry

**Highlight:** Biden’s $10,000 in relief isn’t enough.

**Body**

[*At least 43 million Americans*](https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2021-12-22/federal-student-aid-posts-quarterly-portfolio-reports-fsa-data-center) have student loan debt, ranging from hundreds to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Until now, there’s been no hope of a bailout.

Just as some argued that the subprime mortgage crisis was a matter of millions of people choosing to borrow too much, others have said that the student debt crisis is primarily the fault of the debtors. This myth hides that it was a harmful policy decision to encourage disadvantaged students to borrow for college in the first place. In 2008, the federal government was willing to bail out banks after their risky lending practices devastated the economy. We need a similar such bailout today. But unlike in 2008, this bailout would go to the victims of a crisis, not its perpetrators.

For the last three decades, our government’s lending practices devoured borrowers’ incomes, prevented [*homeownership*](https://www.businessinsider.com/student-loan-debt-holding-back-homebuying-national-association-realtors-poll-2021-9?amp), and contributed to [*despairing anxiety*](https://www.clasp.org/blog/psychological-toll-student-debt/). Lenders have [*denied borrowers access*](https://protectborrowers.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Broken-Promises_ACS-12_9.pdf) to loan relief programs and [*for-profit colleges*](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/00031224211043223) have hounded prospective student borrowers, even when they knew graduates would get little return on their investments. By the time President Barack Obama left office, student loans were just as speculative and commonplace as subprime mortgages.

President Biden has signaled that we must make amends for this debt trap by bailing out the generation of borrowers who have been wronged. But the $10,000 of debt cancellation per borrower that he’s suggested will not be enough.

In 1975, only an estimated [*one in eight college students*](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Student_Loan_Mess/KjklDQAAQBAJ?hl=en&amp;gbpv=1&amp;dq=%221975,+a+report+from+the+Congressional+Research+Service+estimated+that+one+in+eight+college+students+had+a+federal+loan%22&amp;pg=PA48&amp;printsec=frontcover) used federal student loans to pay for college. During that period, [*Pell Grants covered*](https://ticas.org/wp-content/uploads/legacy-files/legacy/files/pub/TICAS_RADD_White_Paper.pdf) much of the cost of attending most public universities, and grants were available to anyone from middle- or low-income families.

But a surge of [*economically disadvantaged students*](https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/B/bo125285299.html) pursued higher education in the 1980s as factory closures, automation and union-busting decimated the middle class. At the same time, President Ronald Reagan persuaded Congress to [*cut Pell Grant awards*](https://www.nytimes.com/1981/11/15/education/after-the-federal-cutbacks-a-new-era-in-paying-for-college.html).

In his speech accepting the Democratic nomination for President in 1992, Bill Clinton described a “[*New Covenant*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/07/17/news/their-own-words-transcript-speech-clinton-accepting-democratic-nomination.html)” with America that would include the largest-ever expansion of federal student loans. Until that point, loans had played a relatively small role in funding U.S. higher education. With student loans for all, he said, “the doors of colleges are thrown open once again to the sons and daughters of stenographers and steelworkers.”

The future president made Americans a promise: If they borrowed to pay for school, their debt would pave a path to economic mobility.

When Mr. Clinton and Democrats won control of the presidency and Congress, they allowed students to borrow unprecedented amounts from the government to pay for college. But this wasn’t altruism: A new [*accounting trick*](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0002716217701673) counted federal student loans as profitable assets instead of expenditures, which gave the administration a shortcut in balancing the budget.

Today, [*63 percent*](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2021/demo/educational-attainment/cps-detailed-tables.html) of Americans over 25 have attended at least some college, and [*most of them have borrowed*](http://collegeaffordability.urban.org/covering-expenses/borrowing/) to pay for it. From the time of Mr. Clinton’s expansion of federal student loan programs in [*1993*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/07/31/us/conferees-in-congress-agree-on-revamping-college-loans.html), total borrowing [*quintupled*](https://github.com/HigherEdData/BankersInTheIvoryTower/tree/main/Chapter%203%20-%20Bankers%20to%20the%20Rescue) to a peak of almost $120 billion in 2010.

The cost of college grew too. In the early 2000s, state governments [*reduced higher education funding*](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2378023119862409) per student, knowing that students could get federal loans to pay for increased tuition. Many students had to take on debt to attend even the public universities and community colleges that enroll most undergraduates.

Predatory for-profit colleges — which often went after Black undergraduates and low-income Pell recipients — especially plundered the expanded federal loan program, which paid them [*tens of billions*](https://github.com/HigherEdData/BankersInTheIvoryTower/tree/main/Chapter%203%20-%20Bankers%20to%20the%20Rescue) of dollars for worthless diplomas or no degree at all. A promise of upward mobility quickly became [*a debt trap*](https://www.brookings.edu/research/the-looming-student-loan-default-crisis-is-worse-than-we-thought/) for borrowers and a financial bonanza for those receiving federal dollars to educate them.

What’s more, compound interest doesn’t pause just because loans aren’t being repaid. While [*new borrowing*](https://github.com/HigherEdData/BankersInTheIvoryTower/tree/main/Chapter%203%20-%20Bankers%20to%20the%20Rescue) by students has declined since 2010, [*total unpaid student debt*](https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/fsawg/datacenter/library/PortfolioSummary.xls) has doubled. In 2016, more than one-third of borrowers who started college in 2004 still [*owed more than they originally borrowed*](https://protectborrowers.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SBPC_Driving_Runaway_Debt.pdf). Those numbers are worse for Black borrowers — two-thirds of them owed more than they initially borrowed more than a decade after they started school.

Borrowers are increasingly unable to repay their debts, not because of their mistakes but because of negligent government policies. Instead of expanding Pell Grants and affordable schools for these disproportionately [*Black*](https://www.brookings.edu/research/black-white-disparity-in-student-loan-debt-more-than-triples-after-graduation/) and [***working class***](https://www.dignityanddebt.org/projects/an-open-letter-to-president-biden-scholars-support-your-promise-to-cancel-student-debt/) students, the government threw them to for-profit college recruiters and corporate loan servicers. Thirty years after Mr. Clinton’s speech, the promise of loan-financed college as a source of mobility for all has proved to be empty words.

The government’s attempted remedies have often made the problem worse. Under one program, borrowers were supposed to get forgiveness after they steadily made their loan payments for 20 to 25 years. But out of an estimated [*4.4 million*](https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Education%20Department%20Response%20to%20Sen%20Warren%20-%204-8-21.pdf) people who have been in repayment for that long, as of last year, only [*32 people*](https://www.nclc.org/uncategorized/new-government-data-exposes-complete-failure-of-education-departments-income-driven-repayment-program.html) had ever managed to have their loans canceled.

Another program, put in place during George W. Bush’s presidency, promised to forgive public servants’ debts after 10 years of payments. As of September, [*1.3 million*](https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/fsawg/datacenter/library/pslf-sep2021.xls) public servants had applied for the program. Only 1 percent of them had [*ever received loan forgiveness*](https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/fsawg/datacenter/library/pslf-sep2021.xls).

Now, Mr. Biden has signaled that he intends to cancel at least $10,000 worth of student loan debt per borrower, which would, according to the Department of Education, [*eliminate the balances of 33 percent of all federal borrowers*](https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Education%20Department%20Response%20to%20Sen%20Warren%20-%204-8-21.pdf). That still leaves too many in debt, especially among those whose debts have increased since leaving school — based on our analysis, [*86 percent of them would still owe money*](https://www.warren.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/warren-releases-academic-experts-new-analysis-showing-widespread-benefits-of-student-debt-cancellation).

Mr. Biden’s proposed income eligibility requirements would also exclude [*upwardly mobile borrowers*](https://rooseveltinstitute.org/publications/student-debt-cancellation-is-progressive/) with low net worths, including many Black professionals. Worse still, verifying income for debt forgiveness would likely offer false hope of cancellation for millions of low-income borrowers who qualify, as the process, again a bureaucratic gantlet, [*may very well fail them.*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/12/bidens-income-cap-student-loan-forgiveness-nightmare-implement-00031746)

Instead, Mr. Biden must bail out borrowers from the trap of unpayable debts. To do right by at least half of borrowers, he would need to cancel $30,000 per borrower. But to fulfill the promise of higher education, to [*narrow the racial wealth gap*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/01/opinion/student-debt-cancellation-biden.html), and to foster an opportunity society, the administration should cancel at least $50,000 per borrower. This would completely bail out [*36 million*](https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Education%20Department%20Response%20to%20Sen%20Warren%20-%204-8-21.pdf)from student debt, according to our analysis, including [*67 percent*](https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Eaton%20et%20al%20analysis_05.03.22.pdf) of those who still owe more than they originally borrowed.

A $50,000 bailout per borrower would eliminate only a portion of the $1.6 trillion in outstanding student debt. The government has done fine without collections for two years during the existing [*repayment pause*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/business/student-loan-payment-pause-biden.html). And the Department of Education expects that a third of this sum will never[*be collected*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/student-loan-losses-seen-costing-u-s-more-than-400-billion-11605963600) anyway.

And no, debt cancellation would not disproportionately benefit the rich, who [*rarely borrow*](https://www.dignityanddebt.org/projects/an-open-letter-to-president-biden-scholars-support-your-promise-to-cancel-student-debt/) to pay for school — only [*4 percent*](https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Eaton%20et%20al%20analysis_05.03.22.pdf) of the most wealthy have any student debt at all.

To protect future generations, Americans need forward-looking reforms for our higher education financing system. Congress should finally pass a [*proposal*](https://medium.com/georgetown-cew/joe-bidens-free-college-plan-would-pay-for-itself-abfb8b22cf3b) that guarantees enough Pell Grants and other debt-free financial aid for any student trying to earn a college degree. Several of these proposals would sensibly [*cap the tuition and attendance expenses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/19/business/tuition-free-college.html) that would otherwise increase in response to another well-intended policy gone wrong.

But unlike these debt-free college proposals, student debt cancellation does not require passage by a deadlocked Congress. [*Legal scholars say*](https://policymemos.hks.harvard.edu/files/policymemos/files/2-17-21-ltr_to_warren_re_admin_debt_cancellation.pdf?m=1613667682) the Higher Education Act gives Mr. Biden the authority to cancel existing student debts by executive order. Doing so will put Congress on notice that it has to act.

Mr. Biden should make a major address on what it means to keep one’s promises, and announce that he’s bailing out borrowers. At his side could stand the military service members, the public-school teachers and the non-college goers who borrowed for their kids. They can testify that they are now able do things that were not possible before.

On that day, tens of millions of borrowers could log onto their federal loan accounts and read the same message: “Your debts are forgiven. Please forgive our failures.”

Charlie Eaton ([*@CharlieEatonPhd*](https://twitter.com/CharlieEatonPhD)) is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of California, Merced and the author of “[*Bankers in the Ivory Tower*](https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/B/bo125285299.html).” Amber Villalobos ([*@Amber\_D\_Villa*](https://twitter.com/amber_d_villa)) is a postdoctoral scholar at University of California, Merced. Frederick Wherry ([*@ProfessorWherry*](https://twitter.com/professorwherry)) is a professor of sociology and African-American studies at Princeton and the director of the [*Dignity + Debt Network*](http://dignityanddebt.org/).

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL MORIGI/GETTY IMAGES FOR WE, THE 45 MILLION)

**Load-Date:** May 17, 2022

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[***Gov. Hochul’s Second-in-Command Faces Sharp Challenge From the Left***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R7-P901-DXY4-X521-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 19, 2022 Sunday 18:41 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1616 words

**Byline:** Luis Ferré-Sadurní

**Highlight:** Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado faces two rivals in New York’s June 28 primary, including Ana María Archila, an activist who first won attention during Justice Kavanaugh’s confirmation hearing.

**Body**

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With a little more than a week until Primary Day in New York, the Democratic Party’s left wing is focused on a contentious statewide race shaped by issues of ideology, ethnicity and the influence of money and lobbying in Albany.

The contest is not for governor: The incumbent, Kathy Hochul, enjoys a huge advantage in fund-raising and in public polls over the party’s most left-leaning challenger, Jumaane Williams, the New York City public advocate.

But in Mr. Williams’s running mate, Ana María Archila, the left sees a legitimate opportunity to capture the lieutenant governor’s race and gain a foothold in the State Capitol.

Ms. Archila, a seasoned activist and first-time candidate backed by the Working Families Party, gained national attention when [*she confronted*](https://www.npr.org/2018/09/30/653086731/ana-maria-archila-on-confronting-jeff-flake) Senator Jeff Flake of Arizona in a Capitol Hill elevator during the hearings over the Supreme Court nomination of Brett Kavanaugh, who had been accused of sexual assault.

The viral moment, which she said was unplanned, led to her [*being invited*](https://theintercept.com/2019/02/04/ana-maria-archila-queens-woman-who-confronted-jeff-flake-will-be-ocasio-cortezs-sotu-guest/) by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez as her guest to the State of the Union address in 2019.

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The race for lieutenant governor has set off competing visions for the role of an office with few statutory duties, but which has nonetheless served as a familiar steppingstone for higher office: Two of the last three governors, including Ms. Hochul, ascended from lieutenant governor after their predecessors resigned amid scandal.

Indeed, during a televised debate on Wednesday, Ms. Archila vowed to use the office of lieutenant governor — typically a ceremonial role with little power beyond presiding over the State Senate and being next in line to succeed the governor — as an independent bully pulpit that could serve as a counterweight to the governor’s office.

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Ms. Archila stressed that the office was an elected position and should therefore not be deferential to the governor, saying that she would “stand up to the governor when he or she is veering away” from helping working people.

The contest for lieutenant governor was thrown into turmoil in April, after former Lt. Gov. Brian Benjamin resigned after he was [*arrested on federal bribery charges*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/nyregion/brian-benjamin-resigns-indicted.html).

Ms. Hochul successfully pushed legislation to remove Mr. Benjamin’s name from the ballot and chose [*Antonio Delgado*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/nyregion/antonio-delgado-new-york-lieutenant-governor-hochul.html), then a congressman representing the Hudson Valley, as her new lieutenant governor and running mate.

Despite his last-minute entry, Mr. Delgado entered the Democratic primary with the backing of Ms. Hochul’s campaign apparatus and support from the party establishment and key labor unions, as well as a sizable war chest he has swiftly deployed to flood the airwaves with television ads.

During Wednesday’s debate, Mr. Delgado said he was chosen by Ms. Hochul as her second-in-command because of his record in Congress and to be an “active partner.”

There is much at stake for Ms. Hochul: While the candidates for governor and lieutenant governor run on the same ticket in the general election, they run separately in the June 28 primary.

If Mr. Delgado were to lose, Ms. Hochul, who is favored to prevail in the Democratic primary, could potentially be forced to run with a lieutenant governor candidate not of her choosing in November. And if Ms. Archila were to win, Republicans would likely seek to link her left-wing credentials to Ms. Hochul, a more moderate Democrat.

The race, which features three Latino candidates, could also mark a momentous milestone for Latinos eager to elevate one of their own to statewide office in New York for the first time, following a dearth in representation despite Latinos accounting for about one-fifth of the state’s population.

Mr. Delgado, 45, identifies as Afro-Latino, though Latino leaders have [*questioned his heritage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/nyregion/antonio-delgado-afro-latino.html), while Ms. Archila, 43, was born and raised in Colombia. The third candidate, Diana Reyna, 48, became the first Dominican American woman elected to public office in the state when she represented parts of Brooklyn and Queens in the City Council.

“When Latinos are not present at the table, our issues are not hyper-localized,” Ms. Reyna, who also served as Mayor Eric Adams’s deputy when he was borough president of Brooklyn, said in an interview this week.

“We don’t represent communities of wealth, we represent the poor, the ***working class***, the single family home that people want to keep and pass down to their children.”

Both Ms. Archila and Ms. Reyna face an uphill climb to unseat Mr. Delgado, a moderate Democrat from Schenectady who was the first person of color elected to Congress in upstate New York after [*flipping a Republican-held House seat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/nyregion/senate-house-race.html) in 2018.

For one, he has a significant fund-raising edge: Relying on money transferred from his congressional campaign account, he had about $2 million as of May, more than six times the amount that his challengers had combined. Mr. Delgado has so far spent over $4 million on television and digital ads since he was appointed lieutenant governor, according to AdImpact, a firm that tracks television ad spending.

He has run the ads — which highlight his résumé as a Rhodes Scholar, a Harvard Law School graduate and brief career as a rap artist — while skipping most candidate debates and forums, avoiding potential scrutiny, much to the chagrin of his opponents.

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He has also received outside help from a super PAC funded by the billionaire founder of a cryptocurrency exchange platform that [*has spent about $1 million in ads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/nyregion/cryptomining-ban-ny.html) supporting him. He insisted during the Wednesday debate that his decision-making would not be influenced by outside money, saying that he did not “know who this crypto billionaire is.”

The party’s progressive-activist wing is seeking to build on its partial success from 2018, when Mr. Williams, the New York City public advocate, mounted an insurgent campaign for lieutenant governor and [*came within six percentage points*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/09/13/us/elections/results-new-york-primary-elections.html) of defeating Ms. Hochul, beating her in Manhattan and Brooklyn in the Democratic primary.

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Her campaign appeared to gain some steam following Mr. Benjamin’s arrest, as a group of city and state lawmakers, as well as Representatives Nydia Velázquez and Jamaal Bowman, [*endorsed*](https://www.anamariaforny.com/endorsements) her candidacy. As for a possible endorsement from Ms. Ocasio-Cortez: “We’re working on it,” Ms. Archila said.

It remains unclear if those endorsements will translate into more votes, especially in a contest that seldom engages voters.

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PHOTOS: From left, Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado, Ana María Archila and Diana Reyna will face off in the Democratic primary for lieutenant governor, but Ms. Archila and Ms. Reyna will have an uphill climb. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JANICE CHUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 19, 2022

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[***Hochul's Second-in-Command Faces Sharp Challenge From the Left***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65R6-W371-DXY4-X4GM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 19, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 22

**Length:** 1580 words

**Byline:** By Luis Ferré-Sadurní

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From left, Lt. Gov. Antonio Delgado, Ana María Archila and Diana Reyna will face off in the Democratic primary for lieutenant governor, but Ms. Archila and Ms. Reyna will have an uphill climb. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JANICE CHUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 19, 2022

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[***Big Questions Swirl at the Polls in Pennsylvania and North Carolina***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G4-XR61-JBG3-6035-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 17, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1374 words

**Byline:** By Trip Gabriel

**Body**

In the pivotal swing state of Pennsylvania, voters will decide hugely consequential primaries for Senate and governor. And in North Carolina, Madison Cawthorn's political fate will be determined.

The most hotly anticipated event so far in the 2022 primary season will unfold today in Pennsylvania, where voters of both parties will make crucial decisions in competitive races for Senate and governor.

The results will help clarify the mood of the country: Pennsylvania, a longtime swing state, has often signaled what American voters are thinking.

And right now, a forceful centrifuge seems to be spinning Pennsylvanians further toward the partisan edges. The state once took pride in electing center-left or center-right politicians to its highest offices. But at least on the Republican side, that history counts for little right now.

The party's high-octane primaries for governor and the Senate have grown increasingly turbulent in the final stretch. The leading candidates support ending abortion rights; some have amplified former President Donald J. Trump's lies about a stolen 2020 election; and all seek to persuade voters of their MAGA bona fides.

North Carolina is also holding primaries that will decide the fate of Representative Madison Cawthorn, who has been plagued by scandals and made many enemies among fellow Republicans, as well as whether Mr. Trump's support can lift a 26-year-old former football player and political novice in a House G.O.P. race.

Here's what we're watching for:

Can Trump again pull a struggling candidate over the finish line?

Polling shows the G.O.P. Senate primary in Pennsylvania in a statistical three-way tie between Dr. Mehmet Oz, the celebrity physician; David McCormick, a former hedge fund executive; and Kathy Barnette, a far-right commentator who has surged in the campaign's final days thanks to a compelling biography and sharp debating.

At one debate, Dr. Oz, who has won Mr. Trump's endorsement, plaintively asked, ''Why is everyone attacking me?'' Ms. Barnette shot back: ''Because you're a liberal.''

The Republican race, with five major candidates, has been dominated by nearly $40 million in television ads spent by the two early front-runners, Mr. Oz and Mr. McCormick, and their allies. Most of their TV spots have been attacks bludgeoning one another.

Ms. Barnette, on only a shoestring budget, vaulted into contention by emphasizing her personal story -- she revealed she born after her mother was raped at age 11, galvanizing anti-abortion voters -- and by emerging as an alternative for Republicans unconvinced that Dr. Oz or Mr. McCormick were authentic conservatives.

The race will test the power of the Trump endorsement, even more than was the case in Ohio two weeks ago, where the former president pulled J.D. Vance, who had been polling in third place, over the finish line.

In Pennsylvania, Mr. Trump's blessing of Dr. Oz met with major pushback pointing out that the doctor was a ''Hollywood liberal'' and friend of Oprah Winfrey's. At a rally Mr. Trump held in Pennsylvania 11 days ago, boos greeted the mention of Mr. Oz's name.

''MAGA does not belong to President Trump,'' Ms. Barnette said at one debate. Today will tell.

Will Democrats choose an outsider for Pennsylvania governor?

The Democratic Senate primary in Pennsylvania has revealed that many Democratic voters, like their Republican counterparts, increasingly desire political brawlers and reject consensus-seeking centrists.

That's why John Fetterman, the state's iconoclastic 6-foot-8 lieutenant governor, has held a big polling lead for weeks. He has appealed to rank-and-file Democrats who want a progressive in office -- as well as one they believe will appeal to ***working-class*** white voters. Over the weekend, he announced that he had had a stroke on Friday and was recovering.

Representative Conor Lamb, who won three races in districts thick with Trump supporters, has used that as a calling card to win the backing of many elected Democrats in the state, who believe he would be the most electable in November. That argument has not been embraced by rank-and-file Democrats, however.

A third candidate, Malcolm Kenyatta, a young left-leaning state lawmaker from Philadelphia, would be the first Black and openly gay nominee should he pull off an upset.

In the G.O.P. governor's race, extremism is on the ballot.

Two big issues will overshadow Pennsylvania's open race for governor in the fall: voting access and the future of abortion, should the Supreme Court overturn Roe v. Wade.

In the Democratic primary, Josh Shapiro, the state's attorney general, is running unopposed. Mr. Shapiro won multiple lawsuits brought by Trump supporters falsely claiming fraud in the 2020 election. He has said he will campaign on voting rights and on protecting abortion access, which could turn the race into a referendum on the issue.

Should Roe be overturned and abortion become an issue decided state by state, Pennsylvania's Republican-led legislature is expected to pass a bill with sharp restrictions. Mr. Shapiro has said he would veto it. The top four Republicans vying for the nomination all support abortion bans.

Doug Mastriano, the clear G.O.P. front-runner in polls, was a key figure in Mr. Trump's effort to overturn the 2020 election results in Pennsylvania. He chartered buses to the Jan. 6 protests in Washington and has made false claims of election fraud a central plank of his bid to lead a state that will be central to the 2024 presidential race. Mr. Trump weighed in on Saturday with a late endorsement of Mr. Mastriano.

Fearing that a Mastriano victory would put an unelectable hard-right nominee on the ticket, some prominent Republicans have coalesced in a Stop Mastriano effort behind Lou Barletta, a former congressman who appears second in most polls.

The other chief contenders in the race are Bill McSwain, a former U.S. attorney, and Dave White, a businessman.

How will Madison Cawthorn fare in North Carolina?

In North Carolina, the Republican primary for Senate is the most prominent contest, though most eyes are likely to be elsewhere: on whether the explosively controversial Representative Madison Cawthorn, 26, will be renominated in his district in the state's far west.

The number to keep in mind is 30: The top finisher in North Carolina primaries must gain a plurality of more than 30 percent of the vote or face a runoff against the second-place candidate.

Mr. Cawthorn, who has seven challengers, has been in the news for all the wrong reasons: for possessing a firearm in an airport (again), for driving with a revoked license (again) and for being rebuked by House Republican leaders for his comments suggesting that lawmakers had used cocaine and held orgies.

It is unclear, however, if these antics will allow any of his rivals, most likely State Senator Chuck Edwards, to force a runoff. Cawthorn is still a national MAGA celebrity with Mr. Trump's endorsement.

In the Senate race, for an open seat, Representative Ted Budd, also endorsed by Mr. Trump, has made a late surge, seeming to surpass former Gov. Pat McCrory.

Mr. McCrory, whose conservative credentials include signing the infamous 2016 ''bathroom bill'' that targeted transgender people -- and drew a major backlash upon his state -- is no longer conservative enough for some Republicans. The anti-tax Club for Growth has brought millions of dollars in TV attack ads down on his head, accusing him of being ''a liberal faker.''

The presumptive Democratic nominee is Cheri Beasley, a former chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court.

And don't forget this House primary.

The power of Mr. Trump's endorsement will also be tested in a G.O.P. primary for a new North Carolina congressional district, the 13th, which is south of Raleigh and is likely to be the state's only competitive House seat in the fall.

The former president has thrown his weight behind a former college football player, Bo Hines, 26, who is also being backed by the Club for Growth's political committee. His main opponent, Kelly Daughtry, is the daughter of a former majority leader of the statehouse. Many Republican officials in the state are pulling for Ms. Daughtry. Sound familiar?

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/us/politics/primary-elections-pennsylvania-north-carolina.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/17/us/politics/primary-elections-pennsylvania-north-carolina.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Voters at a forum for Republican candidates last week in Newton, Pa. Republicans face primaries for governor and the Senate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KRISTON JAE BETHEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[***New York Mayoral Primary Called for Adams***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6336-6WW1-DXY4-X0RJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1624 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Mr. Adams held off Kathryn Garcia after a count of 118,000 absentee ballots saw his substantial lead on primary night narrow to a single percentage point.

Eric L. Adams, who rose from poverty to become an iconoclastic police captain and the borough president of Brooklyn, declared victory in the Democratic nomination for mayor of New York City on Tuesday, putting him on track to become the second Black mayor in the history of the nation's largest city.

The contest, which was called by The Associated Press on Tuesday night, was seen as one of the city's most critical elections in a generation, with the winner expected to help set New York on a recovery course from the economic devastation of Covid-19 and from the longstanding racial and socioeconomic inequalities that the pandemic deepened.

But as the campaign entered its final months, a spike in shootings and homicides drove public safety and crime to the forefront of voters' minds, and Mr. Adams -- the only leading candidate with a law enforcement background -- moved urgently to demonstrate authority on the issue.

Mr. Adams held an 8,400-vote lead over Kathryn Garcia, a margin of one percentage point -- small enough that it was not immediately clear whether she or any of his opponents would contest the result in court. All three leading candidates had filed to maintain the option to challenge the results. If no one does so, Mr. Adams's victory could be certified as soon as next week.

''While there are still some very small amounts of votes to be counted, the results are clear: An historic, diverse, five-borough coalition led by ***working-class*** New Yorkers has led us to victory in the Democratic primary for mayor of New York City,'' Mr. Adams, 60, said in a statement.

Yet neither Ms. Garcia nor Maya Wiley, a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio who finished in third place, was ready to offer a concession on Tuesday, with each offering brief statements that vaguely alluded to their next steps.

The results came after the city's Board of Elections counted an additional 118,000 absentee ballots and then deployed a ranked-choice elimination system -- the first time New York has used it in a mayoral election.

There are potentially several thousand votes still to be counted, which may include affidavit votes and defective absentee ballots that voters can fix within the next week. Although the Board of Elections could not provide a precise number of those votes on Tuesday, the Adams campaign said there were not enough for Ms. Garcia to overtake him.

Lindsey Green, a spokeswoman for Ms. Garcia, said in a statement that campaign officials were ''currently seeking additional clarity on the number of outstanding ballots and are committed to supporting the Democratic nominee.''

Under the ranked-choice voting system, voters could rank up to five candidates on their ballots in preferential order. Because Mr. Adams did not receive more than 50 percent of first-choice votes on the initial tally, the winner was decided by ranked-choice elimination.

Thirteen Democratic candidates were whittled down one by one, with the candidate with the fewest first-place votes eliminated, and those votes were redistributed to the voters' next-ranked choice. Ms. Wiley, who emerged late in the primary as a left-wing standard-bearer, was eliminated following the seventh round of tabulations.

Ms. Garcia won far more of Ms. Wiley's votes than Mr. Adams did, but not quite enough to close the gap.

Still, it was a striking result for Ms. Garcia, a candidate who until recently was little known and who lacked the institutional support and the political operation that helped propel Mr. Adams, a veteran city politician.

In heavily Democratic New York City, Mr. Adams will be the overwhelming favorite in the general election against Curtis Sliwa, the Republican nominee and the founder of the Guardian Angels.

''Now we must focus on winning in November so that we can deliver on the promise of this great city for those who are struggling, who are underserved and who are committed to a safe, fair, affordable future for all New Yorkers,'' Mr. Adams said in his statement.

The final-round matchup between Mr. Adams and Ms. Garcia illustrated sharp divisions within the Democratic Party along the lines of race, class and education.

Mr. Adams, who cast himself as a blue-collar candidate, led in every borough except Manhattan in the tally of first-choice votes and was the strong favorite among ***working-class*** Black and Latino voters. He also demonstrated strength with white voters who held more moderate views, especially, some data suggests, among those voters who did not have college degrees -- a coalition that has been likened to the one that propelled President Biden to the Democratic nomination in 2020.

Ms. Garcia, a former sanitation commissioner who ran on a message of technocratic competence, was popular with white moderate voters across the five boroughs.But she was overwhelmingly the candidate of Manhattan, dominating in some of the wealthiest ZIP codes in the country. She appealed to highly educated and more affluent voters across the ideological spectrum there and in parts of brownstone Brooklyn, even as she struggled to connect with voters of color elsewhere in the kinds of numbers it would have taken to win.

The results capped a remarkable stretch in the city's political history: The race began in a pandemic and took several unexpected twists in the final weeks, as one candidate confronted accusations of sexual misconduct dating back decades; another faced a campaign implosion; and Mr. Adams, under fire over residency questions, offered reporters a tour of the Brooklyn apartment where he says he lives.

Most recently, it was colored by a vote-tallying disaster at the Board of Elections, leaving simmering concerns among Democrats about whether the eventual outcome would leave voters divided and mistrustful of the city's electoral process. In a statement Tuesday night, Ms. Wiley thanked her supporters and expressed grave concerns about the Board of Elections.

''We will have more to say about the next steps shortly,'' the statement said. ''Today we simply must recommit ourselves to a reformed Board of Elections and build new confidence in how we administer voting in New York City. New York City's voters deserve better, and the B.O.E. must be completely remade following what can only be described as a debacle.''

Ms. Garcia came in third place among voters who cast ballots in person on Primary Day and during the early voting period, trailing both Mr. Adams and Ms. Wiley. But on the strength of ranked-choice voting, she surged into second place, with significant support from voters who had ranked Ms. Wiley and Andrew Yang, a former presidential candidate, as their top choices.

Ms. Garcia and Mr. Yang spent time during the final days of the race campaigning together and appearing on joint campaign literature, a team-up that plainly benefited Ms. Garcia under the ranked-choice process after Mr. Yang, who began the race as a front-runner but plummeted to fourth place on Primary Day, dropped out.

Ms. Wiley, a favorite of younger left-wing voters, had sought to build a broad multiracial coalition, and she earned the support of some of New York's most prominent Democratic members of Congress.

Mr. Adams and Ms. Garcia both ran as relative moderates on policy issues, including policing, education and their postures toward the business and real estate communities.

The apparent victory of Mr. Adams, who embraces a relatively expansive role for law enforcement in promoting public safety, amounts to a rebuke of the left wing of his party that promoted far-reaching efforts to scale back the power of the police. The race was a vital if imperfect test of Democratic attitudes around crime amid a national wave of gun violence in American cities.

Mr. Adams pushed for urgent action to combat a rise in gun violence and troubling incidents of subway crimes as well as bias attacks, especially against Asian Americans and Jews. While crime rates are nowhere near those of more violent earlier eras, policing still became the most divisive subject in the mayoral race.

But some older voters had first heard about Mr. Adams when he was a younger member of the police force, pushing to rein in police misconduct.

That background helped him emerge as a candidate with perceived credibility on issues of both combating crime and curbing police violence. And some Democrats, aware that national Republicans are eager to caricature their party as insufficiently concerned about crime, have taken note of Mr. Adams's messaging -- even if his career and life story are, in practice, difficult for other candidates to automatically replicate.

''What Eric Adams has said quite well is that we need to listen to communities that are concerned about public safety, even as we fight for critical reforms in policing and racial justice more broadly in our society,'' said Representative Sean Patrick Maloney, a New York Democrat and the chairman of the Democratic House campaign arm, who endorsed Mr. Adams the day before the primary.

While Mr. Adams was named the winner on Tuesday night, he faces significant challenges in unifying the city around his candidacy. He has faced scrutiny over transparency issues concerning his tax and real estate disclosures; his fund-raising practices and even questions of residency, issues that may intensify under the glare of the nominee's spotlight, and certainly as mayor, should he win as expected in November.

Michael Gold, Dana Rubinstein and Emma G. Fitzsimmons contributed reporting.Michael Gold, Dana Rubinstein and Emma G. Fitzsimmons contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/nyregion/eric-adams-wins.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/nyregion/eric-adams-wins.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The city's Board of Elections counted an additional 118,000 absentee ballots this week to reach the updated results. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Eric L. Adams (A1)

Eric L. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, on the night of the primary last month. He finished the night in first place and was able to retain his lead through the ranked-choice voting rounds.

Kathryn Garcia trailed Mr. Adams by only 8,400 votes in Tuesday's updated tally. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Maya Wiley slipped to third place in the ranked-choice voting rounds. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A11)

**Load-Date:** July 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden Wins In Georgia; Trump Takes North Carolina***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6193-J511-DXY4-X2W5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 14, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 526 words

**Byline:** By Glenn Thrush

**Body**

President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. narrowly defeated President Trump in Georgia, and Mr. Trump won North Carolina, as the two final states were called on Friday, a week and a half after Election Day.

Mr. Biden now has 306 electoral votes and Mr. Trump has 232. Mr. Biden became president-elect when he won Pennsylvania's 20 electoral votes on Saturday, passing the required 270-vote threshold.

The victory for Mr. Biden in Georgia -- a once reliably Republican state whose politics have shifted to the left -- means that he flipped five states Mr. Trump won in 2016. The others were Arizona, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. Mr. Trump did not flip any state that Hillary Clinton won in 2016.

All told, Mr. Biden won 25 states and the District of Columbia, home to a combined 57 percent of the country's population. Mr. Trump won the other 25 states. With more than 78 million votes nationwide, Mr. Biden also beat Mr. Trump in the popular vote by more than 5.3 million votes.

Mr. Biden's margin in Georgia currently stands at just over 14,000 votes, or 0.3 percentage points. Mr. Trump's margin in North Carolina is more than 73,000 votes, or 1.3 percentage points.

Mr. Biden's late surge in Georgia, thanks to his dominance in Atlanta, Savannah and the increasingly Democrat-friendly suburbs around both, transformed what had seemed to be a safe Trump state in early tabulations last week into one of the closest contests in the nation.

Mr. Trump spurred near-record turnout in the rural southwestern parts of the state bordering Alabama and the Florida Panhandle, the white outer suburbs and small cities, and the Appalachian northwest, which touches deep-red Tennessee. Mr. Biden was powered by high turnout among Black voters in Atlanta, and flipped some white voters in the suburban counties that ring the city.

Brad Raffensperger, the secretary of state overseeing Georgia's elections, came under fire this week from fellow Republicans when the Trump campaign and the Georgia Republican Party demanded a hand recount. On Friday, the state began one. State officials say it is unlikely to change the results.

Georgia's election drama is far from over: Both of the state's Senate races are going to January runoffs that will determine whether Republicans retain control of the chamber

In North Carolina, Black voters shattered early-voting records in the lead-up to Election Day. But despite a late get-out-the-vote push by Democrats to motivate Black and Latino voters, Mr. Trump -- who visited North Carolina a half-dozen times toward the close of the campaign -- was more effective in motivating his base of white ***working-class*** and rural voters.

Mr. Trump defeated Mrs. Clinton in North Carolina in 2016 by fewer than four percentage points, but the state has been reliably red for decades: Since 1976, the only Democrat to prevail has been Barack Obama, in 2008.

That Mr. Biden flipped Georgia, a state last won by a Democrat in 1992, was dramatic, but it was years in the making: Mr. Trump defeated Mrs. Clinton there in 2016 by five percentage points, a far slimmer margin than Republicans enjoyed in previous presidential elections.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/pageoneplus/14rex-3.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/13/pageoneplus/14rex-3.html)

**Load-Date:** November 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Eric Adams Wins Democratic Primary for New York City Mayor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6335-0DB1-DXY4-X03R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 6, 2021 Tuesday 13:53 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1717 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Mr. Adams held off Kathryn Garcia after a count of 118,000 absentee ballots saw his substantial lead on primary night narrow to a single percentage point.

**Body**

Mr. Adams held off Kathryn Garcia after a count of 118,000 absentee ballots saw his substantial lead on primary night narrow to a single percentage point.

[*Eric L. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/eric-adams-mayor-nyc), who rose from poverty to become an iconoclastic police captain and the borough president of Brooklyn, declared victory in the Democratic nomination for [*mayor of New York City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/20/nyregion/voters-dante-deblasio.html) on Tuesday, putting him on track to become the second Black [*mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/nyregion/eric-adams-issues-mayor.html) in the history of the nation’s largest city.

The contest, which was called by The Associated Press on Tuesday night, was seen as one of the city’s most critical elections in a generation, with the winner expected to help set New York on a recovery course from the economic devastation of Covid-19 and from the longstanding racial and socioeconomic inequalities that the pandemic deepened.

But as the campaign entered its final months, a spike in shootings and homicides drove public safety and crime to the forefront of voters’ minds, and [*Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/26/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html?searchResultPosition=5) — the only leading candidate with a law enforcement background — moved urgently to demonstrate authority on the issue.

Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html) held an[*8,400-vote lead*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/nyregion/nyc-mayor.html) over [*Kathryn Garcia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/07/nyregion/kathryn-garcia-mayor-nyc.html?searchResultPosition=4), a margin of one percentage point — small enough that it was not immediately clear whether she or any of his opponents would contest the result in court. All three leading candidates had filed to maintain the option to challenge the results. If no one does so, [*Mr. Adams’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/24/nyregion/eric-adams-crime-mayor.html?searchResultPosition=7) victory could be certified as soon as next week.

“While there are still some very small amounts of votes to be counted, the results are clear: An historic, diverse, five-borough coalition led by ***working-class*** New Yorkers has led us to victory in the Democratic primary for [*mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/08/nyregion/garcia-wiley-nyc-mayor.html) of New York City,” Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/10/nyregion/eric-adams-issues-mayor.html), 60, said in a statement.

Both [*Ms. Garcia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/nyregion/election-results.html) and [*Maya Wiley*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/nyregion/maya-wiley-reflects-on-being-a-role-model-for-young-girls-its-deeply-moving.html?searchResultPosition=2), a former counsel to Mayor Bill de Blasio who finished in third place, [*conceded on Wednesday morning*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/07/nyregion/kathryn-garcia-maya-wiley-eric-adams-mayor.html), noting the historic nature of their campaigns and congratulating [*Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/nyregion/eric-adams-ad-general-election.html).

The results came after the city’s [*Board of Elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/06/us/politics/new-york-election-conspiracy-theories.html?searchResultPosition=1) counted an additional 118,000 absentee ballots and then deployed a ranked-choice elimination system — the first time New York has used it in a mayoral election.

There are potentially several thousand votes still to be counted, which may include affidavit votes and defective absentee ballots that voters can fix within the next week. Although the [*Board of Elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/nyregion/nyc-elections-board-reform.html?searchResultPosition=2) could not provide a precise number of those votes on Tuesday, the Adams campaign said there were not enough for Ms. Garcia to overtake him.

Lindsey Green, a spokeswoman for Ms. Garcia, said in a statement that campaign officials were “currently seeking additional clarity on the number of outstanding ballots and are committed to supporting the Democratic nominee.”

Under the [*ranked-choice voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/nyregion/ranked-choice-voting-nyc.html?name=styln-nyc-mayor&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;variant=show&amp;is_new=false) system, voters could rank up to five candidates on their ballots in preferential order. Because [*Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/video/nyregion/100000007828222/eric-adams-voting-mayoral-primary.html?searchResultPosition=3) did not receive more than 50 percent of first-choice votes on the initial tally, the winner was decided by ranked-choice elimination.

Thirteen Democratic candidates were whittled down one by one, with the candidate with the fewest first-place votes eliminated, and those votes were redistributed to the voters’ next-ranked choice. Ms. Wiley, who emerged late in the primary as a left-wing standard-bearer, was eliminated following the seventh round of tabulations.

Ms. Garcia won far more of Ms. Wiley’s votes than [*Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html?searchResultPosition=13)did, but not quite enough to close the gap.

Still, it was a striking result for Ms. Garcia, a candidate who until recently was little known and who lacked the institutional support and the political operation that helped propel Mr. Adams, a veteran city politician.

In heavily Democratic New York City, [*Mr. Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/nyregion/eric-adams-video-interview.html?searchResultPosition=14) will be the overwhelming favorite in the general election against Curtis Sliwa, the Republican nominee and the founder of the Guardian Angels.

“Now we must focus on winning in November so that we can deliver on the promise of this great city for those who are struggling, who are underserved and who are committed to a safe, fair, affordable future for all New Yorkers,” Mr. Adams said in his statement.

The final-round matchup between Mr. Adams and Ms. Garcia illustrated sharp divisions within the Democratic Party along the lines of race, class and education.

Mr. Adams, who cast himself as a [*blue-collar candidate,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/26/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html) led in every borough except Manhattan in the tally of first-choice votes and was the strong favorite among ***working-class*** Black and Latino voters. He also demonstrated strength with white voters who held more moderate views, especially, [*some data suggests*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/opinion/eric-adams-kathryn-garcia-maya-wiley.html), among those voters who did not have college degrees — a coalition that has [*been likened*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/opinion/sway-kara-swisher-ron-klain.html) to the one that propelled President Biden to the Democratic nomination in 2020.

Ms. Garcia, a former sanitation commissioner who ran on a message of technocratic competence, was popular with white moderate voters across the five boroughs.But she was overwhelmingly the candidate of Manhattan, dominating in some of the wealthiest ZIP codes in the country. She appealed to highly educated and more affluent voters across the ideological spectrum there and in parts of brownstone Brooklyn, even as she struggled to connect with voters of color elsewhere in the kinds of numbers it would have taken to win.

The results capped a remarkable stretch in the city’s political history: The race began in a pandemic and took several unexpected twists in the final weeks, as one candidate confronted accusations of sexual misconduct dating back decades; another faced a campaign implosion; and Mr. Adams, under fire over residency questions, offered reporters a tour of the Brooklyn apartment where he says he lives.

Most recently, it was colored by a [*vote-tallying disaster*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/29/nyregion/adams-garcia-wiley-mayor-ranked-choice.html?name=styln-nyc-mayor&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;variant=show&amp;is_new=false) at the Board of Elections, leaving simmering concerns among Democrats about whether the eventual outcome would leave voters divided and mistrustful of the city’s electoral process. In a statement Tuesday night, Ms. Wiley thanked her supporters and expressed grave concerns about the Board of Elections.

“We will have more to say about the next steps shortly,” the statement said. “Today we simply must recommit ourselves to a reformed Board of Elections and build new confidence in how we administer voting in New York City. New York City’s voters deserve better, and the B.O.E. must be completely remade following what can only be described as a debacle.”

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Ms. Garcia and Mr. Yang spent time during the final days of the race campaigning together and appearing on joint campaign literature, a team-up that plainly benefited Ms. Garcia under the ranked-choice process after Mr. Yang, who began the race as a front-runner but plummeted to fourth place on Primary Day, dropped out.

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PHOTOS: The city’s Board of Elections counted an additional 118,000 absentee ballots this week to reach the updated results. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Eric L. Adams (A1); Eric L. Adams, the Brooklyn borough president, on the night of the primary last month. He finished the night in first place and was able to retain his lead through the ranked-choice voting rounds.; Kathryn Garcia trailed Mr. Adams by only 8,400 votes in Tuesday’s updated tally. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Maya Wiley slipped to third place in the ranked-choice voting rounds. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSE A. ALVARADO JR. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A11)

**Load-Date:** October 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What to Watch For in the Pennsylvania and North Carolina Primaries***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65G4-F6G1-DXY4-X21M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 17, 2022 Tuesday 09:25 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1391 words

**Byline:** Trip Gabriel

**Highlight:** In the pivotal swing state of Pennsylvania, voters will decide hugely consequential primaries for Senate and governor. And in North Carolina, Madison Cawthorn’s political fate will be determined.

**Body**

In the pivotal swing state of Pennsylvania, voters will decide hugely consequential primaries for Senate and governor. And in North Carolina, Madison Cawthorn’s political fate will be determined.

The most hotly anticipated event so far in the [*2022 primary season*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/2022-midterm-elections) will unfold today in Pennsylvania, where voters of both parties will make crucial decisions in competitive races for Senate and governor.

The results will help clarify the mood of the country: Pennsylvania, a longtime swing state, has often signaled what American voters are thinking.

And right now, a forceful centrifuge seems to be spinning Pennsylvanians further toward the partisan edges. The state once took pride in electing center-left or center-right politicians to its highest offices. But at least on the Republican side, that history counts for little right now.

The party’s high-octane primaries for governor and the Senate have grown increasingly turbulent in the final stretch. The leading candidates support ending abortion rights; some have amplified former President Donald J. Trump’s lies about a stolen 2020 election; and all seek to persuade voters of their MAGA bona fides.

North Carolina is also holding primaries that will decide the fate of Representative Madison Cawthorn, who has been plagued by scandals and made many enemies among fellow Republicans, as well as whether Mr. Trump’s support can lift a 26-year-old former football player and political novice in a House G.O.P. race.

Here’s what we’re watching for:

Can Trump again pull a struggling candidate over the finish line?

Polling shows the G.O.P. Senate primary in Pennsylvania in a statistical three-way tie between Dr. Mehmet Oz, the celebrity physician; David McCormick, a former hedge fund executive; and [*Kathy Barnette*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/13/us/elections/kathy-barnette-pennsylvania-senate.html), a far-right commentator who has surged in the campaign’s final days thanks to a compelling biography and sharp debating.

At one debate, Dr. Oz, who has [*won Mr. Trump’s endorsement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/09/us/politics/trump-doctor-oz-senate-endorsement.html), plaintively asked, “Why is everyone attacking me?” Ms. Barnette shot back: “Because you’re a liberal.’’

The Republican race, with five major candidates, has been dominated by nearly $40 million in television ads spent by the two early front-runners, Dr. Oz and Mr. McCormick, and their allies. Most of their TV spots have been attacks bludgeoning one another.

Ms. Barnette, on only a shoestring budget, vaulted into contention by emphasizing her personal story — she revealed she was born after her mother was raped at age 11, galvanizing anti-abortion voters — and by emerging as an alternative for Republicans unconvinced that Dr. Oz or Mr. McCormick were authentic conservatives.

The race will test the power of the Trump endorsement, even more than was the case in Ohio two weeks ago, where the former president [*pulled J.D. Vance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/04/us/politics/jd-vance-trump-ohio-fox-news.html), who had been polling in third place, over the finish line.

In Pennsylvania, Mr. Trump’s [*blessing of Dr. Oz*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/09/us/politics/trump-doctor-oz-senate-endorsement.html) met with major pushback pointing out that the doctor was a “Hollywood liberal” and friend of Oprah Winfrey’s. At a rally Mr. Trump held in Pennsylvania 11 days ago, [*boos greeted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/06/us/politics/trump-rally-dr-oz-jd-vance.html) the mention of Dr. Oz’s name.

“MAGA does not belong to President Trump,” Ms. Barnette said at one debate. Today will tell.

Will Democrats choose an outsider for Pennsylvania senator?

The Democratic Senate primary in Pennsylvania has revealed that many Democratic voters, like their Republican counterparts, increasingly desire political brawlers and reject consensus-seeking centrists.

That’s why John Fetterman, the state’s [*iconoclastic 6-foot-8 lieutenant governor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/14/us/politics/fetterman-pennsylvania-democratic-primary.html), has held a big polling lead for weeks. He has appealed to rank-and-file Democrats who want a progressive in office — as well as one they believe will appeal to ***working-class*** white voters. Over the weekend, he announced that [*he had had a stroke on Friday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/15/us/politics/john-fetterman-stroke.html) and was recovering.

Representative Conor Lamb, who won three races in districts thick with Trump supporters, has used that as a calling card to win the backing of many elected Democrats in the state, who believe he would be the most electable in November. That argument [*has not been embraced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/us/politics/conor-lamb-pennsylvania-congress.html) by rank-and-file Democrats, however.

A third candidate, Malcolm Kenyatta, a young left-leaning state lawmaker from Philadelphia, would be the first Black and openly gay nominee should he pull off an upset.

In the G.O.P. governor’s race, extremism is on the ballot.

Two big issues will overshadow Pennsylvania’s open race for governor in the fall: voting access and the future of abortion, should the Supreme Court overturn Roe v. Wade.

In the Democratic primary, [*Josh Shapiro*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/13/us/politics/josh-shapiro-mastriano-ad.html), the state’s attorney general, is running unopposed. Mr. Shapiro won multiple lawsuits brought by Trump supporters falsely claiming fraud in the 2020 election. He has said he will campaign on voting rights and on protecting abortion access, which could turn the race into a referendum on the issue.

Should Roe be overturned and abortion become an issue decided state by state, Pennsylvania’s Republican-led legislature is expected to pass a bill with sharp restrictions. Mr. Shapiro has said he would veto it. The top four Republicans vying for the nomination all support abortion bans.

Doug Mastriano, the clear G.O.P. front-runner in polls, was a key figure in Mr. Trump’s effort to overturn the 2020 election results in Pennsylvania. He chartered buses to the Jan. 6 protests in Washington and has made false claims of election fraud a central plank of his bid to lead a state that will be central to the 2024 presidential race. Mr. Trump weighed in on Saturday with [*a late endorsement of Mr. Mastriano*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/14/us/politics/trump-endorses-doug-mastriano.html).

Fearing that a Mastriano victory would put an unelectable hard-right nominee on the ticket, some prominent Republicans have coalesced in a Stop Mastriano effort behind Lou Barletta, a former congressman who appears second in most polls.

The other chief contenders in the race are Bill McSwain, a former U.S. attorney, and Dave White, a businessman.

How will Madison Cawthorn fare in North Carolina?

In North Carolina, the Republican primary for Senate is the most prominent contest, though most eyes are likely to be elsewhere: on whether the explosively controversial Representative Madison Cawthorn, 26, will be renominated in his district in the state’s far west.

The number to keep in mind is 30: The top finisher in North Carolina primaries must gain a plurality of more than 30 percent of the vote or face a runoff against the second-place candidate.

Mr. Cawthorn, who has seven challengers, has been in the news for all the wrong reasons: for [*possessing a firearm in an airport*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/26/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-gun-airport.html) (again), for [*driving with a revoked license*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/09/politics/cawthorn-charged-driving-revoked-license/index.html) (again) and for being rebuked by House Republican leaders for his comments suggesting that lawmakers [*had used cocaine and held orgies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/29/us/politics/madison-cawthorn.html).

It is unclear, however, if these antics will allow any of his rivals, most likely State Senator Chuck Edwards, to force a runoff. Cawthorn is still a national MAGA celebrity with Mr. Trump’s endorsement.

In the Senate race, for an open seat, Representative Ted Budd, also endorsed by Mr. Trump, [*has made a late surge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/16/us/politics/ted-budd-trump-north-carolina.html), seeming to surpass former Gov. Pat McCrory.

Mr. McCrory, whose conservative credentials include signing [*the infamous 2016 “bathroom bill”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/23/us/north-carolina-transgender-bathrooms.html) that targeted transgender people — and drew a major backlash upon his state — is no longer conservative enough for some Republicans. The anti-tax Club for Growth has brought millions of dollars in TV attack ads down on his head, accusing him of being “a liberal faker.”

The presumptive Democratic nominee is Cheri Beasley, a former chief justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court.

And don’t forget this House primary.

The power of Mr. Trump’s endorsement will also be tested in a G.O.P. primary for a new North Carolina congressional district, the 13th, which is south of Raleigh and is likely to be the state’s only competitive House seat in the fall.

The former president has thrown his weight behind a former college football player, [*Bo Hines, 26*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/11/us/politics/trump-bo-hines.html), who is also being backed by the Club for Growth’s political committee. His main opponent, Kelly Daughtry, is the daughter of a former majority leader of the statehouse. Many Republican officials in the state are pulling for Ms. Daughtry. Sound familiar?

PHOTO: Voters at a forum for Republican candidates last week in Newton, Pa. Republicans face primaries for governor and the Senate. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KRISTON JAE BETHEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 17, 2022

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[***Hitting the Rails, Biden Aims at Ohio and Pennsylvania Trump Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60YP-6TP1-JBG3-61VK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 1, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 21

**Length:** 1188 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck and Thomas Kaplan

**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. sought again to put President Trump 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, 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.

''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 neck-and-neck 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 in 2016, and it is not among the battlegrounds that Mr. Biden's campaign has been most focused on.

In Pennsylvania, 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 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.

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 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 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. Why should he be different?''

Katie Glueck reported from Alliance, and Thomas Kaplan from Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/30/us/politics/biden-ohio-pennsylvania-train.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/30/us/politics/biden-ohio-pennsylvania-train.html)

**Graphic**

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:** October 1, 2020

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[***The snowstorm won’t postpone a City Council election in New York.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61X4-57S1-JBG3-61JC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 1, 2021 Monday 23:03 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 568 words

**Byline:** Azi Paybarah

**Highlight:** Eight candidates running for a seat in Queens were split on whether to postpone the election because of the snow.

**Body**

Eight candidates running for a seat in Queens were split on whether to postpone the election because of the snow.

For weeks, eight people have campaigned for a City Council seat in eastern Queens amid several obstacles: the coronavirus pandemic, unfamiliar [*ranked-choice voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html), and [*attack ads*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html) aimed at a progressive candidate.

Then came the snow. Lots of it.

On Monday, when the storm brought more than 16 inches of snow to Central Park, at least four candidates unsuccessfully called on Mayor Bill de Blasio to postpone Tuesday’s special election. They are battling for a seat that was [*vacated in early November*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html) when Rory Lancman left to join Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo’s administration.

Deepti Sharma, a small-business owner in the race, focused on making the best of it, even if the scene outside her home, by 155th Street and Horace Harding Expressway, was not promising.

“Streets aren’t completely plowed,” she said on Monday evening. “The sidewalks are barely, barely shoveled, because snow is still coming and there’s wind blowing.” Her campaign had scrapped plans to hand out literature to shoppers at local supermarkets. “We’re spending a whole day calling people, letting them know that the election is still on,” she said.

At about 5:30 p.m., [*Mr. de Blasio tweeted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html) that Tuesday’s election would continue.

Sanitation plows “are making extra rounds near polling sites,” wrote the mayor, who earlier [*declared a state of emergency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html) for the city and asked people to restrict nonessential travel.

Several candidates wanted the election to be postponed. There had been three early voting sites — at York College, Queens College and Queensboro Hall — but in a district with limited mass transit, other voters were waiting for Tuesday.

“I don’t want someone endangering themselves to come out in a foot of snow to cast a vote,” one candidate, Soma Syed, a lawyer and small-business owner, said in a statement.

Another candidate, Dilip Nath, who has worked in health care technology, [*said that holding the election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html) would be a “disenfranchisement of voters that are not able-bodied and voters that do not have a reliable method of transportation.”

Two other candidates, Dr. Neeta Jain, a psychologist, and Mujib U. Rahman, president of the Bangladesh Society of North America, signed on to Ms. Syed’s statement.

“Turnout will be very very low if we go through,” Dr. Jain said in a brief interview. A little more than 5,500 people submitted ballots during nine days of early voting, which ended Sunday, according to figures from [*the New York City Board of Elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html).

Other candidates had urged for the election to continue. Moumita Ahmed, a progressive activist who was the target of the attack ads, [*wrote on Twitter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html), “***Working-class*** immigrant families in Queens have endured far, far worse than this snowstorm throughout this pandemic.” James F. Gennaro, a former City Council member, [*tweeted on Monday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html) for residents to “BEAT THE SNOW AND VOTE NOW!”

Also running for Mr. Lancman’s seat is Michael Earl Brown, who could not be reached on Monday.

The winner of Tuesday’s election will hold on to the seat only until Dec. 31. There will be a primary in June and a general election in November for a full four-year term.

PHOTO: Cars covered in snow in Queens on Monday, a day not conducive to campaigning or early voting in a special election for a City Council seat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dimitrios Kambouris/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 1, 2021

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[***'Top Gun: Maverick' Finds Some Fans in Washington***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XR-6RT1-DXY4-X4CY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 15, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1656 words

**Byline:** By Blake Hounshell and Marc Tracy

**Body**

The American right has embraced Tom Cruise's latest blockbuster, hailing the movie as a patriotic gesture produced in defiance of ''woke'' liberal elites and the Chinese Communist Party.

Today's newsletter is a guest dispatch from the Culture desk of The New York Times. Marc Tracy, who regularly covers the intersection of culture and politics, writes about Tom Cruise's latest blockbuster -- and the conservatives who are singing its praises.

''Top Gun: Maverick,'' the inescapable Tom Cruise blockbuster sequel, has been hailed as a cinematic throwback.

Many critics have interpreted its story of an increasingly obsolete pilot being called back to teach today's young people a thing or two for one last mission as a not-so-subtle allegory for the film itself. The movie uses relatively few computer-generated effects, stars the now-60-year-old Cruise and still managed to rake in more than $1 billion globally.

But amid praise from filmgoers who enjoyed the realistic dogfights, filmed with real planes that the real actors rode in, another community has embraced the movie for representing its values and vindicating its outlook: conservatives.

A sampling:

Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida: ''Any movie that's not, like, overwhelmingly woke can actually appeal to normal people.'' (DeSantis had not seen the movie at the time; he later saw it with his wife for her birthday, he said.)

The Fox News host Jesse Watters: ''We've been longing to see a movie that's unapologetically American, and we finally got it.''

Tomi Lahren, of the conservative sports outlet OutKick and Fox: ''The undeniable success of Top Gun is proof Americans are sick of WOKE and just want to watch good movies without a grandstanding social justice message!!''

The right vs. Hollywood

What's going on here?

There is a long tradition in which conservatives seize upon a cultural artifact produced by the entertainment industry, which is generally seen as left-leaning, and claim it for themselves.

''This goes back years,'' said Doug Heye, a Republican consultant, ''and included when we had a Hollywood actor or a reality TV star for president. They feel besieged by the culture. That feeling has only increased, and it's increased because there's even more substance behind it today.''

In a recent essay that discussed movies including ''Top Gun: Maverick,'' A.O. Scott, The Times's co-chief film critic, argued that one notable aspect of the conservative movement is its antagonism toward the entertainment industry.

''The modern right,'' Scott wrote, ''defines itself against the cultural elites who supposedly cluster on the coasts and conspire to impose their values on an unsuspecting public. In this account, Hollywood acts in functional cahoots with academia and the news media.''

And conservative activists' enmity toward Hollywood and other cultural tastemakers has perhaps never been more conspicuous.

DeSantis, whose ability to channel the movement might outstrip any other politician's (including, arguably, Donald Trump's), made waves this spring by revoking special tax and self-governing privileges that Disney had enjoyed for its enormous theme park in his state. The governor and the company had clashed over a newly passed state law that bars instruction about sexual orientation and gender identity in some grades.

So when ''Top Gun: Maverick'' entered this culture war with its uncomplicated, feel-good patriotism -- it is, among other things, a movie about how awesome U.S. Navy pilots can be, particularly when fighting America's enemies -- conservatives' sense of alignment arrived naturally.

''When something comes out,'' Heye said, ''and it's another version of 'Rocky IV''' -- the 1985 movie in which Sylvester Stallone's ***working-class*** boxer enters the ring with a Soviet fighter named Ivan Drago -- ''that becomes something that, for the activist part of the base that is looking for something that isn't critical of their values, they're going to grab onto.''

This is not to say that Maverick, Hangman and the other pilots in the new ''Top Gun'' film face off against today's equivalent of the Soviet Union, whatever country that might be. As in the first ''Top Gun,'' which came out in 1986, the enemy is not explicitly identified.

Nor are conservative politicians and media personalities claiming that the movie makes a compelling case for policies like tax cuts or gun rights. Their argument has less to do with what the film is than what it is not; less to do with its specific plot or characters than with its vibe.

''It's political in being apolitical,'' said Christian Toto, a conservative film critic and the proprietor of the website Hollywood in Toto.

He contrasted ''Top Gun: Maverick'' with some films in the Marvel Cinematic Universe and the gender-swapped ''Ghostbusters'' reboot. Their efforts at inclusivity -- diverse casting, same-sex relationships -- could come across, he said, as ham-handed, particularly to conservative audiences whose antennae are already on alert for filmmakers they see as trying to sneak some spinach in with the cinematic candy.

The conservative allergy to such moviemaking decisions flares up, Toto said, ''when the audience gets a sense it's being put in there awkwardly or there's a message being sent as opposed to organically woven into the story.''

That the pilots training for the daring raid in ''Top Gun: Maverick'' appear to come from a variety of backgrounds seems not like liberal messaging but realistic detail, Toto said.

''The cast is moderately diverse; there are women as pilots,'' he said. ''But they don't comment on it; they don't base the script around it. It's assumed these are just very talented people willing to risk their lives for the mission.''

An All-American hit

Box-office information does not contradict conservatives' case. About 55 percent of the opening weekend sales, an unusually high proportion, came from ticket-buyers over 35, according to Paramount.

And -- atypically for big box-office hits in this era -- ''Top Gun: Maverick'' has made more money in the United States and Canada than in the rest of the world, according to Box Office Mojo.

Which is itself a point of pride for some of the film's conservative backers: '''Top Gun: Maverick' Reaches $1 Billion Worldwide -- Without China,'' read a Breitbart headline last month. (The film was not released in China; earlier, a Chinese company withdrew its share of financing for the film because of its pro-American message, according to a Wall Street Journal report.)

Ben Shapiro, a popular conservative pundit who co-founded the website The Daily Wire, had predicted in his rave review that the movie would do better domestically than abroad. ''The film itself is pretty red, white and blue,'' he said. ''That's just assumed as the backdrop. Which is the way movies used to be.''

Stanley Rosen, a professor of political science at the University of Southern California who studies China's film industry, said in an interview that ''Top Gun: Maverick'' represented an emerging idea that ''Hollywood doesn't need China the way it used to.''

The film's success could signal that the days of Hollywood studios altering story lines to make their releases more palatable to Chinese censors and audiences -- a trend documented in a recent book, ''Red Carpet'' by Erich Schwartzel -- might slowly be on their way out.

And, Rosen added, whatever the film's actual political message, the argument that it has one at all might have its own uses.

''The controversy over wokeness or whether this is Reagan-era nostalgia,'' he said, is ''very good for the box office.''

What to read

Department of Never Tweet: The Securities and Exchange Commission is broadening its inquiry into Elon Musk's disclosures about Twitter, Kate Conger reports. The agency questioned whether a tweet Musk sent in May about the acquisition of Twitter should have been disclosed to the agency and investors.

Natalia Winkelman reviews ''Gabby Giffords Won't Back Down,'' a new documentary about the former Democratic congresswoman from Arizona who was shot in the head at a political event in 2011.

Follow the latest news from President Biden's trip to Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Table for two

Gavin Newsom, the governor of California, is sitting down for lunch on Friday in Washington with Vice President Kamala Harris, two of his aides have confirmed.

For Newsom, the trip, officially made so he could accept an award and discuss policy issues with lawmakers and Biden administration officials, has doubled as something of a cleanup tour.

On Thursday, Newsom said clearly that he supported President Biden to be the Democratic Party's nominee in 2024, amid a swirl of reporting by my Times colleagues and others suggesting that liberal voters are not especially enthused about another term for the 79-year-old commander in chief.

News reports, including in this humble newsletter, have noted that Newsom's rise as a leader in the Democratic Party could put him in competition with Harris, a longtime ally and possible future in-state opponent, in a hypothetical Biden-free presidential primary.

Those stories have gotten the attention of the vice president's office, while amusing the governor's staff back home in California. Both camps insist there's no rivalry between the two leaders.

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Newsom volunteered that Harris had been ''wonderful'' as vice president and said they were just going to ''check in, as we do constantly.'' He alluded, however, to unspecified ''constraints'' Harris had faced in office and said it was ''a difficult time for all of us in public life.''

Asked what was on the lunch menu, a Newsom aide joked in a text: ''Arsenic and arm wrestling. The usual.''

Thanks for reading.

-- Blake

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/2022/07/14/us/politics/top-gun-maverick-republicans.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/us/politics/top-gun-maverick-republicans.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: In ''Top Gun: Maverick,'' Tom Cruise trains a group of young pilots for a dangerous mission against an unidentified enemy. Conservatives, usually hostile to Hollywood, have embraced the movie for representing its values and vindicating its outlook. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT GARFIELD/PARAMOUNT PICTURES

VIVIEN KILLILEA/GETTY IMAGES PARAMOUNT PICTURES)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2022

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[***Overlooked Provisions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6643-3MV1-JBG3-60V1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 9, 2022 Tuesday 14:17 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1827 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** Climate has received most of the attention. But the Senate bill brings big changes to health care, too.

**Body**

Climate has received most of the attention. But the Senate bill brings big changes to health care, too.

The climate provisions in the bill [*that the Senate passed this weekend*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/08/07/us/climate-tax-deal-vote) are likely to be more consequential than anything else in the bill. They will lead to a sharp reduction in U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, experts say, and help address arguably the world’s most pressing crisis.

But the other main spending portion of the bill — dealing with health care — is significant in its own right, and it has received much less attention. (I virtually ignored the health provisions [*in a newsletter last week*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/28/briefing/joe-manchin-climate-deal-chuck-schumer.html). And take a look, below, at yesterday’s print front page of The Times.)

Today, I want to walk through both the substance of the health care provisions and the politics of them. As my colleagues Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Rebecca Robbins have written, those provisions appear to be [*the most substantial changes to health policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/05/us/politics/medicare-drug-costs.html) since the passage of Obamacare in 2010.

They are all but certain to become law, too. In coming days, the House Democrats are expected to pass the same bill that the Senate did, and President Biden has made clear he will quickly sign it.

Against inequality

The bill sets out to reduce Americans’ medical costs in two main ways. First, it uses federal subsidies to reduce the cost of both health insurance and prescription drugs. Second, the bill gives Medicare officials the power to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies, which will likely reduce the price that the companies charge for those drugs.

For these reasons, the bill is effectively an effort to use the health care system to reduce economic inequality, [*much as Obamacare was*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/24/business/24leonhardt.html). The bill’s benefits will flow overwhelmingly to poor, ***working-class*** and middle-class families. Its costs will be borne by increases in corporate taxes (which ultimately fall on shareholders, [*who skew wealthy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/08/briefing/biden-corporate-tax-astrazeneca-vaccine-particle-physics.html)) and reductions in the profits of pharmaceutical companies.

Some critics of the bill have argued that these profit reductions will lead pharmaceutical companies to spend less money developing future drugs and, in turn, to fewer promising treatments. And that’s a plausible concern. Economic incentives matter.

But most experts believe that the pharmaceutical industry will remain plenty profitable after the changes. The Congressional Budget Office — a nonpartisan body — estimates that the law will reduce the number of new drugs introduced over the next 30 years by about 1 percent. “It doesn’t seem that big a deal,” Juliette Cubanski of the Kaiser Family Foundation told me.

A breakdown

Here are the bill’s main provisions:

* It allows Medicare officials to negotiate over drug costs, giving companies less freedom to set high prices. That measure will mostly reduce Medicare’s spending, rather than families’ out-of-pocket costs — and, by extension, will reduce the federal budget deficit. But there will probably be spillover into out-of-pocket costs, especially for people in Medicare.
* The bill sets a $2,000 annual cap on the amount of money that any senior pays for drugs. After somebody hits that cap, a combination of the federal government, private insurers and drug companies will pay the remaining bills. Today, drugs for cancer, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis and some other diseases can cost people much more than $2,000 a year. The new provision will take effect in 2025 and will save a small percentage of older Americans thousands of dollars a year.
* The bill caps out-of-pocket insulin expenses at $35 a month for people in Medicare; many now pay more than $50 a month. The bill also makes adult vaccines free for both seniors and people in Medicaid, starting next year. The shingles vaccine, to take one example, now often costs more than $50.
* For middle- and lower-income people who buy private health-insurance plans through the Obamacare exchanges, federal subsidies will increase for three years. This change will help about 13 million people. A typical person in this situation now pays about $80 a month in premiums, thanks to temporary funding from Biden’s Covid relief bill. The price was set nearly to double next year but now will remain roughly the same, according to Krutika Amin of Kaiser.

Will people notice?

The political effects of the bill seem less clear.

I’ve written before about the work of Suzanne Mettler, a political scientist who has pointed out that many forms of modern government remain [*“submerged”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/21/briefing/biden-invisible-government-american-rescue-plan.html): Americans often do not realize when a federal policy is helping them, because the benefits come through tax credits or other shrouded forms. Modern government tends to be [*more technocratic and complex*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/12/opinion/fdr-warren-2020.html) than, say, Social Security.

It’s easy to imagine how these health care provisions might fit the pattern. Some of the benefits will flow through private insurance plans that people may not associate with a government program, Cubanski notes. Other provisions won’t take effect for a few years. Still others will spare people from facing a large medical bill, but they may not be aware that they would have faced such a bill if Congress had not passed a new law.

“These are meaningful changes,” Cubanski said, “but most people may not necessarily notice that things are changing for the better.”

All of which suggests that the law’s proponents will still have work to do after the House passes it and Biden signs it. “It’s always important for supporters of a policy to explain how it will benefit people,” said Sarah Lueck, a health care expert at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. “And that’s really hard work.”

THE LATEST NEWS

F.B.I. Searches Trump’s Home

* Donald Trump said the F.B.I. had [*raided his Mar-a-Lago home*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/08/08/us/trump-fbi-raid) and opened a safe. The search seems to concern records Trump took from the White House.

1. Republican officials [*reacted with fury*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/us/trump-fbi-right-reaction.html).
2. For background: This is [*the inquiry that led to the F.B.I.’s search*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/us/politics/justice-department-trump-classified.html).

Politics

* Judges in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana and Ohio have found that Republican-drawn maps are illegal gerrymanders. [*The states are using them anyway*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/us/elections/gerrymandering-maps-elections-republicans.html).

1. While in office, Trump asked why his generals couldn’t be [*as loyal as the Nazi commanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/us/politics/trump-book-mark-milley.html) who reported to Hitler, according to a new book.
2. The Democratic attorney general of Michigan wants [*an investigation of her likely Republican opponent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/us/politics/matthew-deperno-dana-nessel-michigan.html) over allegations of meddling with voting machines.

International

* When Ukraine announced a counteroffensive in the south, Russia diverted troops there. That has allowed Ukrainian forces to [*regain territory elsewhere*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/08/08/world/ukraine-russia-news-war).

1. Voters in Kenya are [*choosing their next president today*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/08/09/world/kenya-elections/in-kenyas-presidential-election-the-self-declared-hustler-vs-the-perennial-opposition-candidate?smid=url-share). The choice is between a self-declared “hustler” and a perennial opposition candidate.
2. Torrential rainfall hit Seoul, flooding homes, streets and subway stations. [*At least eight people died*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/world/asia/seoul-floods-south-korea.html).

Other Big Stories

* China announced plans for [*more drills in the waters around Taiwan*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/china-taiwan-explained.html), a sign that Beijing may keep up military pressure.

1. Two of the three men convicted of murdering Ahmaud Arbery were [*sentenced again to life in prison*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/us/arbery-killer-sentencing.html), this time on hate crime charges. The third was sentenced to 35 years.
2. The U.S. is planning to [*stretch its monkeypox vaccine supply*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/us/politics/monkeypox-vaccine.html) by allowing a method that injects one-fifth as much.
3. [*Olivia Newton-John*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/arts/olivia-newton-john-dead.html), star of “Grease” and a chart-topping pop singer in the 1970s and ’80s, died at 73.
4. The historian [*David McCullough*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/books/david-mccullough-dead.html) died at 89. His best-selling books imbued the people and events that shaped America with narrative drama.

Opinions

Americans’ obsession with lawns [*hurts the planet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/opinion/lawns-water-environment.html), Agnes Walton and Kirby Ferguson argue.

China’s global ambitions and domestic anxieties [*increase the chances of war in Taiwan*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-coming-war-over-taiwan-11659614417), Hal Brands and Michael Beckley write in The Wall Street Journal.

MORNING READS

Summer: What makes Coney Island special? The Times [*asked children on the boardwalk*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/05/magazine/coney-island-kids.html).

Check, please: Your dinner tabs have soared. [*This is why*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/09/dining/dinner-bill-restaurant-costs-inflation.html).

Legends: Two basketball greats are retiring. [*Only one is a household name*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/sports/basketball/sylvia-fowles-wnba-retiring.html).

A Times classic: Does mixing alcohol [*really make you sick*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/02/07/health/the-claim-mixing-types-of-alcohol-makes-you-sick.html)

Advice from Wirecutter: Fun [*two-player board games*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/reviews/best-two-player-board-games/).

Lives Lived: Issey Miyake, the Japanese fashion designer, was famous for his innovative, origami-like designs and cult perfumes. [*He died at 84*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/obituaries/issey-miyake-dead.html).

SPORTS NEWS FROM THE ATHLETIC

An ultimatum for the ages: N.B.A. superstar Kevin Durant and the Brooklyn Nets could be headed for a standoff after [*the forward asked*](https://theathletic.com/3485297/2022/08/08/kevin-durant-nets-trade-steve-nash/) Nets owner Joe Tsai to either trade him, or fire coach Steve Nash and general manager Sean Marks. When did the mercurial star turn on the team’s plans, anyway? [*Something isn’t adding up*](https://theathletic.com/3488165/2022/08/08/durant-nets-trade-request-questions/).

College football voting shenanigans: It was mostly business as usual in the college football [*preseason coaches poll*](https://theathletic.com/3487150/2022/08/08/alabama-preseason-coaches-poll/). A suspicious first-place vote for Texas, however, is the stuff of sports radio hosts’ dreams. We have the most [*overrated and underrated*](https://theathletic.com/3487412/2022/08/08/coaches-poll-preseason-rankings-overrated-underrated/) teams. Bulletin board material!

The Yankees come up for air: New York lost five straight games before [*last night’s victory*](https://theathletic.com/3488920/2022/08/09/yankees-matt-carpenter-injury/) over the Seattle Mariners, but it sure felt like more. Aaron Judge hit his 44th home run of the season, [*putting him on pace*](https://theathletic.com/3474913/2022/08/05/aaron-judge-hr-tracker/) for 65 this year.

ARTS AND IDEAS

A more authentic Mexican pizza

To many Americans, the phrase “Mexican pizza” conjures up the Taco Bell menu item — tostadas stacked and shellacked with meat, bean and cheese. But Latino-owned pizzerias are [*reclaiming the name for their own creations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/dining/mexican-pizza.html), Regan Stephens writes.

As a new generation of Mexican chefs opened pizza restaurants around the U.S., they searched for ways to meld their cuisine with the Italian offerings. Pizzas offered a perfect canvas, with the tomato sauce replaced by tomatillo, guajillo pepper or mole sauces. Toppings can include meats — carne asada, birria, chorizo — and vegetables such as corn, roasted poblanos and avocados.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

If you’re in the mood for more Mexican cuisine, [*try broiled fish tacos*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019586-broiled-fish-tacos).

Theater

A new Elton John-Shaina Taub musical adaptation of “The Devil Wears Prada” [*isn’t yet ready-to-wear*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/08/theater/the-devil-wears-prada-review.html).

What to Read

Elisabeth Griffith’s “Formidable” chronicles American [*women’s battle for fair treatment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/02/books/review/formidable-elisabeth-griffith.html).

Late Night

The hosts [*talked about Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/arts/television/stephen-colbert-trump-toilet.html).

Now Time to Play

The pangram from yesterday’s Spelling Bee was gratify. Here is [*today’s puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee). (Do you have questions about the Bee for its editor, Sam Ezersky? He’ll answer them in a future newsletter. [*Submit them here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/04/briefing/what-questions-do-you-have-about-spelling-bee.html).)

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Thin and graceful (five 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. — David

P.S. Carlos Lozada, a Washington Post book critic, is joining Times Opinion [*as a columnist*](https://www.nytco.com/press/carlos-lozada-joins-the-times-as-opinion-columnist/).

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/08/09/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about Joe Manchin. On “[*The Ezra Klein Show*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/09/opinion/ezra-klein-podcast-will-macaskill.html),” William MacAskill explains “longtermism.”

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: The Capitol after Democrats passed the Inflation Reduction Act on Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kenny Holston for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 9, 2022

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[***A Century of William Brown***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FR-WK71-DXY4-X0F2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 15, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 11; ESSAY

**Length:** 1443 words

**Byline:** By Saskia Solomon

**Body**

Where to begin with William Brown? The stubbornly disheveled, snub-nosed 11-year-old protagonist of the writer Richmal Crompton's wildly popular ''Just William'' stories, 100 this year, is an astutely rendered portrait of a 1920s British schoolboy. His antics -- broken drawing-room windows, midnight feasts, theft -- have captured the imagination of millions over the decades, the stories adapted for radio, stage and television.

As with many British millennials, my introduction to William, at age 7, came via the ''Just William'' audiobook, which my mother had chanced upon at a secondhand sale. My family was immediately hooked by the gleefully eventful, frenetic stories, frequently convulsing with laughter. ''Just William'' soundtracked our every car journey, and I'd often fall asleep with it churning away on my Walkman, dreaming of joining William's gang, the Outlaws.

But more than anything, I longed to be William. A self-styled scoundrel, William runs riot through the family home, antagonizing his older siblings, Robert and Ethel, and exasperating Mr. and Mrs. Brown, who wonder, out loud, how best to tame him. No family function is safe when William is present -- but his absence is also cause for concern. There's always the sneaking suspicion he's up to no good.

As a British child growing up in France, I'd say it was these stories, along with a heavy dose of Enid Blyton, that were to blame for my skewed idea of ''Englishness.'' When we moved home, my 12-year-old self was greatly confused: Where were the shillings, and why weren't people saying ''Bob's your uncle'' anymore? To say I was disappointed would be an understatement.

For many, mention of ''Just William'' summons a nostalgic pastoral of interwar childhood: one of twirling maypoles on somnolent village greens, vicarages frequented by well-meaning, nosy parishioners, games of conkers and knock-down ginger played till dusk. The reality, of course, is that few readers will have experienced such quaint youths: the carefree, sugarcoated gleam of a vanished Britain. As a friend of mine puts it, the freedoms enjoyed by William in a safe and bucolic universe contrasted starkly with the realities of her own childhood: ''You could go to the fields or the fair by yourself. There wasn't so much parental control.''

It's a childhood that now feels alien, the stories brimming with action: The boys vex stray cats, make ''licorice water,'' sling homemade catapults, walk for miles across fields and through hedgerows, climb trees, fall into ditches, and draw the ire of their schoolmasters, sweet-shop owners and local farmers, and sometimes all at once. It's worth noting here that the ''Just'' of ''Just William,'' the title of Crompton's first official book of William stories, published in 1922, is not a nod to his moral character, but rather a kind of shrug: Take him or leave him, he won't change.

'I often refer to him as my Frankenstein monster,' Crompton said in a 1968 radio interview. 'I've tried to get rid of him, but he's quite impossible to get rid of.'

The mischief isn't born of malice: It's most often a product of benign misunderstanding. And yet, in a world of Blyton books, filled with ''well-to-do'' children embarking on heroic countryside adventures, or slumming it at boarding school, the William stories could feel outrageous, even dangerous. The author's ambiguous name, especially in the series' early years, added the exciting implication for some female readers -- normally limited to more moralistic fare -- that these were ''boys' books.''

Perhaps this appealed to Crompton herself. A vicar's daughter and lifelong Conservative, Crompton was born in Lancashire in 1890, to a comfortable, middle-class household. She taught classics in an all-girls school until the age of 32, when she contracted polio. The illness left her disabled, and, forced to abandon teaching, she turned to writing. Over the next 50 years, Crompton would publish more than 300 ''Just William'' stories as well as 40 novels for adults (none of which has proved as lasting a literary legacy). She was halfway through her 359th story at the time of her death, in 1969.

Of course, William has not made it to the 21st century unscathed. One story, ''William and the Nasties'' (1935), was deemed to have antisemitic undertones (although intended as an allegory of fascism) and has been withdrawn from reprints. Certain turns of phrase, and incidences of ''blacking up'' and playing ''Cowboys and Indians,'' as well as treatment of animals, have been reviewed by the books' publisher, Macmillan.

And yet, William has escaped the full opprobrium of many of his nostalgic contemporaries. Perhaps some of this longevity is due to Crompton's decision to adapt the stories to the period. Rather than preserving the narrative in a kind of literary aspic, the cast moves with the times. Fashions and slang change; the domestic setup morphs. In the first books the Brown household is large, boasting stables and a summer house. There's a maid, a cook and a nanny. By the '50s only the maid remains, the house having shrunk to a modest semi. A television suddenly appears.

Even today, the ''Just William'' enthusiasm shows no sign of letting up, with 12 million copies sold, translations in more than 20 languages and five new William stories broadcast on BBC Radio 4 last December. New parents nostalgically purchase the books for their offspring, or discover the joys of William through them. Some view the books as collectors' items, and scour yard sales for memorabilia.

One attraction is the stories' relative difficulty. Rather than pandering to the young reader, the text is challenging, peppered with such daunting words as ''ignominious.'' (This is no accident: Crompton, who set out as a writer of serious fiction, had not particularly targeted William to child readers.)

Crompton was known for her mastery of dialogue. For loquacious William, Crompton employs a kind of ''royal cockney'' -- an affectation of ***working-class*** speech. He mangles the ends of words: He's ''right'n wron's''; ''it's not'' becomes ''s'not.'' William's speech differs sharply from that of his siblings: Haughty Ethel performs a kind of saintly enunciation, while the ever-lovelorn Robert is sometimes so overcome he cannot speak. Violet Elizabeth Bott, the lisping village girl who always wants ''in'' with the boys' plans, threatens to ''thcream and thcream till I'm thick.'' Mr. Brown, meanwhile, is all exclamation: ''William!''

Martin Jarvis, the actor who voiced the highly popular ''Just William'' audiobooks -- who is William to several generations -- feels Crompton's mastery of nuance underlies the series' more obvious nostalgic appeal. ''She showed incredible psychology and understanding of not only how an 11-year-old boy just after the First World War might be, but also how the adults around him would act. The picture she paints of just about every form of adult from that time is incredibly accurate.''

For Jarvis, William continues to exert influence. He even sees elements of William's character in the current prime minister -- William's hair is, after all, ''like a neglected lawn.'' (Although Crompton also gives William a slight air of compunction, ending the Boris comparisons.)

As is the case for many successful children's authors, Crompton occasionally chafed at the constraints of association with a single character. While she published scores of novels for adults, none of her characters proved quite as beloved as William. ''I often refer to him as my Frankenstein monster,'' Crompton said in a 1968 radio interview with the BBC. ''I've tried to get rid of him, but he's quite impossible to get rid of.'' After all, as she concedes, ''there is something rather appealing about him.''

In her lifetime, the resolutely British stories found a global readership, most notably in Germany, the Netherlands and India, where ''Just William'' has long figured in elementary school English classes. This amused Crompton no end: ''I don't think William would have approved at all, of his adventures being turned into a school textbook.''

Reading the books anew, I'm comforted by the familiarity of William, the Outlaws and the Browns in their world of village fetes, overcast summers and amateur theater. From a time overshadowed by wars, poverty and fascism, the child's-eye view on life remains steadfastly joyful.

I've grown up, but in this crucial aspect of life the stories remain stubbornly fixed: Though William celebrates countless birthdays and Christmases, he never ages.

He may have turned 100, but unlike his readers, William will always be ''just'' 11.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/books/review/richmal-crompton-just-william.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/books/review/richmal-crompton-just-william.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: William Brown plays pirate. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM ADVERTISING ARCHIVE/COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION)

**Load-Date:** May 15, 2022

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[***Tillie Olsen Captured the Toll of Women’s Labor — on Their Lives and Art***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6291-FDN1-JBG3-634T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 25, 2021 Thursday 11:55 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 2968 words

**Byline:** A.O. Scott

**Highlight:** Through her rigorous depictions of ***working-class*** families, this mid-20th-century writer of fiction conveyed the costs of living for burdened mothers, wives and daughters.

**Body**

Through her rigorous depictions of ***working-class*** families, this mid-20th-century writer of fiction conveyed the costs of living for burdened mothers, wives and daughters.

Tillie Olsen’s reputation rests principally on “Tell Me a Riddle,” a collection of three short stories and a novella published in 1961. It was her first book, but Olsen, who was born in 1912, had started writing many years before, and seems to belong, with respect to style and subject matter, as much to the Great Depression as to the Eisenhower Era or the ’60s. The four pieces in “Tell Me a Riddle” are lyrical bulletins of ***working-class*** family life, charged with emotional detail and delivered with an attention to the rhythms of consciousness more rigorous and powerful than most of what is called realism.

In the first story, “I Stand Here Ironing,” a classic almost from the moment it appeared in “Best American Short Stories of 1957,” we don’t just inhabit the mind of the narrator, a woman reflecting, in the midst of housework, on her daughter’s childhood and her own experience as a mother. Her words, addressed directly to someone — a social worker, a teacher or another well-meaning stranger — land with an almost physical weight. “All that compounds a human being is so heavy and meaningful in me that I cannot endure it tonight,” she says. You can feel the gravity of the words, and the presence of the body that utters them.

The woman isn’t named, and her situation is shorn of the kind of references that might situate her in a particular place or time. You could say that she speaks for generations of women who have faced poverty and disappointment. But there is nothing abstract or general about the story she tells — which is mostly the story of how, in a period of hardship and domestic instability, she temporarily gave up custody of her firstborn child — because the difficulty of telling it registers in every sentence. Whenever I reread this story, I’m startled by how little space it takes up: less than 10 pages in the most recent paperback edition, from the University of Nebraska Press. And yet it’s somehow as dense, as rich, as packed with life and feeling and “all that compounds a human being” as something 10 or 100 times as long.

Is there a place in literature — in our canons and course listings, in our criticism and theory — for unwritten work?

The other parts of “Tell Me a Riddle” — “Hey Sailor, What Ship?,” “O Yes” and the long title story — are a bit looser and more discursive, with expansive dialogue and a wider range of characters, but they all share this sense of compression, of experience distilled to a piercing, concentrated essence.

A mother contemplates her own past and the future facing a child “of anxious, not proud, love.” A couple with young children make room for a beloved, difficult family friend who tests their patience and the limits of his charm. Two little girls, one Black and one white, find their friendship undermined as they move toward adolescence by the subtle pressures of social conformity as racial “sorting.” An elderly couple, their seven children grown and scattered, quarrel bitterly about how to spend the years that remain. The husband is full of plans and projects: He wants to sell their house and move to the “happy communal life” of a cooperative senior citizen residence, to join a reading circle, to visit children and grandchildren. His wife, who “would not exchange her solitude for anything,” experiences the need for peace and quiet as a kind of rage. “Always a ravening inside, a pull to the bed, to lie down, to succumb.”

After a life of hard work, of maternal and conjugal love, she is tired, but the fatigue is felt as hunger, as “tumult,” as a state of restlessness. This weariness links the mothers in the four stories, some of whom may be the same woman encountered at different moments, though it’s also possible that the matriarch in “Tell Me a Riddle” is the mother of the other three. They are all, in any case, always in motion and on their feet, busy with jobs, housework and emotional labor, their overtaxed attention parceled out among babies, toddlers, schoolchildren, teenagers and husbands. Their testimonies are not complaints. Olsen isn’t rubbing the reader’s face in misery, but rather giving an honest assessment of the psychological and physical costs of living. “Oh why is it like it is and why do I have to care?” a girl in “O Yes” asks her mother. The answer is unspoken: “Thinking: caring asks doing. It is a long baptism into the seas of humankind, my daughter. Better immersion than to live untouched. … Yet how will you sustain?”

In other words: How will you not be worn out? How will you not succumb? The moral and existential danger of tiredness is a widespread modern malady, but an unusual literary subject. The 20th-century novel is enchanted by ennui and seduced by alienation, perpetually fascinated by the stultifying, dehumanizing effects of modern life. But exhaustion of the kind that these women contend with — the everyday burden of their unending busyness — is rarely represented in fiction. The reason is suggested on the first page of “I Stand Here Ironing”: “And when is there time to remember, to sift, to weigh, to estimate, to total?”

It goes without saying that there is no time to write, and Olsen’s career is built on sifting and weighing the forces that conspire to prevent writing from happening. Even though she was almost 50 when “Tell Me a Riddle” appeared, she wasn’t exactly a late bloomer. Olsen came to her vocation early, embarking on a novel — published in 1974 as “Yonnondio: From the Thirties” with a title borrowed from Walt Whitman — when she was barely in her 20s. The themes and moods of “Tell Me a Riddle” are prefigured in “Yonnondio,” an episodic chronicle of a family chasing work and security in the mining camps and factory towns of the Great Plains.

The raw material was Olsen’s own childhood. She was born Tybile Lerner in Omaha, one of six children of Jewish immigrant parents who had fled Russia after the failed revolution of 1905. Like many Americans of her generation and background, she spent the 1930s balancing — or rather juggling, while riding a unicycle on a high wire — radical politics, artistic ambition, wage labor and domestic life. With Jack Olsen, a printer and labor organizer, she raised four children while working various office and factory jobs. She was also a journalist and an activist, publishing (in an early issue of Partisan Review) a vivid account of the San Francisco general strike of 1934, during which she was briefly jailed. “Listen, it is late,” she wrote at the end of that dispatch. “I am feverish and tired. Forgive me that the words are feverish and blurred. You see, If I had time, If I could go away. But I write this on a battlefield.”

The battle continued, even if the terrain shifted. Olsen was a writer her whole life — she died in 2007 — but she didn’t write much. Not because she was blocked or lacked material. The blockage — the obligation of earning a living and tending children, the “immersion” in caring that was a source of fulfillment as well as frustration — was the subject matter. The silence that surrounds those stories is its own kind of statement.

Olsen’s strongest belief was the idea that people should have the power to represent themselves.

Is there a place in literature — in our canons and course listings, in our criticism and theory — for unwritten work? The idea seems almost preposterous; it’s hard enough to keep up with the books that have been written without worrying over the ones that haven’t. But every writer knows the weight, the power, the literal, palpable reality of silence. It isn’t just that negative space gives shape to words; it’s an active presence, an animating ghost in the machine.

Literary ethics prompts us to attend to the unheard and the marginal; curiosity or impatience with the same old stuff sends us in search of the forgotten and the neglected. But what kind of attention do we owe — what kind of attention is it even possible to pay — to the unvoiced?

This isn’t an epistemological question: It’s a political question, having to do with privilege and visibility, with how the resources that make writing possible — the time, the space, the confidence — are distributed. The best-known articulation of the problem of unequal access to the tools of writing is surely “A Room of One’s Own,” Virginia Woolf’s clearsighted feminist polemic from 1929.

In “Silences,” an essay that appeared in Harper’s in 1965, Olsen broadened the terms of Woolf’s argument, surveying the gaps and lost years in various careers and the different reasons (censorship, illness, temperamental reticence) that even outwardly successful writers didn’t write. But she homed in on a vaster silence of “those whose waking hours are all struggle for existence; the barely educated; the illiterate; women. Their silence the silence of centuries as to how life was, is, for most of humanity.”

She included herself. “Where the gifted among women (and men) have remained mute, or have never attained full capacity,” she continued, “it is because of circumstances, inner and outer, which oppose the needs of creation.” And she concluded with a brief survey of the circumstances that accounted for her own silence and its occasional breaking: “This was the time of festering and congestion. For a few months I was able to shield the writing with which I was so full, against the demands of jobs on which I had to be competent, through the joys and responsibilities of family. For a few months. Always roused by the writing, always denied. ‘I could not go to write it down. It convulsed and died in me. I will pay.’ My work died. What demanded to be written, did not. It seethed, bubbled, clamored, peopled me. At last moved into the hours meant for sleeping. I worked now full time on temporary jobs, a Kelly, a Western Agency girl (girl!), wandering from office to office, always hoping we could manage two, three writing months ahead. Eventually there was time.”

In her 40s, Olsen, who had never gone to college, was admitted to Stanford’s creative writing program as a Wallace Stegner fellow. It was there that she found the physical and psychic room, and the material support, to finish three of the stories that would appear in “Tell Me a Riddle.” In the wake of that book’s success, she was awarded one of the early fellowships at the Radcliffe Institute, which had been established to provide money, office space, collegiality and institutional backing for women scholars and artists. According to “[*The Equivalents*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/books/review/the-equivalents-maggie-doherty.html?searchResultPosition=5),” Maggie Doherty’s history of the institute’s early years, Olsen arrived in Cambridge with the intention of producing “the great proletarian novel,” an epic of toil, oppression and resistance in the tradition of Tolstoy and James T. Farrell.

What she produced instead was “Silences,” which originated as a seminar presentation at Radcliffe. Doherty’s account of it is one of the most exhilarating passages in her book, dramatizing how a rambling, two-hour talk coalesced around a radical idea, the vision of “a world in which all people could explore their creative capacities and fulfill their ambitions without fear of going broke.”

The thesis of “Silences” had been implicit at least since “Yonnondio.” While the narrative dwells on the physical hardships endured by Jim and Anna Holbrook — in particular “the weariness” and brutality that nearly destroy Anna — the reader’s attention gravitates toward Mazie, their older daughter, who is graced with the gifts of imagination and perception. A relatively prosperous neighbor recognizes her potential, giving her books (“Those fairy tales. Wilde’s, And the Dickens and Blake, and that book of Greek myths”) and advice: “Mazie. Live, don’t exist. Learn from your mother, who has had everything to grind out life and yet has kept life.”

Mazie’s father sells the books before she has a chance to read them, but it’s still tempting to see her as a portrait of the artist as a young woman. A different kind of novel might have charted her awakening, her determination (to continue the Joycean paraphrase) to forge in the smithy of her soul the uncreated conscience of her class. But to hitch Mazie’s aspirations to a fable of self-making would also be to sell her out, to risk betraying the numberless girls like her — “most of humanity,” by Olsen’s later estimate — whose minds were just as quick and sensitive but who lacked the luck or the entitlement to be heard.

“Silences” acknowledges many reasons that writers can’t or don’t write, so it’s impossible to say for sure why Olsen’s great proletarian novel never came into being. But her own work, and Doherty’s shrewd rendering of her circumstances in the 1960s, offer some clues. At Radcliffe, she was both a cherished colleague — especially close to the poets Anne Sexton and Maxine Kumin, the other principal characters in “The Equivalents” — and an outlier. The other fellows were mostly younger, Eastern, middle-class, academically credentialed women. The standard account of American social mobility would herald the entrance into such company as an overcoming of obstacles, a personal transformation tinged with loss but nonetheless sealed in triumph.

That story, after all — a story of self-making that is also assimilation — is one of the dominant American narratives. It forms the template for countless coming-of-age stories, memoirs and novels, linking such ideologically disparate works as “Black Boy,” “The Adventures of Augie March” and “Hillbilly Elegy.” But that isn’t the kind of story Olsen wanted to tell, even as it mirrored to some extent the arc of her own biography. (After Radcliffe, she went on to teach literature at other institutions, including Amherst College.)

Nor did she entirely trust the idea that a writer could give voice to the voiceless. The voices in her fiction feel very close to her own. To go further beyond the boundaries of self would involve an imaginative leap — and an ethical risk — that she was reluctant to take. Her strongest belief was the idea that people should have the power to represent themselves.

Doherty cites Marx’s famous description of how communism “makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner.” Olsen, adding “child-rearing to the mix,” imagines a world in which writing (or other artistic creation) would be available to everyone because it would be an aspect of ordinary experience, as valuable and common as any other kind of work, care or play.

This utopian longing is perhaps most powerfully realized in a book that Olsen didn’t write. In the early 1970s, she came across an old copy of “Life in the Iron Mills,” an 1861 novella by Rebecca Harding Davis (who is also mentioned in “Silences”). Olsen persuaded the Feminist Press to publish a new edition, to which she contributed “a biographical interpretation” that is longer than Davis’s original text. It’s a tour de force of sympathetic scholarship, in which Olsen finds uncanny echoes of her own fiction in Davis’s life and work.

Through Olsen’s eyes, Davis becomes both an exemplary woman writer and a cautionary figure, continually wresting time and space for writing from the demands of marriage and motherhood, and trying to protect her intellectual integrity from the pressures of a fickle, commercially compromised and often hypocritical literary establishment. A prolific and popular author in the 1860s and ’70s, Davis (who died in 1910) was hardly silent herself, but in “Life in the Iron Mills” she created an avatar of silence that could have sprung from Olsen’s own notebooks.

Hugh Wolfe, Davis’s protagonist, is a worker, first seen as part of an undifferentiated mass of men with “brains full of unawakened power” making their way through the smoke and noise of a factory town in western Virginia before the Civil War. He is also an artist. While his fellow workers spend their time off in the saloons and brothels, he makes sculptures out of korl, the waste product left behind by the smelting process. He is looked at with benevolent interest by some of the local elite, but his talent leads to ruin rather than triumph.

“Life in the Iron Mills,” sold to The Atlantic Monthly as an exposé of working conditions in early industrial America, turns out to be a parable about art. And those subjects aren’t as far apart as they might appear, at least if you read Rebecca Harding Davis through the lens of Tillie Olsen.

As a teacher, Olsen developed pioneering courses in feminist and ***working-class*** literature. She helped change the study of American literature, opening its canon to neglected voices and traditions. This project continues, not without controversy, and is sometimes faulted for politicizing art, for putting matters of gender, class and race in the way of supposedly more universal concerns.

Olsen’s slender oeuvre delivers a mighty rebuke to that objection, since there is no experience more common — and also, paradoxically, none more unique — than dwelling in a body that desires, all at once, to work, to love, to create and to rest. This is the essence of both her weary, patient maternal wisdom and her radical criticism of the way things are. How to sustain?

Let her be. So all that is in her will not bloom — in how many does it? There is still enough left to live by. Only help her to know — help make it so there is cause for her to know — that she is more than this dress on the ironing board, helpless before the iron.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY OLSEN FAMILY ARCHIVES) (BR1); Tillie Olsen with her daughter Laurie. (BR24); Tillie with her husband, Jack Olsen. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JILL KREMENTZ, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED) (BR25)

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2021

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[***G.O.P. Seizes on Inflation, Putting Democrats in Peril***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XR-6RT1-DXY4-X4BX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 15, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1701 words

**Byline:** By Alan Rappeport

**Body**

Economists warn that a blitz of midterm election campaign ads could push consumer prices even higher.

WASHINGTON -- Triple-digit gasoline bills. Bulging hamburger prices. A Fourth of July holiday that broke the bank.

Prices are rising at the fastest rate in four decades, a painful development that has given Republicans a powerful talking point just months ahead of the midterm elections. With control of Congress very much in play, Republicans are investing heavily in a blitz of campaign advertisements that portray a dark sense of economic disarray as they seek to make inflation a political albatross for President Biden and Democrats.

According to Kantar's Campaign Media Analysis Group, candidates running in House, Senate and governor races around the country have spent nearly $22 million airing about 130,000 local and national television ads that mention inflation from early April through the beginning of July. Inflation was the 10th most common issue mentioned by Democrats and 11th most common for Republicans, according to the data, underscoring how critical the issue is to both parties this election cycle.

The data released Wednesday showing that prices in June climbed 9.1 percent over the past year gave Republicans fresh ammunition against Mr. Biden and his party, ammunition that includes faulting Democrats for passing a $1.9 trillion stimulus package last year and efforts to push through additional spending in a sweeping climate and economic package known as ''Build Back Better.''

The intensifying focus on inflation is already weighing on Mr. Biden's poll numbers. A New York Times/Siena College poll this week showed his approval at a meager 33 percent, with 20 percent of voters viewing jobs and the economy as the most important problem facing the country. Inflation and the cost of living followed closely behind. The poll also showed that the race for control of Congress is surprisingly tight.

While gas prices have fallen from their $5 a gallon peak and there are signs that inflation might be slowing, consumers are unlikely to feel better off anytime soon. Gas prices are still much higher than they were a year ago, with the average national price for a gallon at $4.60 versus $3.15 in 2021, according to AAA.

''It's a very negative thing politically for the Democrats,'' said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard University and former Obama administration economic adviser. ''My guess is that the negative views about inflation are so deeply baked in that nothing can change in the next few months to change them.''

The White House, while acknowledging the pain that inflation is causing, has tried to deflect responsibility, saying that it is a global problem and attributing it to shortages of food and oil stemming from Russian President Vladimir V. Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden called the latest Consumer Price Index ''out-of-date'' given the recent fall in gas prices and said the data ''is a reminder that all major economies are battling this Covid-related challenge, made worse by Putin's unconscionable aggression.''

However, Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen has acknowledged that the pandemic aid package contributed to inflation by spurring demand in the economy. Last month, she admitted that she was ''wrong'' to describe price increases as ''transitory.''

Republicans have latched on to that as proof that Democrats and the Biden administration misled voters and mishandled the economy and to claim -- despite a strong labor market and other signs of economic health -- that the nation is on the verge of economic collapse.

An ad funded by One Nation, a nonprofit group aligned with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, links rising prices to the $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan that Democrats passed last year. The ad is aimed at Senator Mark Kelly, Democrat of Arizona, and describes him as the ''deciding vote'' for the bill that passed the Senate 50 to 49 with no Republican support. A gravelly voice reminds viewers that some of the money went to finance ski slopes, golf courses and a luxury hotel.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

''Their spending spree worsened inflation,'' the narrator said as images of a gas station and grocery store flashed across the screen.

Clips of empty food shelves and a gas station pump meter ticking higher are the backdrop for an ad supporting Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican. The TV ad opens with a pointed critique of the president's handling of the economy: ''Joe Biden's inflation is crushing Americans.''

The National Republican Congressional Committee highlighted the soaring sticker prices of hamburgers, buns, propane and gasoline in an ad assailing Representative Dina Titus, a Nevada Democrat, who is running against Mark Robertson, a Republican who is an Army veteran and a business owner.

''Democrats' harmful economic policies are making everything more expensive, and there's no end in sight,'' the narrator said as images of Ms. Titus and Mr. Biden appeared before a backdrop of $100 bills.

Republicans are not the only ones talking about inflation on the trail. Democrats are on the defensive, acknowledging the sting of rising prices and pledging to combat them.

Tim Ryan, a Democrat running for Senate in Ohio, makes no mention of Mr. Biden in a campaign ad filmed at a basketball arena. He insists that inflation is not a political matter and calls for improving American supply chains through re-shoring, being tough on China and cutting taxes.

''Who here is tired of getting hammered by inflation?'' Mr. Ryan asked. ''We've got to get serious about lowering costs and actually helping people.''

The Federal Reserve has been raising interest rates aggressively to tame inflation, which has been fueled by surging demand, supply chain disruptions and higher energy costs resulting from Russia's war in Ukraine. The Fed's focus on trying to slow the economy by raising borrowing costs has heightened fears that the country could tip into a recession.

There are signs that inflation concerns and recession fears are deepening. The National Federation of Independent Business said this week that optimism among small companies about economic conditions over the next six months fell to a record low in June amid worries about inflation, labor shortages and the prospect of tax increases.

Some economists have expressed concern that the political debate could actually make it harder for the central bank to orchestrate a so-called soft landing -- in which it cools the economy without causing a recession -- if the proliferation of campaign ads fan fears of inflation.

If inflation concerns become even more heightened and consumers begin expecting prices to keep rising, that could compel workers to ask their bosses for bigger raises in anticipation of goods and services becoming more costly. Those employers could then raise the costs of the goods and services they sell in order to cover their higher labor costs.

''The concern that I have is that you get inflationary expectations embedded in the economy and that leads to the wage-price spiral that we saw in the 70s,'' said Dean Baker, senior economist at the Center for Economic and Policy Research. ''It becomes self-perpetuating.''

Mr. Baker added that such a wage-price spiral is unlikely because wage growth has been slowing, but that it is possible that the Fed could make unnecessary interest rate hikes because of the hysteria surrounding inflation.

Goldman Sachs economists, in a research note last month, pointed to studies that found inflation expectations, which are a key indicator of rising prices, are sensitive to new information such as political ads.

''Fed officials might feel compelled to respond forcefully to even moderate further increases in long-run inflation expectations,'' they wrote. ''As a result, we see the upcoming onslaught of inflation-focused political advertisements as adding to the risk that the Fed could continue to tighten aggressively even if economic activity decelerates sharply.''

The notion that the United States could essentially talk itself into a recession is not new. As recently as 2019, before the pandemic, markets were roiled by former President Donald J. Trump's trade war with China and consumer sentiment started to dip. Mr. Trump accused his critics and the media of ''doing everything they can to crash the economy because they think that will be bad for me and my re-election.''

Mr. Furman pointed out that economic sentiment can often diverge along party lines depending on what party is in power, but that it is uncertain to what extent those feelings will influence hiring and investment plans.

''Republicans became much more pessimistic about the economy after Biden was elected,'' he said.

Beyond campaign ads, the sense of economic doom is being amplified by right-leaning media outlets, which consistently tie inflation to Mr. Biden's policies.

Monica Crowley, a conservative commentator who appears regularly on Fox News, said that inflation was a regular topic during her appearances and on her podcast. She argues that the jump in prices coincided directly with the passage of the pandemic relief package last year and predicts that Democrats will pay the price for inflation because it is harming their low-income and ***working class*** base the hardest.

''This is not some obscure fiscal or monetary issue that the American people might have some issue understanding,'' Ms. Crowley, a former senior Treasury Department official during the Trump administration, said. ''Inflation affects everybody. The political fallout for the Democrats is going to be very significant.''

The Biden administration has argued that the focus on inflation has in some cases been unfair.

Jared Bernstein, a member of the White House's Council of Economic Advisers, dismissed the notion that Mr. Biden was facing ''Jimmy Carter déjà vu'' in terms of inflation and suggested in an interview with Fox News that the network was trying to cast the data in the most negative light.

''You like to focus on the headwinds,'' Mr. Bernstein said to Neil Cavuto of Fox on Wednesday. ''And I get it -- if it bleeds, it leads.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/us/politics/democrats-republicans-inflation-midterms.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/us/politics/democrats-republicans-inflation-midterms.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Republicans are investing heavily in ads that portray a dark sense of economic disarray and blame President Biden and the Democrats for rapid inflation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B3)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2022

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[***The Age of The Creative Minority***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:645G-84D1-DXY4-X491-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 26, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21; DAVID BROOKS

**Length:** 968 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks once observed that being a minority in 19th-century Europe was like living in someone else's country home. The aristocrat owned the house. Other people got to stay there but as guests. They did not get to set the rules, run the institutions or dominate the culture.

Something similar can be said of America in the 1950s. But over the ensuing decades, the Protestant establishment crumbled and America became more marvelously diverse. If you're reading this, there's a good chance you're a member of a minority group -- or several. Maybe you're Black or Jewish or Muslim. Maybe you're gay, trans, Hispanic, Asian American, socialist, libertarian or Swedenborgian.

Even the former country house owners have come to feel like minority members. The formerly mighty mainline Protestant denominations, like the Episcopalians and Methodists, have shrunk and lost influence. Even some of the people who used to regard themselves as part of the majority have come to feel like minorities. White evangelical Protestants are down to about 15 percent of the country. They vote for people like Donald Trump in part because they feel like strangers in their own land, oppressed minorities fighting for survival.

We live in an age of minorities. People assert their minority identities with justified pride. It might be most accurate to say that America is now a place of jostling minorities. The crucial questions become: How do people think about their minority group identity and how do they regard the relationships between minorities?

Historically, to riff on another Sacks observation, there have been at least four different minority mind-sets:

First, assimilation. The assimilationists feel constricted by their minority identity. They want to be seen as individuals, not as a member of some outsider category. They shed the traits that might identity themselves as Jews or Mexicans or what have you.

Second, separatism. The separatists want to preserve the authenticity of their own culture. They send their kids to schools with their own kind, socialize mostly with their own kind. They derive meaning from having a strong cohesive identity and don't want it watered down.

Third, combat. People who take this approach see life as essentially a struggle between oppressor and oppressed groups. Bigotry is so baked in that there's no realistic hope of integration. The battle must be fought against the groups that despise us and whose values are alien to us. In fact, this battle gives life purpose.

Fourth, integration without assimilation. People who take this approach cherish their group for the way it contributes to the national whole. E pluribus unum. Members of this group celebrate pluralistic, hyphenated identities and the fluid mixing of groups that each contribute to an American identity.

Our politics is so nasty now because many people find the third mind-set most compelling. Americans are a deeply religious people, especially when they think they are not being religious. And these days what I would call the religion of minoritarianism has seized many hearts. This is the belief that history is inevitably the heroic struggle by minorities to free themselves from the yoke of majority domination. It is the belief that sin resides in the social structures imposed by majorities and that virtue and the true consciousness reside with the oppressed groups.

At a recent Faith Angle Forum in France, the British political scientist Matthew Goodwin defined wokeness as a belief system organized around ''the sacralization of racial, gender and sexual minorities.'' I'd add that right-wing populism is organized around the sacralization of the white ***working class*** and the belief that left-wing minority groups have now become the dominant oppressive majority.

Right and left warriors disagree completely about who the dominant majority is, but they agree that ''we'' are an oppressed minority, that those with power despise ''us,'' and that the war must be won.

There's some truth in their diagnoses. There really is a lot of oppression out there. But this mind-set is based on a dangerous falsehood -- that the line between good and evil runs between groups, the good over here, the oppressive over there.

Once you accept the truth that the line between good and evil runs through every human heart, then you begin to see not just groups, but also the struggles of diverse individuals within groups. You begin to see that each person, embedded within the richness of a particular culture, is trying to tackle the common human problems -- to live a life with dignity and meaning, to have some positive impact on the world.

Integration without assimilation is the only way forward. It is, as the prophet Jeremiah suggested, to transmit the richness of your own cultures while seeking the peace and prosperity of the city to which you have been carried.

It is hard. It means socializing with diverse and sometimes antagonistic groups rather than resting in the one that feels most at home. It means recognizing and embracing the fact that, as an American, you contain multiple identities and cultures. You wear different uniforms and are sometimes not sure which one you ultimately belong to.

But this is the most creative way to live. It's the clashing of different viewpoints, histories and identities within a single people and even within a single human mind. Integration without assimilation is the nuclear reactor of American dynamism.

Happy Thanksgiving weekend!

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**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** November 26, 2021

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[***In Cawthorn's District, Strong Opinions of Him, For and Against***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FR-WK71-DXY4-X0DH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 15, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 25

**Length:** 1399 words

**Byline:** By Jazmine Ulloa

**Body**

The right-wing firebrand is counting on Republican primary voters to look past his bad press. Opponents are counting on them to lose patience with him.

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. -- When Representative Madison Cawthorn's name comes up in this city of 14,000, where he was born and raised and it is not difficult to bump into someone who knew him from his home-schooling days, there tends to be a visceral reaction.

There are sighs from Republicans who elected him to his first term in November 2020 and met his meteoric rise in Washington with the praise and excitement reserved for a hometown hero -- only to be disappointed by his behavior and bad press ever since.

There are groans and looks of utter disgust from people with Democratic and independent leanings -- some of whom have chosen to cast a ballot in a Republican primary for the first time in hopes of removing him from office.

And there are eye-rolls and shrugs from his die-hard supporters, ''America First'' conservatives after the fashion of Donald J. Trump, who chalk up Mr. Cawthorn's controversies to youthful indiscretion and instead reserve their opprobrium for the liberal media, Democrats, his Republican opponents and political groups with deep pockets.

''I don't care what he's done,'' said Moiena Gilbert, 77, a retired certified nursing assistant who pulled up in an old Ford pickup to cast an early vote this week at Henderson County's Board of Elections. ''I am going to vote for the man.''

What there is not a lot of is indifference. In this southwestern corner of the state, a largely ***working-class*** and Republican stronghold set against the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains, it seems as if nearly everyone has made up his or her mind on the young firebrand once seen as the future of the Republican Party.

In interviews with more than 30 voters in Mr. Cawthorn's 11th Congressional District, including nearly two dozen registered Republicans, it was clear that his support had weakened, even among hard-right Trump followers who said Mr. Cawthorn's immaturity and lack of focus on his constituents had led them to disregard his endorsement by the former president and give one of his rivals their vote.

Mr. Cawthorn needs to garner only 30 percent of the vote on Tuesday to avoid a runoff in a crowded field split among seven other challengers. They are led by Chuck Edwards, a state senator who has the endorsements of most members of the Legislature from his district, and Michele Woodhouse, the elected Republican chair of Mr. Cawthorn's district who once was among his staunch supporters.

Whether Mr. Cawthorn can dodge a runoff has been a constant source of debate in his hometown among friends, co-workers and in Christian circles.

''I think there is a lot of support for Madison -- they just may be afraid to tell you,'' said one Baptist deacon leaving the Bethany Bible Church after a Wednesday night Bible study.

Chip Worrell, 62, a charter member of the same church and a woodworker who helped erect its building, disagreed.

''I don't think he is going to be re-elected,'' he said.

Mr. Cawthorn, 26, who was injured in a car crash at 18, has seldom been out of the headlines since making his first run for Congress in 2020, when it emerged that he had made up parts of his autobiography. He falsely claimed his injuries had kept him from attending the Naval Academy, but admitted in court that it had already rejected him. Young women at the conservative Christian college he attended before dropping out accused him of sexual harassment.

Elected in 2020 as the youngest member ever to serve in the House, he helped spread Mr. Trump's stolen-election lies and aligned himself with other incendiary far-right representatives, Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Lauren Boebert of Colorado.

But his re-election campaign has been marred by a seemingly endless series of embarrassing reports -- beginning when he claimed that people he ''looked up to'' in Washington had invited him to orgies and used cocaine. (The remark drew a scolding from the House Republican leader, Kevin McCarthy.)

The revelations ranged from traffic violations, like driving with a revoked license, to two incidents in which he brought a loaded gun to an airport. Politico published photos of Mr. Cawthorn in lingerie. The Washington Examiner reported his involvement in a cryptocurrency scheme and suggested it may have violated federal insider trading laws. And nude photos and videos have circulated showing him in sexually suggestive antics, in what appeared to be attempts to raise questions about Mr. Cawthorn's sexuality.

Mr. Cawthorn's campaign did not respond to requests for comment. Writing on Twitter, he told supporters that he and a friend had simply been joking around crassly.

''I told you there would be a drip drip campaign,'' he wrote. ''Blackmail won't win. We will.''

Democrats have criticized some of the attacks for stirring homophobia. Supporters in Mr. Cawthorn's district see the leaks as the work of his opponents or of G.O.P. leaders like Mr. McCarthy.

But a super PAC created to oust Mr. Cawthorn, which has held itself out as a clearinghouse of damaging information about him, said the tips it has received have largely come from Mr. Cawthorn's former aides and supporters.

''From the very start, we have been focused on firing Cawthorn, but firing him in a way that was factual and honest,'' said David Wheeler, a Democrat who co-founded the group, American Muckrakers Inc., with Mr. Cawthorn's 2020 Democratic opponent, Moe Davis.

In Henderson, Transylvania and Haywood counties, many voters recalled how Mr. Cawthorn won the seat -- replacing Mark Meadows, who became chief of staff in the Trump White House -- by modeling himself after Mr. Trump.

Many compared his brashness to Mr. Trump's and brushed away the photos of him partying or goofing off as the digressions of a young man. Some believed them to be fake.

''If I was a young kid with a cellphone, I wouldn't have a job either,'' said David Roberts, 33, an engineer and unaffiliated voter in Hendersonville who planned to cast a ballot for Mr. Cawthorn on Tuesday. ''I am not voting for him to be my best friend or date my daughter.''

Less easily brushed away were Mr. Cawthorn's attempts to bring guns through airport security and his traffic violations, which many saw as irresponsible considering the crash that left him in a wheelchair. ''Disgrace,'' ''immature'' and ''embarrassment'' were common refrains.

''He's broken the law. He hasn't really done anything for this district that I can think of,'' said Scott Tekavec, 59, a maintenance technician who said he did not usually vote Republican but decided to cast a ballot for Mr. Edwards as an expression of his disdain for Mr. Cawthorn.

Perhaps the most frequently cited objections to Mr. Cawthorn, however, were his track record of missing important votes in Congress and reports that he had moved into a newly-drawn conservative district nearby before deciding to run for re-election to his seat in the 11th District.

''He isn't doing his job,'' Lynn Cagle, 47, a truck driver in Haywood County, said of Mr. Cawthorn as he left a senior center after voting for Mr. Edwards.

Mr. Cawthorn's opponents lack his ability to draw attention, but they see an opening nonetheless. At a Hendersonville rally, Ms. Woodhouse presented herself as a true ''America First'' conservative and Mr. Cawthorn as unelectable.

And Rodd Honeycutt, a retired Army colonel, said he had voted for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but felt the need to challenge him this year over his lack of leadership.

''There is a trend line of missteps and indiscipline,'' Mr. Honeycutt said, adding: ''It's really a distraction right now when we should be focused on kitchen-table issues like the cost of gas, or inflation, or what is going on with the war in Ukraine.''

At Bethany Bible Church, Christine Tuttle, 61, a bookkeeper, and her daughter, Lizzie, 20, said they remembered Mr. Cawthorn as respected, outgoing and popular among the home-school families.

They said their image of him was tainted when young women came forward with accusations that he had forcibly kissed them.

Mrs. Tuttle said she still voted for him in 2020. ''He had so much promise,'' she said.

She and her daughter said they would not be voting for Mr. Cawthorn this time. But they said they knew plenty of people who would.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/15/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-hendersonville-nc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/15/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-hendersonville-nc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Representative Madison Cawthorn at a rally hosted by former President Donald J. Trump in Selma, N.C., last month. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VEASEY CONWAY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Lizzie and Christine Tuttle of Hendersonville, N.C., voted for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but said they do not plan to this year.

Mr. Cawthorn needs to garner 30 percent of votes on Tuesday to avoid a runoff in a race split among seven other challengers. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSE BARBER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[***How Chuck Schumer Avoided a Primary Challenge From the Left***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655G-RY31-DXY4-X278-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 6, 2022 Wednesday 16:21 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1364 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck, Blake Hounshell and Leah Askarinam

**Highlight:** Despite months of speculation, no prominent progressive has so far come forward to challenge the Democratic majority leader, who has worked hard to shore up his left flank.

**Body**

Despite months of speculation, no prominent progressive has so far come forward to challenge the Democratic majority leader, who has worked hard to shore up his left flank.

Democrats were floundering, and Senator Chuck Schumer had a lot on his plate.

His party [*couldn’t pass*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/19/us/politics/manchin-build-back-better.html) its legislative agenda, it had just suffered major [*electoral losses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/democrat-losses-2022.html), and he had a long list of [*Biden administration nominees*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/08/us/politics/biden-nominees-senate-confirmation.html) to [*shepherd*](https://twitter.com/mkraju/status/1471284074975215620?s=20&amp;t=6uitvZj9i1_xEb-EcQ26ww) through.

But despite his busy schedule, Schumer, the majority leader and a Democrat who embodies the party establishment, still took the time for a warm gesture to his native New York’s strong progressive left. Appearing live via video, he showed up at an inauguration celebration in December for the New York City Council’s most prominent incoming left-wing member, Tiffany Cabán, who took the oath of office with the [*help of*](https://twitter.com/bradlander/status/1471279133544099840?s=20&amp;t=6uitvZj9i1_xEb-EcQ26ww) Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

Schumer’s attendance was in some ways just another stop on his always-packed New York itinerary. But the moment also vividly illustrated why — barring some extraordinary development — Schumer has attracted no serious left-wing challenger to his Senate re-election bid as Thursday’s primary filing deadline arrives, despite months of speculation about who might emerge.

“He’s been really relational,” said Cabán, who is [*a favorite*](https://www.socialists.nyc/previous-endorsements) of the New York City Democratic Socialists. “He shows up.”

Indeed, he is a [*highly visible*](https://www.schumer.senate.gov/chuck-around-new-york) presence [*from Brooklyn*](https://www.mediaite.com/entertainment/dude-can-actually-carry-a-tune-chuck-schumer-joins-brooklyn-street-performers-to-belt-out-new-york-new-york/) to [*Buffalo*](https://buffalonews.com/news/local/sen-charles-schumer-completes-62-county-tour-despite-pandemic/article_a31f68bc-3677-11eb-9738-2f07286f5ef5.html), building relationships with elected officials at every level of the ballot and across the Democratic ideological spectrum. But Schumer’s efforts to engage the farthest-left faction of his party have been particularly consequential in New York, a state where several [*top*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/26/nyregion/joseph-crowley-ocasio-cortez-democratic-primary.html) [*Democratic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/nyregion/jamaal-bowman-eliot-engel.html) [*officials*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/13/nyregion/state-senate-election-results-idc-klein.html) have lost primaries in recent years.

He has often [*teamed up*](https://www.thecity.nyc/2021/2/8/22272958/schumer-aoc-funerals-covid-19-victims-nyc) on local issues with left-wing lawmakers including Ocasio-Cortez and Cabán. (He also recently schmoozed over empanadas at a Cabán office opening, she said on Wednesday.)

In the Buffalo mayor’s race, [*he endorsed*](https://buffalonews.com/news/local/government-and-politics/schumer-endorses-walton-for-buffalo-mayor/article_71070670-32b4-11ec-91f9-8fbdbc737039.html) the Democratic nominee, a democratic socialist, while other prominent elected officials stayed on the sidelines (the candidate lost, but good will for Schumer remains). And in New York and nationally, he loudly champions progressive priorities including canceling student debt.

More broadly, he helped [*secure significant federal aid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/26/nyregion/covid-budget-new-york.html) for New York, he has an overwhelming fund-raising advantage and polls show that he is popular at home. Challenging him in a pricey statewide race would be a daunting task.

Certainly, the Senate majority leader is not an obvious favorite for New York’s left-wing grass-roots. Democrats of all stripes remain frustrated by the pace of progress in the divided Senate, while moderate donors have at times been discomfited by his overtures to the left.

But Ocasio-Cortez, who long drew chatter about a possible Senate bid, [*has said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/17/nyregion/kathy-hochul-democratic-nomination.html) she is running for re-election. Schumer received his party’s backing by acclamation at the Democratic convention. And he secured the endorsement of the left-wing New York Working Families Party.

“Chuck Schumer is everywhere, he always will be,” said Angelo Roefaro, Schumer’s spokesman. “Plain and simple: omnipresence.”

What to read tonight

* Jazmine Ulloa reports from Ohio on [*how Representative Tim Ryan, a Democrat, is trying to win back white,* ***working-class*** *voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/us/politics/tim-ryan-ohio-voters.html) in his Senate bid.

1. A group of conservative megadonors — including figures like Peter Thiel and Rebekah Mercer — has quietly [*formed a coalition to shape the midterms*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/us/politics/republican-donors-rockbridge-network-trump.html) and the Republican Party.
2. President Biden’s decision to extend a moratorium on student debt payments is the latest example of a bigger political challenge: The policies that help households stretch their budgets [*could complicate messaging on curbing inflation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/business/economy/student-loan-pause-inflation.html).
3. Executives from six large oil companies appeared before a House committee and defended themselves against criticism over [*higher gas prices*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/business/energy-environment/gas-prices-executives-congress.html), a top concern for Democrats ahead of the midterms.
4. Representative Bob Gibbs, an Ohio Republican, [*is retiring rather than taking on a Trump-endorsed challenger*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/us/politics/bob-gibbs-ohio-retire.html).

School-board elections — an early midterms test?

Those looking for clues to the November midterm elections got some fresh data points last night. And the clues are coming from an unlikely place: school boards.

This year, Wisconsin held some of the earliest school-board elections in the country. Like everything else in American politics, these normally sleepy contests have become sharply polarized — [*and closely watched*](https://wisconsinexaminer.com/2022/04/06/conservatives-school-board-push-yields-mixed-results-in-tuesday-elections/).

Nationally, Republicans see an opportunity to erode the Democrats’ traditional advantage on education, capitalizing on [*widespread frustration over schooling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/24/us/politics/covid-school-reopening-teen-mental-health.html) during the coronavirus pandemic. Under the banner of “parents’ rights,” they’ve stoked controversies over L.G.B.T.Q. issues and [*critical race theory*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-critical-race-theory.html), an academic legal concept that has become a loose shorthand for a contentious debate on how schools teach about race.

It’s a strategy that complements Republicans’ emphasis on local elections as a means of energizing the base of the party. Last year, Senator Ron Johnson urged Wisconsin voters to “take back our school boards, our county boards, our city councils.”

So how did it go? Republicans in Wisconsin invested more than $70,000 in school-board races this year, [*according to The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*](https://www.jsonline.com/story/news/education/2022/04/01/gop-spends-more-than-70-000-wisconsin-school-board-elections/7172781001/). Rebecca Kleefisch, a former lieutenant governor who is running to oust Gov. Tony Evers, the Democratic incumbent, endorsed a slate of 48 candidates in school board contests. Thirty-four of them won.

But the raw numbers can be misleading. Republicans picked up seats in Waukesha County, a longtime G.O.P. stronghold, but failed to make inroads in most contested areas. [*Scarlett Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/21/us/republicans-schools-critical-race-theory.html), a conservative activist who drew national attention for organizing a recall of her local school board last fall, [*lost her election bid*](https://www.jsonline.com/story/communities/northshore/news/mequon/2022/04/05/mequon-thiensville-school-board-election-results-april-5-2022/7217563001/) in a suburb north of Milwaukee.

In contested Eau Claire, two incumbents backed by Democrats and teachers’ unions, Tim Nordin and Marquell Johnson, were narrowly re-elected [*with some help from the state party*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?active_status=all&amp;ad_type=political_and_issue_ads&amp;country=US&amp;id=401505611976517&amp;view_all_page_id=95483488591&amp;search_type=page&amp;media_type=all). Both had [*complained of receiving harassment*](https://www.weau.com/2022/03/21/eau-claire-police-investigating-threat-towards-ecasd-school-board-meeting/) during the campaign, during which conservative candidates criticized school training materials on how to discuss children’s sexual identities.

In an email, Nordin said the results were a repudiation of “false narratives about race and identity.” He added, “Our community saw through dog whistles and rejected barely disguised attacks on our children.”

Michael Ford, a professor of public administration at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh who tracks school board elections, noted that Republican-backed candidates had done well in the suburbs of Milwaukee, though the results elsewhere were more of a wash.

“In the last presidential election, there were many conservative-leaning suburban voters who were uncomfortable with Trumpism,” Ford said. Last night’s results could be a sign that education issues are returning those voters to the G.O.P. fold, he said.

Wisconsin is one of the most hotly contested battleground states in the nation, and each party will be poring over the outcome of these races for weeks to come. Republicans viewed the elections as a tuneup ahead of November, when they are keen to replace Evers and defend Ron Johnson’s Senate seat. The state party [*praised*](https://wisgop.org/conservatives-dominate-in-local-elections/) last night’s results as “a testament to the strength of the grass-roots Republican operation.”

Ben Wikler, the chairman of the Wisconsin Democratic Party, said that Republicans had “fizzled out completely” outside suburban Milwaukee by “making fringe arguments to an evenly divided electorate.”

He hailed the results as a good sign for Evers, a former science teacher who has made his handling of education issues central to his re-election pitch.

“If the far-right candidates had won, I’d be worried,” Wikler said.

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: Senator Chuck Schumer, hardly a favorite among his party’s left-wing grass-roots, has nevertheless skillfully navigated New York’s progressive priorities. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Democrats Face Deepening Peril as Republicans Seize on Inflation Fears***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XK-6X21-DXY4-X431-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2022 Thursday 23:24 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1716 words

**Byline:** Alan Rappeport

**Highlight:** Economists warn that a blitz of midterm election campaign ads could push consumer prices even higher.

**Body**

Economists warn that a blitz of midterm election campaign ads could push consumer prices even higher.

WASHINGTON — Triple-digit gasoline bills. Bulging hamburger prices. A Fourth of July holiday that broke the bank.

Prices are rising at the fastest rate in four decades, a painful development that has given Republicans a powerful talking point just months ahead of the midterm elections. With control of Congress [*very much in play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/upshot/poll-2022-midterms-congress.html), Republicans are investing heavily in a blitz of campaign advertisements that portray a dark sense of economic disarray as they seek to make inflation a political albatross for President Biden and Democrats.

According to Kantar’s Campaign Media Analysis Group, candidates running in House, Senate and governor races around the country have spent nearly $22 million airing about 130,000 local and national television ads that mention inflation from early April through the beginning of July. Inflation was the 10th most common issue mentioned by Democrats and 11th most common for Republicans, according to the data, underscoring how critical the issue is to both parties this election cycle.

The data released Wednesday showing that [*prices in June climbed 9.1 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/business/economy/inflation-june-interest-rates.html) over the past year gave Republicans fresh ammunition against Mr. Biden and his party, ammunition that includes faulting Democrats for passing a $1.9 trillion stimulus package last year and efforts to push through additional spending in a sweeping climate and economic package known as “Build Back Better.”

The intensifying focus on inflation is already weighing on Mr. Biden’s poll numbers. [*A New York Times/Siena College poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/us/politics/biden-approval-polling-2024.html) this week showed his approval at a meager 33 percent, with 20 percent of voters viewing jobs and the economy as the most important problem facing the country. Inflation and the cost of living followed closely behind. The poll also showed that the race for control of Congress [*is surprisingly tight.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/upshot/poll-2022-midterms-congress.html)

While gas prices have fallen from their $5 a gallon peak and there are signs that inflation might be slowing, consumers are unlikely to feel better off anytime soon. Gas prices are still much higher than they were a year ago, with the [*average national price for a gallon at $4.60*](https://gasprices.aaa.com/) versus $3.15 in 2021, according to AAA.

“It’s a very negative thing politically for the Democrats,” said Jason Furman, an economist at Harvard University and former Obama administration economic adviser. “My guess is that the negative views about inflation are so deeply baked in that nothing can change in the next few months to change them.”

The White House, while acknowledging the pain that inflation is causing, has tried to deflect responsibility, saying that it is a global problem and attributing it to shortages of food and oil stemming from Russian President Vladimir V. Putin’s invasion of Ukraine.

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden called the latest Consumer Price Index “out-of-date” given the recent fall in gas prices and said the data “is a reminder that all major economies are battling this Covid-related challenge, made worse by Putin’s unconscionable aggression.”

However, Treasury Secretary Janet L. Yellen has acknowledged that the pandemic aid package contributed to inflation by spurring demand in the economy. Last month, she [*admitted that she was “wrong”*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/31/politics/treasury-secretary-janet-yellen-inflation-cnntv/index.html) to describe price increases as “transitory.”

Republicans have latched on to that as proof that Democrats and the Biden administration misled voters and mishandled the economy and to claim — despite a strong labor market and other signs of economic health — that the nation is on the verge of economic collapse.

An ad funded by One Nation, a nonprofit group aligned with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, links rising prices to the $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan that Democrats passed last year. The ad is aimed at Senator Mark Kelly, Democrat of Arizona, and describes him as the “deciding vote” for the bill that [*passed the Senate 50 to 49*](https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_votes/vote1171/vote_117_1_00110.htm)with no Republican support. A gravelly voice reminds viewers that some of the money went to finance ski slopes, golf courses and a luxury hotel.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/4GGVMeBdzsA)]

“Their spending spree worsened inflation,” the narrator said as images of a gas station and grocery store flashed across the screen.

Clips of empty food shelves and a gas station pump meter ticking higher are the backdrop for an ad supporting Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine, a Republican. The TV ad opens with a pointed critique of the president’s handling of the economy: “Joe Biden’s inflation is crushing Americans.”

The National Republican Congressional Committee highlighted the soaring sticker prices of hamburgers, buns, propane and gasoline in an ad assailing Representative Dina Titus, a Nevada Democrat, who is running against [*Mark Robertson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/15/us/politics/mark-robertson-congress-nevada-gop.html), a Republican who is an Army veteran and a business owner.

“Democrats’ harmful economic policies are making everything more expensive, and there’s no end in sight,” [*the narrator said*](https://twitter.com/NRCC/status/1542491880088342529?s=20&amp;t=l1G5nal8K3JbR8DwV79Iiw) as images of Ms. Titus and Mr. Biden appeared before a backdrop of $100 bills.

Republicans are not the only ones talking about inflation on the trail. Democrats are on the defensive, acknowledging the sting of rising prices and pledging to combat them.

Tim Ryan, a Democrat running for Senate in Ohio, makes no mention of Mr. Biden in a campaign ad filmed at a basketball arena. He insists that inflation is not a political matter and calls for improving American supply chains through re-shoring, being tough on China and cutting taxes.

“Who here is tired of getting hammered by inflation?” Mr. Ryan asked. “We’ve got to get serious about lowering costs and actually helping people.”

The Federal Reserve has been [*raising interest rates aggressively to tame inflation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/06/business/economy/fed-rate-increase-inflation.html), which has been fueled by surging demand, supply chain disruptions and higher energy costs resulting from Russia’s war in Ukraine. The Fed’s focus on trying to slow the economy by raising borrowing costs has heightened fears that the country could tip into a recession.

There are signs that inflation concerns and recession fears are deepening. The National Federation of Independent Business said this week that optimism among small companies about economic conditions over the next six months [*fell to a record low*](https://www.nfib.com/content/press-release/economy/small-business-expectations-for-future-conditions-hit-all-time-low/) in June amid worries about inflation, labor shortages and the prospect of tax increases.

Some economists have expressed concern that the political debate could actually make it harder for the central bank to orchestrate a so-called soft landing — in which it cools the economy without causing a recession — if the proliferation of campaign ads fan fears of inflation.

If inflation concerns become even more heightened and consumers begin expecting prices to keep rising, that could compel workers to ask their bosses for bigger raises in anticipation of goods and services becoming more costly. Those employers could then raise the costs of the goods and services they sell in order to cover their higher labor costs.

“The concern that I have is that you get inflationary expectations embedded in the economy and that leads to the wage-price spiral that we saw in the 70s,” said Dean Baker, senior economist at the Center for Economic and Policy Research. “It becomes self-perpetuating.”

Mr. Baker added that such a wage-price spiral is unlikely because wage growth has been slowing, but that it is possible that the Fed could make unnecessary interest rate hikes because of the hysteria surrounding inflation.

Goldman Sachs economists, in a research note last month, pointed to studies that found inflation expectations, which are a key indicator of rising prices, are sensitive to new information such as political ads.

“Fed officials might feel compelled to respond forcefully to even moderate further increases in long-run inflation expectations,” they wrote. “As a result, we see the upcoming onslaught of inflation-focused political advertisements as adding to the risk that the Fed could continue to tighten aggressively even if economic activity decelerates sharply.”

The notion that the United States could essentially talk itself into a recession is not new. As recently as 2019, before the pandemic, markets were roiled by former President Donald J. Trump’s trade war with China and [*consumer sentiment started to dip*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/30/business/economy/recession-trump.html). Mr. Trump accused his critics and the media of “doing everything they can to crash the economy because they think that will be bad for me and my re-election.”

Mr. Furman pointed out that economic sentiment can often diverge along party lines depending on what party is in power, but that it is uncertain to what extent those feelings will influence hiring and investment plans.

“Republicans became much more pessimistic about the economy after Biden was elected,” he said.

Beyond campaign ads, the sense of economic doom is being amplified by right-leaning media outlets, which consistently tie inflation to Mr. Biden’s policies.

Monica Crowley, a conservative commentator who appears regularly on Fox News, said that inflation was a regular topic during her appearances and on her podcast. She argues that the jump in prices coincided directly with the passage of the pandemic relief package last year and predicts that Democrats will pay the price for inflation because it is harming their low-income and ***working class*** base the hardest.

“This is not some obscure fiscal or monetary issue that the American people might have some issue understanding,” Ms. Crowley, a former senior Treasury Department official during the Trump administration, said. “Inflation affects everybody. The political fallout for the Democrats is going to be very significant.”

The Biden administration has argued that the focus on inflation has in some cases been unfair.

Jared Bernstein, a member of the White House’s Council of Economic Advisers, dismissed the notion that Mr. Biden was facing “Jimmy Carter déjà vu” in terms of inflation and suggested in an interview with Fox News that the network was trying to cast the data in the most negative light.

“You like to focus on the headwinds,” Mr. Bernstein said to Neil Cavuto of Fox on Wednesday. “And I get it — if it bleeds, it leads.”

PHOTO: Republicans are investing heavily in ads that portray a dark sense of economic disarray and blame President Biden and the Democrats for rapid inflation. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HIROKO MASUIKE/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B3)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2022

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[***‘Top Gun: Maverick’ Enters the Pantheon of Conservative Fan Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XK-X951-DXY4-X45P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2022 Thursday 23:54 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1685 words

**Byline:** Blake Hounshell and Marc Tracy

**Highlight:** The American right has embraced Tom Cruise’s latest blockbuster, hailing the movie as a patriotic gesture produced in defiance of “woke” liberal elites and the Chinese Communist Party.

**Body**

The American right has embraced Tom Cruise’s latest blockbuster, hailing the movie as a patriotic gesture produced in defiance of “woke” liberal elites and the Chinese Communist Party.

Today’s newsletter is a guest dispatch from the Culture desk of The New York Times. [*Marc Tracy*](https://www.nytimes.com/by/marc-tracy), who regularly covers the intersection of culture and politics, writes about Tom Cruise’s latest blockbuster — and the conservatives who are singing its praises.

“[*Top Gun: Maverick*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/26/movies/top-gun-maverick-review.html),” the inescapable Tom Cruise blockbuster sequel, has been hailed as a cinematic throwback.

Many critics have interpreted its story of an increasingly obsolete pilot being called back to teach today’s young people a thing or two for one last mission as a not-so-subtle allegory for the film itself. The movie uses relatively few computer-generated effects, stars the now-60-year-old Cruise and still managed to rake in more than $1 billion globally.

But amid praise from filmgoers who enjoyed the realistic dogfights, filmed with real planes that the real actors rode in, another community has embraced the movie for representing its values and vindicating its outlook: conservatives.

A sampling:

* [*Gov. Ron DeSantis*](https://floridapolitics.com/archives/531116-top-gun-desantis/)of Florida: “Any movie that’s not, like, overwhelmingly woke can actually appeal to normal people.” (DeSantis had not seen the movie at the time; he later saw it with his wife for her birthday, he [*said*](https://rumble.com/v1a5ggy-gov.-ron-desantis-expands-bright-futures-eligibility.html).)

1. The Fox News host [*Jesse Watters*](https://www.facebook.com/FoxNews/photos/a.184044921335/10161577473381336/?type=3): “We’ve been longing to see a movie that’s unapologetically American, and we finally got it.”
2. [*Tomi Lahren*](https://twitter.com/TomiLahren/status/1535339830552539136), of the conservative sports outlet OutKick and Fox: “The undeniable success of Top Gun is proof Americans are sick of WOKE and just want to watch good movies without a grandstanding social justice message!!”

The right vs. Hollywood

What’s going on here?

There is a long tradition in which conservatives seize upon a cultural artifact produced by the entertainment industry, which is generally seen as left-leaning, and claim it for themselves.

“This goes back years,” said Doug Heye, a Republican consultant, “and included when we had a Hollywood actor or a reality TV star for president. They feel besieged by the culture. That feeling has only increased, and it’s increased because there’s even more substance behind it today.”

In a [*recent essay that discussed movies including “Top Gun: Maverick,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/02/movies/liberal-hollywood-dog.html) A.O. Scott, The Times’s co-chief film critic, argued that one notable aspect of the conservative movement is its antagonism toward the entertainment industry.

“The modern right,” Scott wrote, “defines itself against the cultural elites who supposedly cluster on the coasts and conspire to impose their values on an unsuspecting public. In this account, Hollywood acts in functional cahoots with academia and the news media.”

And conservative activists’ enmity toward Hollywood and other cultural tastemakers has perhaps never been more conspicuous.

DeSantis, whose ability to channel the movement might outstrip any other politician’s (including, arguably, Donald Trump’s), made waves this spring by [*revoking special tax and self-governing privileges*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/us/politics/desantis-disney-florida.html) that Disney had enjoyed for its enormous theme park in his state. The governor and the company had clashed over [*a newly passed state law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/us/dont-say-gay-bill-florida.html) that bars instruction about sexual orientation and gender identity in some grades.

So when “Top Gun: Maverick” entered this culture war with its uncomplicated, feel-good patriotism — it is, among other things, a movie about how awesome U.S. Navy pilots can be, particularly when fighting America’s enemies — conservatives’ sense of alignment arrived naturally.

“When something comes out,” Heye said, “and it’s another version of ‘Rocky IV’” — the 1985 movie in which Sylvester Stallone’s ***working-class*** boxer enters the ring with a Soviet fighter named Ivan Drago — “that becomes something that, for the activist part of the base that is looking for something that isn’t critical of their values, they’re going to grab onto.”

This is not to say that Maverick, Hangman and the other pilots in the new “Top Gun” film face off against today’s equivalent of the Soviet Union, whatever country that might be. As in the first “Top Gun,” which came out in 1986, the enemy is not explicitly identified.

Nor are conservative politicians and media personalities claiming that the movie makes a compelling case for policies like tax cuts or gun rights. Their argument has less to do with what the film is than what it is not; less to do with its specific plot or characters than with its vibe.

“It’s political in being apolitical,” said Christian Toto, a conservative film critic and the proprietor of the website [*Hollywood in Toto*](https://www.hollywoodintoto.com/).

He contrasted “Top Gun: Maverick” with some films in the Marvel Cinematic Universe and the gender-swapped [*“Ghostbusters” reboot*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/15/movies/ghostbusters-review-melissa-mccarthy-kristen-wiig.html). Their efforts at inclusivity — diverse casting, same-sex relationships — could come across, he said, as ham-handed, particularly to conservative audiences whose antennae are already on alert for filmmakers they see as trying to sneak some spinach in with the cinematic candy.

The conservative allergy to such moviemaking decisions flares up, Toto said, “when the audience gets a sense it’s being put in there awkwardly or there’s a message being sent as opposed to organically woven into the story.”

That the pilots training for the daring raid in “Top Gun: Maverick” appear to come from a variety of backgrounds seems not like liberal messaging but realistic detail, Toto said.

“The cast is moderately diverse; there are women as pilots,” he said. “But they don’t comment on it; they don’t base the script around it. It’s assumed these are just very talented people willing to risk their lives for the mission.”

An All-American hit

Box-office information does not contradict conservatives’ case. About 55 percent of the opening weekend sales, an unusually high proportion, came from ticket-buyers over 35, according to Paramount.

And — atypically for big box-office hits in this era — “Top Gun: Maverick” has made more money in the United States and Canada than in the rest of the world, according to Box Office Mojo.

Which is itself a point of pride for some of the film’s conservative backers: [*“‘Top Gun: Maverick’ Reaches $1 Billion Worldwide — Without China,”*](https://www.breitbart.com/entertainment/2022/06/26/top-gun-maverick-reaches-1-billion-worldwide-without-china/) read a Breitbart headline last month. (The film was not released in China; earlier, a Chinese company withdrew its share of financing for the film because of its pro-American message, according to a Wall Street Journal [*report*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/top-gun-maverick-loses-chinese-investor-due-to-pro-u-s-messaging-11653643803).)

Ben Shapiro, a popular conservative pundit who co-founded the website The Daily Wire, had predicted in his [*rave review*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WilR1fWzmY) that the movie would do better domestically than abroad. “The film itself is pretty red, white and blue,” he said. “That’s just assumed as the backdrop. Which is the way movies used to be.”

Stanley Rosen, a professor of political science at the University of Southern California who studies China’s film industry, said in an interview that “Top Gun: Maverick” represented an emerging idea that “Hollywood doesn’t need China the way it used to.”

The film’s success could signal that the days of Hollywood studios altering story lines to make their releases more palatable to Chinese censors and audiences — a trend documented in [*a recent book, “Red Carpet”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/01/books/review/red-carpet-erich-schwartzel.html) by Erich Schwartzel — might slowly be on their way out.

And, Rosen added, whatever the film’s actual political message, the argument that it has one at all might have its own uses.

“The controversy over wokeness or whether this is Reagan-era nostalgia,” he said, is “very good for the box office.”

What to read

* Department of Never Tweet: The Securities and Exchange Commission is broadening its inquiry into Elon Musk’s disclosures about Twitter, [*Kate Conger reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/technology/twitter-elon-musk-sec.html). The agency questioned whether a tweet Musk sent in May about the acquisition of Twitter should have been disclosed to the agency and investors.

1. Natalia Winkelman [*reviews “Gabby Giffords Won’t Back Down,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/movies/gabby-giffords-wont-back-down-review.html)a new documentary about the former Democratic congresswoman from Arizona who was shot in the head at a political event in 2011.
2. [*Follow the latest news*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/07/14/world/biden-israel-news/biden-and-lapid-push-for-israeli-ties-with-saudi-arabia)from President Biden’s trip to Israel and Saudi Arabia.

Table for two

Gavin Newsom, the governor of California, is sitting down for lunch on Friday in Washington with Vice President Kamala Harris, two of his aides have confirmed.

For Newsom, the trip, [*officially made so he could accept an award and discuss policy issues with lawmakers and Biden administration officials*](https://calmatters.org/newsletters/whatmatters/2022/07/gavin-newsom-president-washington/), has doubled as something of a cleanup tour.

On Thursday, [*Newsom said clearly*](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/democrats-sour-biden-gavin-newsom-sparks-presidential-run/story?id=86625416) that he supported President Biden to be the Democratic Party’s nominee in 2024, amid a swirl of reporting by my Times colleagues and others suggesting that [*liberal voters are not especially enthused*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/us/politics/youth-voters-midterms-polling.html) about another term for the 79-year-old commander in chief.

News reports, [*including in this humble newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/21/us/politics/gavin-newsom-2024-president.html), have noted that Newsom’s rise as a leader in the Democratic Party could put him in competition with Harris, a longtime ally and possible future in-state opponent, in a hypothetical Biden-free presidential primary.

Those stories have gotten the attention of the vice president’s office, while amusing the governor’s staff back home in California. Both camps insist there’s no rivalry between the two leaders.

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Newsom volunteered that Harris had been “wonderful” as vice president and said they were just going to “check in, as we do constantly.” He alluded, however, to unspecified “constraints” Harris had faced in office and said it was “a difficult time for all of us in public life.”

Asked what was on the lunch menu, a Newsom aide joked in a text: “Arsenic and arm wrestling. The usual.”

Thanks for reading.

— Blake

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).

PHOTOS: In “Top Gun: Maverick,” Tom Cruise trains a group of young pilots for a dangerous mission against an unidentified enemy. Conservatives, usually hostile to Hollywood, have embraced the movie for representing its values and vindicating its outlook. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SCOTT GARFIELD/PARAMOUNT PICTURES; VIVIEN KILLILEA/GETTY IMAGES PARAMOUNT PICTURES)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Who Can Actually Afford to Live in Portland?; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CK-3NF1-DXY4-X3XT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 6, 2021 Tuesday 17:28 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 641 words

**Byline:** Alanna Bennett

**Highlight:** Willy Vlautin’s “The Night Always Comes” follows a young woman determined to hold her impoverished family together.

**Body**

THE NIGHT ALWAYS COMES

By Willy Vlautin

Craftsman and small clapboard houses still dot the streets of Portland, Ore., as they have for over a century, but next to them now you will find walls of steel and glass stretching up into the city’s gray skies. If you’re familiar with the area, the sight may be chilling. These condos stand in the place of old churches and Boys &amp; Girls Clubs, on lots purchased by developers and sold by families who often had little choice. You may get a sense, looking at half-built 12-unit condominiums with rents twice as high as those families’ mortgages, that they’re not just replacing the old ways of Portland. They may be replacing everyone who can’t keep up.

Lynette, the protagonist of Willy Vlautin’s determined new novel, “The Night Always Comes,” feels the dread of Portland’s transformation down to her bones. This is a novel that lives firmly in the melancholia of the city’s gentrification, hurtling readers through one woman’s desperation to keep her life afloat in a city that’s pushing its ***working class*** out, one razed lot at a time.

For years Lynette has been up at 4 a.m. every day. She works two jobs while attending community college and caring for a brother with developmental disabilities (Vlautin never specifies his condition). She does all this with a single goal in mind: to raise enough money to put a down payment on the house her family has lived in for Lynette’s whole life. That down payment, in combination with a loan to be taken out by her mother, is the only way for the three to stay together. After years of depression and rage she’s worked hard to control, Lynette is bent on controlling this as well. Her dream is simply to chart a future for her family that would allow them to live without the looming specter of displacement.

But when Lynette’s mother reneges on the deal, that dream disappears in an instant. Lynette spirals, and most of the novel takes place over a single night as she tears feverishly through Portland, chasing down any lead that might result in some extra cash that could right the situation. Most of the people Lynette meets on this tragic, desperate night do not react kindly, and as the evening turns violent the exhaustion and isolation of her poverty ring clear as day.

The novel, Vlautin’s sixth, stalls out during its many long monologues spelling out exactly what each character is thinking in clunky detail. Vlautin’s etchings of the city’s poor, white population are at times overwrought, especially around the topic of weight, as are the inner lives of anyone who’s not the main character. That tendency is extra egregious when it comes to Lynette’s mother, a dreary antagonist whose motives no number of monologues manage to three-dimensionalize.

The novel regains its footing, though, in the moments where we get to live in Lynette’s inner world. “The whole city is starting to haunt me,” Lynette says in the novel’s most potent scene. “All the new places, all the big new buildings, just remind me that I’m nothing, that I’m nobody.” The central question of her night resonates beyond this one family: Can one person be built to sink, or is she set up to fail by an entire system designed to keep the poor not just working, but hurting? Anyone who’s scrambled within the confines of poverty may relate to Lynette’s quest for agency over her own fate. With “The Night Always Comes,” Vlautin chronicles the downfall of a city. As Lynette’s story illustrates, it’s an undoing that is deeply personal, too.

Alanna Bennett is a screenwriter for “Roswell, New Mexico.” Her culture writing has appeared in BuzzFeed, Teen Vogue, Eater and more. THE NIGHT ALWAYS COMES By Willy Vlautin 208 pp. Harper/HarperCollins Publishers. $26.99.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Agata Nowicka FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*Let’s Get Lost*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/books/review/Wray-t.html)

1. [*The Walls Are Closing In*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/24/books/review/Wray-t.html)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Age of the Creative Minority; David Brooks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6454-4TF1-DXY4-X1WV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 24, 2021 Wednesday 00:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 974 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** Here are four ways to think about your group identity.

**Body**

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks once observed that being a minority in 19th-century Europe was like living in someone else’s country home. The aristocrat owned the house. Other people got to stay there but as guests. They did not get to set the rules, run the institutions or dominate the culture.

Something similar can be said of America in the 1950s. But over the ensuing decades, the Protestant establishment crumbled and America became more marvelously diverse. If you’re reading this, there’s a good chance you’re a member of a minority group — or several. Maybe you’re Black or Jewish or Muslim. Maybe you’re gay, trans, Hispanic, Asian American, socialist, libertarian or Swedenborgian.

Even the former country house owners have come to feel like minority members. The formerly mighty mainline Protestant denominations, like the Episcopalians and Methodists, have shrunk and lost influence. Even some of the people who used to regard themselves as part of the majority have come to feel like minorities. White evangelical Protestants are down to [*about 15 percent*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/07/08/rapid-decline-white-evangelical-america/) of the country. They vote for people like Donald Trump in part because they feel like strangers in their own land, oppressed minorities fighting for survival.

We live in an age of minorities. People assert their minority identities with justified pride. It might be most accurate to say that America is now a place of jostling minorities. The crucial questions become: How do people think about their minority group identity and how do they regard the relationships between minorities?

Historically, to riff on another Sacks [*observation*](https://www.firstthings.com/article/2014/01/on-creative-minorities), there have been at least four different minority mind-sets:

First, assimilation. The assimilationists feel constricted by their minority identity. They want to be seen as individuals, not as a member of some outsider category. They shed the traits that might identity themselves as Jews or Mexicans or what have you.

Second, separatism. The separatists want to preserve the authenticity of their own culture. They send their kids to schools with their own kind, socialize mostly with their own kind. They derive meaning from having a strong cohesive identity and don’t want it watered down.

Third, combat. People who take this approach see life as essentially a struggle between oppressor and oppressed groups. Bigotry is so baked in that there’s no realistic hope of integration. The battle must be fought against the groups that despise us and whose values are alien to us. In fact, this battle gives life purpose.

Fourth, integration without assimilation. People who take this approach cherish their group for the way it contributes to the national whole. E pluribus unum. Members of this group celebrate pluralistic, hyphenated identities and the fluid mixing of groups that each contribute to an American identity.

Our politics is so nasty now because many people find the third mind-set most compelling. Americans are a deeply religious people, especially when they think they are not being religious. And these days what I would call the religion of minoritarianism has seized many hearts. This is the belief that history is inevitably the heroic struggle by minorities to free themselves from the yoke of majority domination. It is the belief that sin resides in the social structures imposed by majorities and that virtue and the true consciousness reside with the oppressed groups.

At a recent Faith Angle Forum in France, the British political scientist Matthew Goodwin defined wokeness as a belief system organized around “the sacralization of racial, gender and sexual minorities.” I’d add that right-wing populism is organized around the sacralization of the white ***working class*** and the belief that left-wing minority groups have now become the dominant oppressive majority.

Right and left warriors disagree completely about who the dominant majority is, but they agree that “we” are an oppressed minority, that those with power despise “us,” and that the war must be won.

There’s some truth in their diagnoses. There really is a lot of oppression out there. But this mind-set is based on a dangerous falsehood — that the line between good and evil runs between groups, the good over here, the oppressive over there.

Once you accept the truth that the line between good and evil runs through every human heart, then you begin to see not just groups, but also the struggles of diverse individuals within groups. You begin to see that each person, embedded within the richness of a particular culture, is trying to tackle the common human problems — to live a life with dignity and meaning, to have some positive impact on the world.

Integration without assimilation is the only way forward. It is, as the prophet Jeremiah suggested, to transmit the richness of your own cultures while seeking the peace and prosperity of the city to which you have been carried.

It is hard. It means socializing with diverse and sometimes antagonistic groups rather than resting in the one that feels most at home. It means recognizing and embracing the fact that, as an American, you contain multiple identities and cultures. You wear different uniforms and are sometimes not sure which one you ultimately belong to.

But this is the most creative way to live. It’s the clashing of different viewpoints, histories and identities within a single people and even within a single human mind. Integration without assimilation is the nuclear reactor of American dynamism.

Happy Thanksgiving weekend!

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 Amr Alfiky for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***It's Just There, Like the Queen, Pubs and Big Ben***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6556-55F1-DXY4-X4S3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 1246 words

**Byline:** By Dwight Garner

**Body**

David Hendy's ''The BBC'' looks back at 100 years of wartime reporting, dramas, satires and weather reports.

THE BBCA Century on AirBy David HendyIllustrated. 638 pages. PublicAffairs. $38.

The British Broadcasting Corporation, the BBC -- the Beeb -- turns 100 this year. ''Hullo, hullo, 2LO calling, 2LO calling,'' a few thousand listeners heard through the hissing ether at 6 p.m. on Nov. 14, 1922. ''This is the British Broadcasting Company. 2LO. Stand by for one minute please!'' What followed were short news and weather bulletins, read twice, the second time slowly so that listeners could take notes.

David Hendy, in his thorough and engaging new book, ''The BBC: A Century on Air,'' writes that you can't understand England without understanding the BBC. It occupies, he says, ''a quasi-mystical place in the national psyche.'' It's just there, like the white cliffs of Dover.

The BBC sparked to life in the wake of World War I. Its founders included wounded veterans, and they were idealists. Civilization was in tatters; they hoped, through a new medium, to forge a common culture by giving listeners not necessarily what they wanted, but what they needed, to hear.

The audience was fed a fibrous diet of plays and concerts and talks and lectures; sports included Derby Day and Wimbledon. Announcers wore dinner jackets as well as their plummy accents, ''as a courtesy to the live performers with whom they would be consorting.'' Catching the chimes of Big Ben before the evening news became a ritual for millions.

Equipment was primitive. A framed notice by the microphone warned guest speakers, ''If you sneeze or rustle papers you will DEAFEN THOUSANDS!!!''

Radio was new; the BBC felt that it had to teach people how to listen. ''To keep your mind from wandering,'' it advised, ''you might wish to turn the lights out, or settle into your favorite armchair five minutes before the program starts; above all, you should remember that 'If you only listen with half an ear, you haven't a quarter of a right to criticize.'''

The BBC gained a reputation for being a bit snooty, and soporific. One complaint can stand for many: ''People do not want three hours of [expletive] 'King Lear' in verse when they get out of a 10-hour day in the [expletive] coal-pits, and [expletive] anybody who tries to tell them that they do.''

The BBC took it from both sides. To mandarins like Virginia Woolf, it was irredeemably middlebrow; she referred to it as the ''Betwixt and Between Company.'' The BBC loosened up over time and took increasing account of ***working-class*** and minority audiences, and of audiences who simply wanted to laugh.

The broadcaster was created by a Royal Charter; it has never been government-run, yet it must answer to government. Hendy recounts attempts to limit its editorial independence. Churchill and Thatcher were especially vocal critics: They felt there was something a bit pinko about the whole enterprise.

The BBC's scrupulous reporting during World War II gave it lasting prestige across the world. It largely lived up to the motto of R.T. Clark, its senior news editor: to tell ''the truth and nothing but the truth, even if the truth is horrible.''

During wartime, the company occasionally broadcast from a safer perch. When announcers intoned ''This is London,'' with British phlegm, they were often in a countryside manor. The London headquarters took a direct hit from a bomb in October 1940; the reader of the evening news ''paused for a split second to blow the plaster and soot off the script in front of him before carrying on with the rest of the bulletin.'' Seven people were killed in the attack. After the war, the BBC's foreign services became a prop to the Commonwealth, the new euphemism for ''empire.''

One of this book's best set pieces is of the BBC's wall-to-wall televised coverage of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953. One reporter referred to it as ''C-Day.'' This sort of thing had never been on TV before. The hard part, Hendy writes, was ''persuading royal officials that mere subjects had a right to witness the ceremony in the first place.''

Over time the BBC's tentacles grew longer and more varied: Clusters of radio and television stations catered to different demographics. Competitors crept in.

The satire boom of the postwar era arrived, led by ''The Goon Show,'' which ran from 1951 to 1960. There were TV dramas from iconic talents like Ken Loach and Dennis Potter. The BBC began to take the critic Clive James's advice: ''Anemic high art is less worth having than low art with guts.''

Language battles fought at the company are never dull to read about. For decades, ''bloody'' could be used only rarely and ''bugger'' not at all. One internal stylebook, Hendy writes, ''included a ban on jokes about lavatories or 'effeminacy in men' as well as any 'suggestive references' to subjects such as 'Honeymoon Couples, Chambermaids, Fig leaves, Prostitution, Ladies' underwear, e.g. winter draws on, Animal habits, e.g. rabbits, Lodgers, Commercial travelers.''

The eclectic and influential disc jockey John Peel was brought in; so, alas, was the cigar-chomping comic Jimmy Savile, the zany-uncle host of shows like ''Top of the Pops,'' who was found after his death in 2011 to have molested dozens if not hundreds of children across five decades. An inquiry found that the BBC did not do nearly enough to stop him.

The BBC's nature documentaries were pathbreaking, and big hits. (They left James ''slack-jawed with wonder and respect.'') Hendy walks us through how, under David Attenborough, these things got made. They take years, enormous staffs and a global network of freelancers willing to sit out in the cold and rain to get the money shots.

Attenborough was told, early on, that he couldn't appear onscreen because his teeth were too big. Richard Dawkins has written, in his memoirs, about how difficult it is to talk while walking backward, a crucial skill for any BBC documentary host.

More recent BBC hits include the reality series ''Strictly Come Dancing,'' the brainy documentaries of Louis Theroux and the comedy-drama series ''I May Destroy You.''

The right has retained its distrust of the BBC, including up-to-date complaints about wokeness; it would like to see it become smaller and more ''distinctive,'' in the manner of PBS and NPR. These American stations have had nothing like the BBC's cultural impact -- though Greg Jackson, in his story collection ''Prodigals,'' was correct to refer to Terry Gross as the ''Catcher in the WHYY.''

Hendy can be critical of the company, but at heart he's a fan. He reports that across any given week, more than 91 percent of British households use one BBC service or another. He cites academic surveys showing that the broadcaster's news output is, if anything, tilted slightly to the right.

The BBC can still be snoozy. I'm not the only person I know who, at least before Putin rattled the world's cage, listened to the BBC World Service app at bedtime because it's an aural sleeping pill.

I deserve to lose style points for borrowing Hendy's last lines for my own, but he puts it simply about the BBC's precarious position: ''We sometimes never know just how much we need or want something until it is gone.''Dwight Garner has been a book critic for The Times since 2008. His most recent book is ''Garner's Quotations: A Modern Miscellany.''The BBC: A Century on AirBy David HendyIllustrated. 638 pages. PublicAffairs. $38.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/04/books/review-bbc-century-on-air-david-hendy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/04/books/review-bbc-century-on-air-david-hendy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: David Graham, who was involved in the BBC's broadcasts to Germany in World War II. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BBC)

David Hendy

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Hybrid Painter And the Story Of a Partnership***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65F9-2251-JBG3-6334-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 13, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 12; CRITIC'S PICKS

**Length:** 1400 words

**Byline:** By Roberta Smith

**Body**

Shows in Hartford and New York spotlight great works by Milton Avery from every decade, and those of Sally Michel, who helped shape her husband's art.

HARTFORD, Conn. -- There has always been a certain fluidity in our appreciation of the American modernist maverick Milton Avery (1885-1965). And this is not just because of the light, airy, daringly simplified, almost abstract paintings of sand, sea and sky that characterized his last decade. Avery was artistically unaffiliated, never part of a particular group or movement, which means that general awareness of his work has fluctuated a great deal. It's always surprising to realize the range of his styles and subjects, and the chance to do so has been too rare.

Now, one of those rare moments has arrived, with quite a bit of Avery's work on view in shows in New York City and Hartford, Conn. The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford is presenting ''Milton Avery,'' a lavish survey of nearly 70 paintings (organized by the Royal Academy of Arts, London in collaboration with the Wadsworth and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth). It is the largest since the artist's retrospective at the Whitney Museum in 1982. In New York, Yares Art is celebrating 50 years of representing the Avery estate with an exhibition of 50 Averys; mostly paintings, with some watercolors.

And as a sidebar to these shows, D. Wigmore Fine Art has mounted its third show of the work of Sally Michel (1902-2003), the painter from Brooklyn who married Avery in 1926. She worked full time as a freelance illustrator for more than 30 years so that he could paint full time. Her painting style has been seen as a knockoff of her husband's, but her contribution to its formation has yet to be fully recognized, especially his tendency to distill forms to their essence.

The Wadsworth show begins on a cringey note. Its first work is a small oil on board from around 1910 that features tufts of yellow and green leafy brushwork supported by trunks and branches whose skinny, brittle lines suggest the use of a quill pen. Yick. If that painting promises anything, it's a future in greeting card design. But Avery, whose simplified use of flat, saturated color would influence fledgling Abstract Expressionists like Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb and Barnett Newman, virtually acknowledged the problem: He called the scene ''Spindly Trees'' and went on to use line more loosely and inventively, making them a staple of his radiant, notational art.

The development of Avery's use of line is visible nearby in a charming little Impressionist work from 1918, where the lines disappear in a richly colored, palette-knifed surface. In two hilly vistas -- ''Moody Landscape'' (1930) and ''Fall in Vermont'' (1935) -- Avery begins to exploit the physicality of paint. Softer, thicker lines and autumnal colors suggest the influence of Marsden Hartley's dark early landscapes, also inspired by Vermont. Then the thin lines return, gentler and more supple, in ''Blue Trees'' of 1945, an early mature painting; they seem almost to sway within the soft masses of blue and mauve leafiness of different trees.

If this seems like a lot of ground for a show to cover in its first 15 paintings, it is. The Wadsworth presentation is arranged thematically, divided according to traditional subjects -- landscape, still life, portraits and self-portraits, figures and figure groups -- as well as ''Urban Scenes,'' ''The Breakthrough Moment'' and ''Color Harmonies.'' Each of the first several galleries backtracks to around 1930 and marches forward again, which becomes confusing. Then, toward the show's finish, the divisions dissolve into one another, culminating in a final gallery of late work from the 1950s and early '60s, when Avery enlarged his canvases, thinned his paint, and turned for the most part to unpopulated views of the sea, arguably nature's most abstract element. The few times he edged into abstraction, however, he held back with a descriptive title like ''Boathouse by the Sea,'' which converts this 1959 painting's bands of color orange, blue, yellow and black into sky, water, sand and shadow.

Born into a ***working-class*** family in New York State, Avery grew up in Hartford and never really had an easy life. He left school at 16, taking a succession of jobs -- mostly manual -- to help support his family. Upon the death of his father in 1905, he decided that a job in commercial lettering would pay better and enrolled in a class at the Connecticut League of Art Students. The teacher encouraged him to switch to life-drawing class; by 1911 he listed his occupation as ''artist'' in the Hartford directory, studying at night while working during the day.

In 1924, he met Sally Michel at an art colony in Gloucester, Mass. She was 17 years his junior, which was one reason that, around this time, he moved his birth date up to 1893. Upon their marriage two years later, they established their routine in a small apartment in Manhattan. He painted in the living room -- he never had a studio. She also worked ''from home'' as we now say, as a freelance illustrator, including for The New York Times Magazine and Macy's department store for three decades, and thus could also care for their daughter, March, who was born in 1932. On the weekends the couple visited art galleries and museums. Michel also painted, but only on board in modest sizes; she did not use canvas or begin to have solo shows until after Avery's death .

Life was not easy for Avery and Michel but its harshness did not affect his art. Avery consistently made gentle, optimistic, profoundly optical paintings that defined their own strip of no man's land between representation and abstraction, refusing both extremes through their use of simple shapes and saturated colors. (Only in the late 1950s did his work begin to earn enough that she could quit her day jobs.)

The big ocean-oriented paintings of Avery's final decade are considered his greatest works because they are closest to the pinnacle of Abstract Expressionism. But the shows at the Wadsworth exhibition and to some extent Yares attest that there are great Averys from every decade. He remained a singular hybrid, who never settled into any niche, but constantly circulated, combining different ratios of cartooning, folk art, European modernism and American Scene painting.

In the 1941 ''Bus Ride'' at Yares -- which has slightly more late paintings than the Wadsworth, including his last one -- the Avery family is pictured on a New York City bus. Avery's hair is wild and so is the spatial design in this odd fusion of American Scene and folk art, with a touch of cartooning. In the 1931 ''Seaside'' at the Wadsworth, he widely spaces five figures on a beach, combining American Scene in a modernist meditation on pale colors. The ensemble is stagelike and feels a little like a Shakespeare tragedy, or a Beckett farce, primarily because of the startled expression in the main figure's face. It takes a moment to realize that the woman behind her is probably simply zipping up her friend's beach dress.

The view that Avery worked for decades to achieve a final blast of brilliance seems as antediluvian as the idea that he worked alone in a style that overpowered his wife's work. First of all, they were more or less joined at the hip, working side by side, looking at and talking about art, for 40 years. As other art historians have suggested, it may be impossible to think of their style as anything but collaborative, especially since Michel was an illustrator, adept at abbreviating forms.

The 17 paintings in ''Sally Michel: Reshaping Realism'' at Wigmore include landscapes, still lifes, nudes and figures. They are not as suave as Avery but they have a sharpness of composition and a boldness of color that gives them their own weight, tension and emotional force. They confirm that without Sally Michel there would have been no Milton Avery, and not just because she brought home the bacon for much of his artistic career.

Milton AveryThrough June 5 at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main Street, Hartford, Conn., 860-278-2670, thewadsworth.org.

Milton AveryThrough July 30 at Yares Art, 745 Fifth Avenue at 57th Street, Manhattan, 212-256-0969, yaresart.com.

Sally Michel: Reshaping RealismThrough June 10 at D. Wigmore Fine Art, 152 West 57th Street, Manhattan, 212-581-1657, dwigmore.com.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/arts/design/milton-avery-wadsworth-museum.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/arts/design/milton-avery-wadsworth-museum.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from above left: Milton Avery's ''Seaside'' (1931) at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Conn.

Avery's ''Blue Trees'' (1945) at the Wadsworth

Sally Michel's ''Mother and Son'' (1975) at the D. Wigmore Fine Art gallery

and, center, Avery's ''Bus Ride'' (1941) at Yares Art. Below, a view of the Avery exhibition at the Wadsworth. Late abstractions of Avery's final decade are ocean-oriented and closest to the pinnacle of Abstract Expressionism. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MILTON AVERY TRUST/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NY

WADSWORTH ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART)

**Load-Date:** May 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Century of the BBC, a ‘Quasi-Mystical’ Part of England’s Psyche***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6552-2Y01-DXY4-X4FY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 4, 2022 Monday 08:46 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1248 words

**Byline:** Dwight Garner

**Highlight:** David Hendy’s “The BBC” looks back at 100 years of wartime reporting, dramas, satires and weather reports.

**Body**

David Hendy’s “The BBC” looks back at 100 years of wartime reporting, dramas, satires and weather reports.

THE BBC

A Century on Air

By David Hendy

Illustrated. 638 pages. PublicAffairs. $38.

The British Broadcasting Corporation, the BBC — the Beeb — turns 100 this year. “Hullo, hullo, 2LO calling, 2LO calling,” a few thousand listeners heard through the hissing ether at 6 p.m. on Nov. 14, 1922. “This is the British Broadcasting Company. 2LO. Stand by for one minute please!” What followed were short news and weather bulletins, read twice, the second time slowly so that listeners could take notes.

David Hendy, in his thorough and engaging new book, “The BBC: A Century on Air,” writes that you can’t understand England without understanding the BBC. It occupies, he says, “a quasi-mystical place in the national psyche.” It’s just there, like the white cliffs of Dover.

The BBC sparked to life in the wake of World War I. Its founders included wounded veterans, and they were idealists. Civilization was in tatters; they hoped, through a new medium, to forge a common culture by giving listeners not necessarily what they wanted, but what they needed, to hear.

The audience was fed a fibrous diet of plays and concerts and talks and lectures; sports included Derby Day and Wimbledon. Announcers wore dinner jackets as well as their plummy accents, “as a courtesy to the live performers with whom they would be consorting.” Catching the chimes of Big Ben before the evening news became a ritual for millions.

Equipment was primitive. A framed notice by the microphone warned guest speakers, “If you sneeze or rustle papers you will DEAFEN THOUSANDS!!!”

Radio was new; the BBC felt that it had to teach people how to listen. “To keep your mind from wandering,” it advised, “you might wish to turn the lights out, or settle into your favorite armchair five minutes before the program starts; above all, you should remember that ‘If you only listen with half an ear, you haven’t a quarter of a right to criticize.’”

The BBC gained a reputation for being a bit snooty, and soporific. One complaint can stand for many: “People do not want three hours of [expletive] ‘King Lear’ in verse when they get out of a 10-hour day in the [expletive] coal-pits, and [expletive] anybody who tries to tell them that they do.”

The BBC took it from both sides. To mandarins like Virginia Woolf, it was irredeemably middlebrow; she referred to it as the “Betwixt and Between Company.” The BBC loosened up over time and took increasing account of ***working-class*** and minority audiences, and of audiences who simply wanted to laugh.

The broadcaster was created by a Royal Charter; it has never been government-run, yet it must answer to government. Hendy recounts attempts to limit its editorial independence. Churchill and Thatcher were especially vocal critics: They felt there was something a bit pinko about the whole enterprise.

The BBC’s scrupulous reporting during World War II gave it lasting prestige across the world. It largely lived up to the motto of R.T. Clark, its senior news editor: to tell “the truth and nothing but the truth, even if the truth is horrible.”

During wartime, the company occasionally broadcast from a safer perch. When announcers intoned “This is London,” with British phlegm, they were often in a countryside manor. The London headquarters took a direct hit from a bomb in October 1940; the reader of the evening news “paused for a split second to blow the plaster and soot off the script in front of him before carrying on with the rest of the bulletin.” Seven people were killed in the attack. After the war, the BBC’s foreign services became a prop to the Commonwealth, the new euphemism for “empire.”

One of this book’s best set pieces is of the BBC’s wall-to-wall televised coverage of Queen Elizabeth II’s coronation in 1953. One reporter referred to it as “C-Day.” This sort of thing had never been on TV before. The hard part, Hendy writes, was “persuading royal officials that mere subjects had a right to witness the ceremony in the first place.”

Over time the BBC’s tentacles grew longer and more varied: Clusters of radio and television stations catered to different demographics. Competitors crept in.

The satire boom of the postwar era arrived, led by “The Goon Show,” which ran from 1951 to 1960. There were TV dramas from iconic talents like Ken Loach and Dennis Potter. The BBC began to take the critic Clive James’s advice: “Anemic high art is less worth having than low art with guts.”

Language battles fought at the company are never dull to read about. For decades, “bloody” could be used only rarely and “bugger” not at all. One internal stylebook, Hendy writes, “included a ban on jokes about lavatories or ‘effeminacy in men’ as well as any ‘suggestive references’ to subjects such as ‘Honeymoon Couples, Chambermaids, Fig leaves, Prostitution, Ladies’ underwear, e.g. winter draws on, Animal habits, e.g. rabbits, Lodgers, Commercial travelers.”

The eclectic and influential disc jockey John Peel was brought in; so, alas, was the cigar-chomping comic Jimmy Savile, the zany-uncle host of shows like “Top of the Pops,” who was found after his death in 2011 to have molested dozens if not hundreds of children across five decades. An inquiry found that the BBC [*did not do nearly enough*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/26/world/europe/jimmy-savile-report-bbc.html) to stop him.

The BBC’s [*nature documentaries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/17/arts/television/not-enough-snakes-in-your-nightmares-see-planet-earth-ii.html) were pathbreaking, and big hits. (They left James “slack-jawed with wonder and respect.”) Hendy walks us through how, under David Attenborough, these things got made. They take years, enormous staffs and a global network of freelancers willing to sit out in the cold and rain to get the money shots.

Attenborough was told, early on, that he couldn’t appear onscreen because his teeth were too big. Richard Dawkins has written, in his memoirs, about how difficult it is to talk while walking backward, a crucial skill for any BBC documentary host.

More recent BBC hits include the reality series “Strictly Come Dancing,” the brainy documentaries of Louis Theroux and the comedy-drama series [*“I May Destroy You.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/04/arts/television/review-i-may-destroy-you.html)

The right has retained its distrust of the BBC, including up-to-date complaints about wokeness; it would like to see it become smaller and more “distinctive,” in the manner of PBS and NPR. These American stations have had nothing like the BBC’s cultural impact — though Greg Jackson, in his story collection “Prodigals,” was correct to refer to Terry Gross as the “Catcher in the WHYY.”

Hendy can be critical of the company, but at heart he’s a fan. He reports that across any given week, more than 91 percent of British households use one BBC service or another. He cites academic surveys showing that the broadcaster’s news output is, if anything, tilted slightly to the right.

The BBC can still be snoozy. I’m not the only person I know who, at least before Putin rattled the world’s cage, listened to the BBC World Service app at bedtime because it’s an aural sleeping pill.

I deserve to lose style points for borrowing Hendy’s last lines for my own, but he puts it simply about the BBC’s precarious position: “We sometimes never know just how much we need or want something until it is gone.”

Dwight Garner has been a book critic for The Times since 2008. His most recent book is “Garner’s Quotations: A Modern Miscellany.” The BBC: A Century on Air By David Hendy Illustrated. 638 pages. PublicAffairs. $38.

PHOTOS: David Graham, who was involved in the BBC’s broadcasts to Germany in World War II. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BBC); David Hendy

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Joe Biden Looms, but Bernie Sanders Is Running His Own Race; Political Memo***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YM6-W931-DXY4-X05W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 8, 2020 Wednesday 12:12 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1503 words

**Byline:** Sydney Ember

**Highlight:** The Vermont senator has been the front-runner in early campaigning, but Mr. Biden’s expected entry could change that. Mr. Sanders is not likely to care.

**Body**

PITTSBURGH — [Read more: [*Bernie Sanders drops out of 2020 democratic presidential race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html).]

Senator Bernie Sanders was in a rush.

He arrived late to a rally in Michigan after racing across the state recently. He took four questions at a town hall in Ohio before dashing off again.

“Tell me what’s on your mind,” he urged the audience during an event in Detroit. “Don’t be shy — we don’t have an enormous amount of time.”

Two months into his second presidential bid, Mr. Sanders is atop the field of [*announced Democratic candidates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html), buoyed by his enviable name recognition, [*a huge pool of small donors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) and enduring appeal as a political outsider. He has been asserting his status as a front-runner on the campaign trail, mostly holding big rallies that double as shows of force, with the kinds of enthusiastic crowds that helped him win primaries against Hillary Clinton in 2016.

But as he swept through a string of Rust Belt towns over four days this month, there was some reason to hurry: the looming candidacy of Joseph R. Biden Jr.

Mr. Sanders has been running second to the former vice president in most early polls, but as the only one in the race, he has enjoyed significant attention from voters, local party officials and the news media. With Mr. Biden expected to declare his candidacy soon, Mr. Sanders now faces the prospect of greater competition for the spotlight.

So far, Mr. Sanders doesn’t show signs of being psyched out by his rivals, unlike Republican candidates who were rattled by Donald J. Trump in the last election or politicians in both parties who are given to second-guessing. At a CNN town-hall-style forum on Monday night, [*he took a firm stand supporting voting rights for people now in jail*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) — even “terrible people” like the Boston Marathon bomber and people accused of sexual assault. When the moderator gave him a chance to backtrack, Mr. Sanders did not show any self-doubt.

Whether as an insurgent presidential candidate in 2016 or a front-runner now, Mr. Sanders believes he is battling against establishment forces and traditional thinking, and his advisers say he is running his own race.

[Make sense of [*the people, issues and ideas shaping American politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) with our newsletter.]

“Bernie Sanders is out there making an appeal for his message and his policy ideas,” Faiz Shakir, Mr. Sanders’s campaign manager, said. “And they’re going to be the same regardless of whether it’s Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama running against him.”

“It is not contingent upon the people in the race,” he said.

That kind of thinking could allow Mr. Sanders, of Vermont, to operate above the campaign fray and outside of the political gossip he hates. It also risks making him at times appear out of touch with the realities of the race: Mr. Sanders has steamrollered through successes and setbacks alike in single-minded pursuit. His ideological message has not deviated. He does not mention other candidates or allude to them. Even his irascible demeanor is unchanged.

Mr. Sanders’s campaign says he is taking his status as a leading candidate seriously, and is participating in decision-making behind the scenes — how to allocate money, where to travel, what message to emphasize and when. During campaign swings, he is making an effort to meet with local officials and union leaders. He has at times even talked about himself, something that he resisted in 2016 but that his advisers have urged him to do.

“I grew up in a family that lived paycheck to paycheck,” he said at a rally here in Pittsburgh, “and I know what that is about.” It was a start.

[Who’s in? Who’s out? [*Keep up with the 2020 field with our candidate tracker.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html)]

Yet being at the top brings all kinds of perils, and candidates who start out as the highest-profile, best-funded contenders in the race have a mixed record.

Mrs. Clinton was a globally famous fund-raising powerhouse when she entered the presidential race in 2007, but Mr. Obama overtook her with an insurgent campaign that united wary voters. The same year, Rudolph W. Giuliani, the former New York mayor, saw an early polling lead in the Republican primary disintegrate after conservative voters discovered that behind his image as the hero after the Sept. 11 attacks was an eclectic political record that included liberal views on abortion and guns.

Recent political history is also littered with examples of candidates who failed to expand their support beyond a strong following at the outset, including Jeb Bush, whose early financial advantage in the 2016 Republican primary concealed the thinness of his support from voters.

Still, with many Democrats indicating that electoral strength in November 2020 is as important as anything else, Mr. Sanders’s advisers are aware that his success could be predicated on whether voters believe not only in his ideology but also in his ability to get across the finish line.

And so, with Mr. Biden’s footsteps getting louder, Mr. Sanders has been sprinting of late. Last weekend, he stormed though Wisconsin, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania, closing [*with a town hall on Fox News*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html) in Bethlehem, Pa.

Ahead of a return visit to South Carolina last week, he announced a slate of endorsements from elected officials and faith and labor leaders, a move his campaign hoped would demonstrate strength in a state where Mr. Biden holds a [*big lead in early polling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html).

Perhaps most notably, Mr. Sanders has sharpened his attacks against President Trump, repeatedly portraying him as a devious liar and arguing that the president had failed to deliver on the campaign promises — on health care, on taxes, on trade — that had won him so many votes.

“When we think about somebody setting an example for the children of this country, we don’t want somebody who lies all of the time,” he said at a rally in Warren, Mich., a ***working-class*** town not far from Detroit. “The very biggest lie that he told here in Michigan and in Vermont and all over this country was that he was going to stand with the ***working class*** of our country — that he was on their side.”

“It will not shock you to learn that he lied,” Mr. Sanders said of Mr. Trump, at the rally in Pittsburgh. “I know that that’s a shock, but he did.”

[Read more: The blowup between the Center for American Progress and Mr. Sanders’s campaign [*reflects ideological divisions among Democrats.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html)]

At several stops, he also offered direct appeals to ***working-class*** voters, vowing to defend them against what he characterized as the whims of money-grabbing corporations.

In Ohio, he excoriated General Motors for closing its nearby Lordstown plant. “We are sick and tired,” he said, his voice filling the high school auditorium, “of you shutting down plants in this country and destroying families.” Those in the crowd raised their fists and applauded thunderously.

But even as a leading presidential candidate, Mr. Sanders is in many ways the same as he was as an underdog in 2016. He rarely smiles, even when he is being praised. He interrupts pointed questions from voters, then answers them with recognizable snippets from his stump speech. He does not linger at campaign stops.

Some people attending Mr. Sanders’s events appeared to yearn for a connection they did not get.

In Detroit, a crowd of mostly black voters packed into Sweet Potato Sensations, a bakery in the northwestern part of the city, for a brief question-and-answer session with Mr. Sanders, who had faced criticism in 2016 for failing to draw initial support from African-Americans.

“Is the baby in child care?” he asked a woman holding a young child in the front, trying to land a point.

“No,” she replied.

“All right,” he said.

In answer to a question on immigration, he seemed to miss the mark, too.

“I wanted to hear him say that Trump is using that hate to create something that is going to really infringe on peoples’ rights as Americans,” said David Sanchez, 36, who had posed the inquiry. “I heard, like, a canned answer, and that was pretty unfortunate actually.”

But many voters said it was that very consistency that endears Mr. Sanders to them.

Michael Bodner, 57, a postal worker from St. Clair Shores, Mich., said he believed that Mr. Sanders could win the nomination — and the general election — because of his reliable message and clear point of view.

“Bernie,” he said, as the wind picked up, “he’s always been this way.”

And it seemed unlikely at this point that Mr. Sanders would change.

Sitting onstage later in Ohio, Mr. Sanders scribbled notes. He sighed and chewed his lip. As familiar chants of “Bernie! Bernie!” rang out, he looked less than eager to soak any of it in.

Alexander Burns contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont in Pittsburgh this month. On the stump, he has asserted his status as a Democratic front-runner. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

* [*Medicare for All and Beyond, Sanders Uses the Senate as His Launching Pad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html)

1. [*Bernie Sanders Accuses Liberal Think Tank of Smearing Progressive Candidates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html)
2. [*‘Stop Sanders’ Democrats Are Agonizing Over His Momentum*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-drops-out.html)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Helen Andrews and Jill Filipovic; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CK-NN81-JBG3-61F1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 6, 2021 Tuesday 08:20 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 11279 words

**Highlight:** The April 6 episode of “The Ezra Klein Show.”

**Body**

The April 6 episode of “The Ezra Klein Show.”

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Helen Andrews and Jill Filipovic. 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. Click [*here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html) for the episode page and Ezra’s thoughts on the interview. Click play below to listen to the episode.

EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein, and this is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

[MUSIC PLAYING]

I’ve been fascinated by the fight over the baby boomers. You maybe remember OK, boomer, this dismissal of boomer politics that got popular on the internet for a minute and drove boomers totally crazy. That came, of course, during Donald Trump’s presidency. And it reflected frustration in having our fourth boomer president.

And then it’s not like there was — well, there was a bit of a generational handover, actually. Joe Biden — he’s not a boomer. He’s born a few years before the boomers. But I don’t think that’s the kind of generational handover a lot of young people were looking for, which I think gets to the point of this generational frustration. There is a sense — and not just a sense, a reality — that America’s elder generations have kept a hammerlock on power.

They’ve not used that power, in many cases, all that wisely. You look at the climate, for instance. And the world they’re leaving, the economy they’re leaving, is not in great shape. And even now, if you look at how a lot of boomers vote, there’s a feeling among the young that they are the ones blocking progress on these issues. And this is a live fight. I mean, if you just turned on “Saturday Night Live” the other night, you heard it.

^ARCHIVED RECORDING^: (SINGING) Baby boomers, greatest generation. You got all the money, now we got the vaccination. Crash the economy three whole times. But when it comes to the vax, we the first in line. Got a job out of college, no student debt. Retirement funded 100 percent. Voted for Trump —

EZRA KLEIN: So I’ve been wanting to do a show on this. First, is it useful to talk about this at all? Generations are big and diverse. What’s the point in talking in categories of that size? But then also, what is the critique at its core? I mean, you don’t get a lot out of OK boomer. Whenever there’s this much anger, though, lasting for this much time and emerging in this many cultural forms, you got to assume there’s something real there, something worth trying to understand on its own terms.

But one thing about it is, it’s not just one critique of the boomers. There’s a left critique that’s more about economics and power, and then a right critique that, at least usually, is more about cultural libertinism and individualism and institutional decay. So I wanted to put these critiques together to see if they added up to something coherent. Or maybe it’s just a bunch of carping millennials. And I say that as an often carping millennial.

Jill Filipovic is a writer, commentator, a lawyer, and she’s the author of the book “OK, Boomer, Let’s Talk How My Generation Got Left Behind,” which is a very nice encapsulation of the economic case for millennial rage. Helen Andrews is a senior editor at The American Conservative and author of “Boomers, The Men and Women Who Promised Freedom and Delivered Disaster,” which is a pretty searing critique from the right. As always, my email is [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com) Here we go.

So welcome, both of you, to the show. Helen, I want to begin with you. Why is generational analysis valuable? I mean, we’re dealing with pretty arbitrary time periods. Generations, they contain multitudes. So why are boomers or any other age cohort a useful descriptive category for understanding American society?

HELEN ANDREWS: The clue that first got me thinking that the boomers might be worth analyzing as a generation rather than through historical events that they happened to be around for was that the 1960s was a global phenomenon. A lot of people attribute ’60s protests in the United States to the various issues that they centered around, things like the anti-war movement. But you saw the same kinds of student protests in countries that didn’t have a draft or in countries where they had completely different records in World War II. And the parent-child dynamic was just totally alien to what it was in the United States.

So that got me thinking that the ’60s might have been a product just of the youth generation having such demographic heft, there being just so many more young people around. And that was the reason the ’60s protests took the form they did and were so universal across the civilized world. And then I started following the boomers through their political career. And you saw the same kinds of coincidences across the globe as they came into power in the 1990s. You saw neoliberal triangulators, who were trying to reconcile the left and capitalism, and the same types of leaders like Tony Blair and Bill Clinton in different places.

So any phenomenon that is happening in countries that have very different histories and issues sets, but similar demographic bulges, I thought was an indication that generations were worth looking at as generations.

EZRA KLEIN: So I can buy that. So then, Jill, let’s say I’m a boomer who thinks my generation wasn’t really that bad. And I’m tired of everybody yelling at me. I mean, sure, every generation, we make a few mistakes. But ultimately, we boomers, we left the world better than we found it. And the problem is that millennials are just particularly self-pitying, and they just want to blame the fact that life is hard on everyone else. Convince me I’m wrong.

JILL FILIPOVIC: Well, that’s pretty much the same thing that people said about the boomers when they were young, right? There is a whole book written about them called “The Culture of Narcissism.” If you read Helen’s book, it certainly draws on a lot of the descriptions of boomers when they were young people. I think one thing that’s very poorly understood about the boomer generation — and perhaps this is me being slightly defensive of them — is that they’re an incredibly politically polarized generation.

So boomers, much more so than millennials, much more so than the silent generation, more so even than Gen Xers, are really split politically down the middle between liberals and conservatives. And I think what we’ve actually seen and what I hear, especially from liberal boomers, is the sense of, well, wait a minute. We were trying to make the world a better place. And then there were political forces who we didn’t vote for who may have been part of our cohort, who now you’re using to blame our entire generation.

There’s some fairness to that defensiveness. That said, I would say, liberal boomers kind of won the culture. Conservative and more moderate boomers won American politics. And so the generation wide legacy, yes, does have some positives. But overwhelmingly, we’re now living on a planet that’s flooding and burning. So I think it’s a little hard to say that boomers left it better than they found it.

EZRA KLEIN: On the flooding and burning point — and I guess I’ll send this one to Helen, but it’s really for both — one thing I thought about, reading both of your books, is how much the boomers are actually a stand-in for technological change, some of which they generate and some of which they didn’t. I mean, the planet is burning. But the driving of fossil fuels as the way you power economies, I mean, that predates the boomers. And then, obviously, it grows during their heyday.

But a lot of the things that I think they get tagged for come from scientific advances that they weren’t even the ones to necessarily create. I mean, a lot of the sexual politics changes come from the pill. A lot of — and this is a theme of your book, Helen — a lot of social changes come from television. I mean, how much are boomers, Helen, simply the generation that happened to be largest and then in power when a lot of the electricity revolutions innovations came into full flower?

HELEN ANDREWS: I don’t think you can blame technology for the way the world is today and the wreckage that the boomers left us. For example, when we talk about the world today being a lot tougher for millennials than it was for the boomers, one of the things we’re talking about is the loss of power on the part of the ***working class***. Their wages are not growing the way that they used to in the days of the boomers. A one-income family can’t make it the way that they could in the time of the boomers.

Some of that is attributable to technology, but a lot of that is due to changes in what the boomers did to the left. That is, the boomers were the generation of the new left. And the reason they called themselves that is because they were rebelling against the old left. They deliberately wanted the left-wing party in the western democracies not to stand for ***working class*** people and unions, but rather to stand for identity politics type interests. The hinge moment in America for that is the reforms to the Democratic National Convention in 1972, when they nominated George McGovern.

The way that delegates were chosen was then tilted toward or to favor identity politics. So the boomers made a choice to have their left-wing party champion identity politics, rather than ***working class*** people and unions. And so that’s the reason why the ***working class*** was then so vulnerable to these technological changes. The technological changes would have happened either way. But I think they would have had better defenders in the left-wing parties if the boomers hadn’t replaced the old left with their new left.

EZRA KLEIN: Is this what you think they did wrong? I mean, my understanding of your take on the boomers is that they unleashed a kind of cultural reckoning on America. And you do talk about the new left questions in the book, but you’re a Trump supporter. He’s not a huge fan of unions himself. Or is it your view that we should go back to a much stronger union and redistribution style politics? Is that the politics you want to see return?

HELEN ANDREWS: No, I would like to see the Republicans become the ***working class*** party of the future. Because I don’t think the Democratic Party as currently constituted is going to turn around and start championing their interests. And so I think there’s room for Republicans to be a little bit nicer to labor and to unions as a part of that realignment.

But realistically, Republicans protecting ***working class*** interests may have a different issue set than it did when the old left was championing unions in the 1940s and ’50s. It may look like having different positions on things like trade and immigration, which are actually areas where Trump and the ***working class*** were quite together.

EZRA KLEIN: Jill, give me your economic critique of the boomer legacy.

JILL FILIPOVIC: Yeah, so it’s interesting hearing what Helen says because it just strikes me as entirely ahistorical and the kind of polar opposite conclusion that I came to in researching my book. If you look at the political decisions that were made that really did gut the American middle class and ***working class***, yes, Democrats are certainly not innocent parties here. But many of those decisions and many of those huge changes came about when boomers field the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 and then again in 1984.

So you had Reagan who came in, increased tax havens for corporations, refused to increase the federal minimum wage, which we’re still arguing about, which has certainly damaged ***working class*** earning power, gutted union power and union membership. When you look at the ways in which the American economic landscape has changed, comparing boomers to millennials, one of the biggest differences is that when boomers were young, they saw their future as invested in.

So, when boomers were young adults, the federal government was spending $3 in investments into the future, things like infrastructure, education, research for every dollar it spent on entitlements. Now that’s flipped. So the federal government is spending $3, and as soon as boomers all are retired, that number will have ticked up to closer to $5 for every dollar it spends on future investments. So as boomers have gone through the course of their lives, they’ve seen the government work for them. Millennials really haven’t. We’ve been the ones stuck footing the bill.

And when it comes to this gap between the middle class and the ***working class*** and the degree to which ***working class*** earnings have really seen the bottom fall out, which is what’s happened over the past several decades, that’s been a pretty direct result of a systemic dismantlement of the kind of L.B.J. Great Society policies, of F.D.R.’s social welfare policies, of strong protections for unions. I mean, a tax on union memberships and right to work laws are not Democratic inventions. Those were coming from Republicans, and often boomer Republicans.

So, from my view, it really is this shift to conservatism among baby boomers, and sort of Reagan conservatism in particular, that was then bolstered by this kind of ’90s Clinton era centrist Democratic Party that really saw it, I think, to compete on the cultural issues that Republicans made salient and did kind of cede ground on a lot of the most important economic issues that Americans needed to thrive.

HELEN ANDREWS: I’d like to disagree a little bit with Jill’s analysis. And the issue that I think highlights the difference between her position and mine is higher education. If you’re talking about differences in the way the economy looks today versus the way it did in 1950, a huge difference is the fact that lots more people today go to college. Now I think that channeling as many high school seniors as we can into the four-year college track is actually a bad idea. And it was the boomers that did that.

Jill’s line in her book is that the boomers took advantage of all of this investment in their futures and then pulled the ladder up behind them. When it comes to higher education, I wish they had pulled that ladder up behind them, but instead, they doubled down. The boomers were the generation that said going from 15 percent of Americans going to college to 30 percent of Americans going to college was good.

Therefore, kicking that number up even higher to 50 percent or 70 percent must be even better. And at a certain point, you hit diminishing returns. And that’s bad for the economy. That’s bad for the people who start college and then don’t finish. So the story of the boomers and the story of higher education, they’re tied together in ways that go beyond the usual PC liberal colleges or left-wing line.

EZRA KLEIN: What’s your take on the higher education affordability, Jill?

JILL FILIPOVIC: Sure, so when Helen says that there are diminishing returns and that’s bad for people who start college and don’t finish, the only reason it’s bad is because of the student loan debt that young people now have to take on, right? So I’m not sure it necessarily is a bad thing on its face to have a more educated population. In fact, I’d say that that’s quite a good thing. Obviously, I don’t think it is necessarily appropriate to funnel every single high school graduate into a four-year college. But I think having more opportunities for more people to pursue high school education is good.

The bad part of it comes along with skyrocketing education costs and the fact that getting a college education now is many, many times more expensive than it was when baby boomers were young. And part of that, again, does come from these systematic dismantlings of programs that were put in place that baby boomers benefited from, for example, Pell grants, which used to cover a majority of a student’s need-based costs and were grants. During the Reagan era, Congress cut Pell grants, and instead, filled that gap with student loan aid.

Then you saw during the Clinton era, there was the privatization of Sallie Mae. Boomer politicians, or largely boomer politicians, created the universe in which I and I think all three of us on this podcast entered college in, which is that student loans were divorced partially from financial need, that Sallie Mae could be a private lender and also its own collection agency, and that grant-based aid had been stripped out in a way that it simply wasn’t for boomers.

So the problem of higher education to me is not a problem of an overeducated populace. It’s a problem of a deeply indebted populace. And that’s a solvable political problem that boomers and other politicians have instead exacerbated.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to pull out the cultural critique here, alongside some of the economic issues and policies we’re talking about. Helen, you write in your book that the baby boomers have been responsible for the most dramatic sundering of Western civilization since the Protestant Reformation. That’s, I think, a bigger claim than college affordability or too much college access. So what do you mean when you say that the boomers were a once in a 500 years kind of cultural catastrophe?

HELEN ANDREWS: I have had people ask whether or not that was hyperbole. And my answer is that it was not. The way to make that analogy work and to really get your head around just how world historically disruptive the boomers were is to think about it in terms of media. The Protestant Reformation was a direct result of the advent of the printing press and the popularization of the written word as a medium of communication. And the only revolution in media comparable to that since then has been the rise of television and a visual media. And the baby boomers were the generation, the first generation to be raised by their TVs and to have their minds shaped by visual media, rather than text.

There were a lot of people at the time in the 1950s saying that this shift to TV was going to make everybody dumber and eliminate a dimension of critical thinking from the way people process information. And looking at the legacy of the baby boomers and even more at what the rise of social media has done, I think it’s time to consider the possibility that the doomsayers about TV were absolutely correct. So, yes, that the rise of TV was obviously as important and as momentous as the rise of the printing press and the printed word. So it really isn’t that much of a stretch to then say that the Cultural Revolution that followed from it was equally momentous.

EZRA KLEIN: But what Cultural Revolution did that create? You’re very much speaking my language here. I am a huge fan of the televisual media critics, the McLuhan’s and Postman’s. And I think they’re way under-read today. But I don’t think the issue here is that it destroyed critical thinking. I think that would be a pretty hard case to prove. But it definitely changed culture. And it changed what people expected from culture. So how did it change that? How did it change what the boomers thought was the culture they wanted to build and participate in?

HELEN ANDREWS: You can see it in politics, which has been cannibalized by the methods of advertising, rather than the methods of persuasion. Television reduces people’s attention spans. It has an intrinsic bias towards flash over substance. So, basically, anything that people are trying to think critically about. If the information that’s in their minds is information that they got through TV, it’s going to be data of a very superficial kind.

And so even if they then try to process that data in their minds in a thoughtful and serious way, it’s going to come out the other side equally superficial. So you see that in literature in the decline of the novel. You see that in the academy in just the difference between what an academic book sounds like today versus the prose that you saw in an academic book in 1950. It’s just anywhere you look, you see things looking a lot more superficial.

EZRA KLEIN: Jill, do agree that our intellectual and cultural outputs are so much worse than they were pre-boomer and pre-television?

JILL FILIPOVIC: No, I don’t. I think often, these issues are a whole lot more complicated than TV is good or TV is bad, or the internet is great or it’s broken all of our brains, right? I think that there is certainly plenty to critique about the ways in which, as Helen says, television has decreased our attention spans, has moved us toward a more kind of advertising mentality than a persuasion mentality. That’s all quite well taken.

But the idea that that has led to a kind of a greater poverty in cultural output, I actually think is demonstrably false. I think we’re seeing a greater diversity in people who are creating cultural products. I think that we are seeing a challenge to kind of an old guard about what is valuable and what’s not. To me, that’s incredibly exciting to have new visual mediums, to have new technologies, to have new kinds of music and art and ways of speaking and rhetoric that’s all introduced into this canon. I think it makes art and literature and television and music all the richer and more interesting.

EZRA KLEIN: This is where I do wonder how much is generations and how much is technology. Because I think we’re a little bit on a straight line from television and then to cable and then to internet and then to — and Jill, you and I come out of blogging, which was the one great golden period of all this. And then it goes over to social media and Twitter and TikTok and so on. And so there’s more of everything, but there’s also more fracturing of everything. And to me, one of the unifying threads of both of your books is that the boomers preside over this individualization of both commerce and culture and policy-making, for that matter.

But sometimes I wonder whether or not some of that fracturing doesn’t just reflect a kind of ideology that took hold for who knows what reason, but it actually reflects the direction these technologies went and what they allowed. When you have 500 cable channels, you’re going to be able to nichefy the audience in a way you don’t when you only have a couple of networks. And so, how much of the individualization that you’re talking about just stems from the fact that we lost some of that common ground?

JILL FILIPOVIC: I think that’s right. It’s almost, I think, impossible to compare today’s internet to the television that boomers grew up with. Because boomers grew up in kind of a monoculture when it came to popular culture. There were a handful of television stations. And they have now certainly lived their adult lives through that really dramatic shift. I think there’s a couple of things happening. There’s the reality that technology has now allowed this hyper individualization, right?

And then there’s also the reality that America is just a much more diverse place than it was when boomers were young people tuning in to Leave it to Beaver. America has many more immigrants. We have people from many more different countries who speak many more different languages. We’re a much more racially diverse country.

And so when you look at where millennials and folks younger than millennials are oriented, I agree with many of these critiques that the sort of hyper individualization, the ability to really ensconce one’s self inside a universe where most people look and think and believe like you do is ultimately not a great thing. That said, I think the monoculture that boomers were raised in was pretty suffocating and, frankly, not exactly fertile ground for the kind of incredible creativity that I think is one positive outshoot of technology that we see now.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me pick up on that, that monoculture idea. Helen, what’s your most sympathetic description of what the boomers understood themselves to be rebelling against in terms of the culture?

HELEN ANDREWS: The boomers certainly did view their parents as their enemy. They saw themselves as waging a cultural war in generational terms. And that made a lot of sense for the 1968 student protesters in France and Germany because their parents’ generation was that of fascism and collaboration. But it makes a lot less sense among the student protesters in America. Their parents had been the good guys in World War II.

So when they were trying to come up with things to rebel against, the worst they could say was that they had it too good. You read some of these old new left tracts, and what they’re complaining about is that their middle class upbringings were too prosperous and had presented too few challenges. So I tend to think that the culture the boomers were raised in had a lot going for it. Hollywood was never better than it was in the 1940s. We still watch movies and TV from the 1950s. So the monoculture that people complain about and that the new left student rebels of the ’60s tried to overthrow was actually pretty kind of great.

EZRA KLEIN: That doesn’t seem quite even fair to me as a description of these new left tracts, which I’ve enjoyed reading in my time, too. They’re rebelling against the war in Vietnam, Jim Crow, and racial apartheid in the South, although, frankly, not only in the South, a society in which women broadly are expected to stay home and, to the extent they do work, are not given access to the opportunities of equal power or income. I mean, I think they had a more far reaching critique. There’s a materialism thread in their critique. But I think their critique had a lot more to do with oppression than that gives it credit for.

HELEN ANDREWS: I refer you to the opening line of the Port Huron Statement. We are the children of our generation raised in at least modest comfort. And the modest comfort was a big part of what made life so empty in the view of Tom Hayden and his friends in the SDS. One of the reasons they were so impatient with the old left was that they thought union style goals, like raising people’s wages, were no longer the most important thing in life. So you are correct, Ezra, that the war was a big part of their agenda. But in terms of what spiritually animated them, I think it was a sense of emptiness and surfeit that things had been too easy for their generation.

EZRA KLEIN: Jill, what’s your sense of what the boomers were pushing against?

JILL FILIPOVIC: Well, I think there’s a real conflation happening here between the Boomers and the new left. If the new left was actually representative of baby boomers, I think we would have had a president McGovern, right? I don’t know that we would have had a Ronald Reagan. But I think part of what’s happening here is taking what was, in fact, an incredibly tiny sliver of the baby boomer population, folks who were participating in anti-Vietnam War protests who identified as part of the new left or the SDS, even folks who were showing up at civil rights protests and feminist protests, tiny, tiny minority of a huge generation, and certainly not a representative one.

That said, boomers know as adults, nearly every one of them seem as to want to take credit, at least for the civil rights and feminist movements. And so I do think there was a real sense of obligation on the part of young baby boomers who were progressive, which, again, is probably not even a majority of the generation, to show up and to work to make the country a better place. Yeah, I think one thing that is important to recognize is that the leaders of these movements were typically not baby boomers.

So the folks we think about leading the civil rights movement, the feminist movement, even the anti-Vietnam War protests, are older than baby boomers. Gloria Steinem is not a baby boomer. Martin Luther King, Jr. was not a baby boomer. Malcolm X was not a baby boomer. Baby boomers were often the foot soldiers of these movements. They showed up. They put their bodies on the line when they were young, when they were teenagers, high school students and college students.

But they weren’t necessarily the ones coming up with the kind of intellectual underpinnings of these movements, nor organizing them nor forming them. And so I think that that is very important context here. And again, these movements also were, unfortunately, not representative of most of the American public.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: Helen, one of the threads of your book is that the boomers style themselves as a generation about liberation. And that is liberation from various kinds of oppression, liberation potentially from materialism and old structures of family. And your argument is that that liberation, in many cases, does not bring happiness, that that freedom brings only chaos. Could you talk a bit about that?

HELEN ANDREWS: The fundamental legacy of the boomers, if you had to put it in a single sentence, is that they are institution destroyers. And it has to do with exactly what you say, that they believed, above all, in liberation. That’s the thing about institutions. They do constrain your choices. That’s what they’re designed to do. That’s what they’re supposed to do. So there is no institution that the boomers encountered that could withstand their absolute commitment to liberation.

Unfortunately, we now see that an America denuded of institutions is not actually such a great place. They decided that churches could no longer put moral constraints on their parishioners. They thought that the family was too constraining. And unfortunately, when you abolish these institutions, what you do get is chaos. So the challenge for millennials has been growing up and navigating a world without institutions. And I think that’s one of the main reasons why millennials have such little patience with the boomers and their pretense of idealism. Because we’re growing up in the aftermath of it. And it does not look so great to us.

EZRA KLEIN: Jill, what’s your read of the boomers’ sort of institutional legacy and the sort of culture they end up creating?

JILL FILIPOVIC: So I have, perhaps not surprisingly, the total opposite view of Helen. The idea that boomers killed the family, killed the church, I think is pretty flatly absurd. Yes, a whole series of cultural changes happened partly because of boomers, partly because, as we discussed earlier, of technologies, like the contraceptive pill, that really did shift opportunities for women in particular, also for African Americans. And that, in many ways, kind of recalibrated American culture so that it was less hierarchical. And I think that’s right that some of the old institutions began to recede.

In my view, the problem is not that these institutions were deeply beloved, doing sort of overwhelmingly positive good for all Americans, and boomers kind of came through and wiped them out. I think part of the reason why we’ve seen things like a decrease in church attendance, which is certainly very pronounced among millennials, why we saw things like the increase in a divorce rate among boomers once divorce laws really were liberalized, is because many of these old institutions weren’t working in the first place.

I certainly don’t look around me and see an America without institutions. I look around me and I see an America that has been rendered incredibly unequal and that the benefits of some of these old institutions, like, for example, marriage, only accrue to a fairly privileged chunk of society. And part of that I do think is a boomer legacy. Part of that I think is, frankly, the unfinished work of some of these boomer progressive movements.

I think right now, part of what millennials are facing is that we have hollowed out economic prospects. We are going to be the first generation that is not going to do as well as our parents. We’re not even going to do as well as our grandparents. We have far less in wealth. We make less money. And yet, many of us have cultural trappings and social trappings that were certainly beyond the scope of what our parents had. And so we’re living with this kind of dissonance.

And millennials who are relatively lucky — and I think it’s fair to say that probably all three of us qualify — folks who have graduated from a four-year college, who are members of a professional class, we’re going to be pretty OK. The real problem is that so many members of our generation and members of our generation that are disproportionately Black and Brown are going to do so much worse than perhaps they otherwise would have.

And so what I see as the problem is not necessarily the boomer dismantling of old, imperfect, and frankly often, no longer particularly useful institutions, but rather a failure to build up something different and something that would support millennial life and support young people that reflects an increasingly egalitarian country when it comes to things like race and gender, not when it comes to things like economics, and a country that simply hosts a wider variety of people and viewpoints who want different things.

HELEN ANDREWS: Jill’s position on the family is one that I hear a lot from people on the left, and in particular, from boomers themselves. The line is that there was an old model of the family that wasn’t working. And the boomers came in and shook it up. And naturally, there was some chaos attendant upon that. Because chaos is inevitable whenever you have a revolution. But we’re finding our way to a new equilibrium.

The problem with the family that millennials are most worried about and are most likely to face is not divorce. It’s never getting married in the first place. So that’s an indication to me not that the family was shaken up and then discovered a new equilibrium or is on its way to a new equilibrium. That says to me that the boomers broke the nuclear family. And it has not yet been repaired if millennials are not even finding their way toward getting married in the first place. That’s a sign that there’s something that’s gone wrong with the way we are coupling up.

JILL FILIPOVIC: Well, I’m not sure that’s totally right. When you look at which millennials get married and why and when you look at why millennials say they aren’t married or why they’re delaying marriage, it is very much an economic issue, right? Of course, there are cultural issues involved, too. I didn’t get married until I was 34. And I, frankly, never really planned on getting married. That is certainly, to some degree, an individual choice. But when you look at overwhelmingly, millennials do still say they want to get married.

The ones that haven’t gotten married typically say one of two reasons. One is, I haven’t found the right person yet, which I actually think it’s probably a good thing if we live in a culture where marriage has a romantic aspect to it, and we take our time finding someone who we actually would like to spend the rest of our lives with. And if we don’t find that person, then we feel OK staying on our own. And B, the second reason millennials give for not being married is that they don’t feel like they’re financially ready.

So, one thing that has really shifted is the idea of marriage as kind of a capstone to adult life, right, versus a cornerstone of adult life. Is marriage something you do after you have all your ducks in a row? You’ve graduated from college or from the highest level of education you plan on attaining. You have a steady job. You feel like an adult. And therefore, you get married, which is very much how millennials see it. Or is marriage kind of a cornerstone to adult life, something you put in place in order to build adulthood off of, which is how — I’m not sure that’s actually how boomers saw it, but it’s certainly how their parents saw it.

So there has been that shift to the understanding of marriage, but along with that have come these profound disruptions to the American economy that have really affected millennials. And so you see that actually, millennials who are highly educated who have college degrees and who are relatively affluent, yes, we get married much later. We tend to get married in our 30s. But our marriages are the most stable in half a century. Our marriages are — they’re happy. They are much less likely to end in divorce. They’re, by kind of all measures, I think, very good marriages.

What you see on the other side of things, though, is because the bottom has fallen out of ***working class*** wages, in part because of conservative economic policies, you see that ***working class*** folks would like ideally to get married, but don’t feel like marriage is realistically on the table because they feel like many young people feel like they haven’t achieved the kind of financial stability that is that baseline for adulthood that would allow them to get married.

And so, to me, do we want to incentivize people getting married is a sort of bigger question that I’m not even sure that I agree with. I think it’s OK to have a wide variety of family setups. But if we do want to incentivize marriage and we do want to make it possible for more people to get married, then I think the first thing to solve are these widespread economic inequities. And the first thing to solve is to help shore up ***working class*** wages.

EZRA KLEIN: But let me try to bring children into this conversation, too. Because I agree on the cornerstone, capstone. But I’ll direct this one to you, Jill. One thing we do know is that millennial families are having fewer children than they want to be having. We know this in survey data. It’s all over anecdotal reporting. And part of it comes from economic pressure. Part of it comes from affordability problems. As people like to point out, there are more dogs than kids in San Francisco now.

Part of it also comes from this cornerstone, capstone issue, when you’re getting married later. And a lot of people do have children outside of marriage, but a lot of people don’t want to do that so they wait. Then it turns out that you’ve had a kid or two. And by the time you want to have three kids or four kids, you actually don’t have the time anymore just biologically to do it. And so we do see a lot of families that are not able to achieve the sort of size of family that the people in them had originally wanted. Doesn’t that bespeak some kind of failure that is more than just an economics failure?

JILL FILIPOVIC: Sure, I think it’s a broad failure of both the state and how we imagine work should look. The reality is, sort of post-second wave feminism, women have entered a workplace that was constructed by and for men, according to the somewhat natural flow of men’s lives. And so these really crucial years when you’re building up your reputation at your workplace, when you’re working the kind of jobs that will put you in a better position for later on, are the same years in which women are having children. And pre-second wave feminism, the answer to that was essentially, well, women, or at least, middle class, upper middle class white women, didn’t work after they had children.

Now we’ve seen a huge shift. We have, obviously, many more women in the workplace. But we haven’t adjusted workplace norms and workplace policies. So of course, you see women delaying childbearing because I think we’re all sort of stuck between a rock and a hard place. There are some policy solutions to this, but not all. I think the jury is kind of still out on the degree to which family friendly policies incentivize childbearing, that they do a little bit, but it’s certainly not — we’re just, we’re not going to return to a time in which American women are having an average of three or four or five children. And I think that that ship has largely sailed.

But when you look at surveys of women who either haven’t had or are not planning to have their ideal number of children, you see them list a couple of reasons. And the two top ones are time and money. So the money one I think we’ve kind of gone over. That’s obvious, right? And especially in a country where child care can outpace the cost of rent, you can understand why families don’t have the number of children they may otherwise want if they can’t afford them.

But the time piece I think is also really important. Americans today work about a month more every year than we did half a century ago. So we’re spending much more time at the office. And at the same time, parenthood, and especially motherhood, has gotten much more intensive. So women today, working mothers, spend more time with their kids than mothers did in 1965, when many more of those mothers were at home full-time.

So the expectations for what you do as a parent have been so far ratcheted up while expectations for work and the amount of time that we dedicate to our employer have ratcheted up as well that I think women are really caught right in this impossible between space. I think what’s often missing in these conversations is that we focus very heavily on women’s choices, when, in reality, not all of this, but at least some of this, is solvable policy wise.

HELEN ANDREWS: Ezra, I’m so happy to hear you talk about the biological realities of fertility. Because one of my biggest frustrations in debates about the ’60s and the sexual revolution is the way that the pill is overrated as marking a brand new era in human control over fertility, that it made so many people believe that childbearing was now something that was entirely under an individual’s control.

The truth is that after the pill, we’ve become pretty good at not having babies when we don’t want them. But we have not gotten much better at all at making babies arrive once we do want them. And that’s a fundamental problem with the capstone model of marriage. Exactly as you say, that by the time you get around to having a capstone marriage, you just don’t have time to have three or four children. Millennial women are on track to have 25 percent of them end up childless, to reach the end of their childbearing years, having no children.

And when you survey women, the percent that say they want no children is generally about 5 percent. So that’s 20 percent of women who are going to never have children at all simply because they couldn’t put the pieces together in time. Not because they didn’t want them, but because they just couldn’t make it happen. And I think that’s a lot of human misery out there that deserves to be addressed.

EZRA KLEIN: So when you think about addressing it, where do you approach that? Do you see that as a cultural or an economic problem?

HELEN ANDREWS: If you were a time traveler who fell asleep in 1955 and woke up again in 2020, one of the first differences that you would notice is women in the workplace. It used to be that ¾ of families were one-earner families. And today, that has just about flipped. About ⅔ of families are two-earner families. And the problem with that is not that women are in the workplace. Women being in the workplace is fine. It’s that many women would prefer a breadwinner model family and aren’t able to afford it.

This incidentally is the knock-down rebuttal to any boomer who disputes millennial complaints about how hard we have it economically. It is simply the case that you could put together a middle class life on one income in their day, and you can’t do that now. And that’s a huge problem. That’s a huge decline in the quality of life for a lot of people. So I think addressing the two-income trap is the first thing we need to do to make raising kids easier. And if raising kids is easier, more people will do it.

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to go back to something you were talking about earlier, which is that one way of reading this is that there was a period of change from institutions that many thought were not working for them. But what hasn’t really happened is that alternative institutions emerged and began functioning well. And I have a personal slight obsession with the failure of some of the alternative living structures and ideas of the boomer age. I love reading books about the commune era and also why it failed. Because some part of me always thinks that seemed like a reasonable idea. Maybe it should have worked.

People underestimate this. There’s a great David Brooks piece in The Atlantic about it from a year or two ago. The nuclear family as we think about it now, that Leave it to Beaver family, that was a really small punctuated period in American life. We used to have giant extended families that all lived together. Then there was a moment of sort of the nuclear family. And now we’re in these more fractured families, where we’re trying to basically buy the roles that extended families do for us. What went wrong in alternative institution construction? Like, not how can we go back, but why haven’t we been able to go more forward?

JILL FILIPOVIC: A big piece of it is that there was a tremendous disconnect between boomer cultural shifts and then the political universe that more conservative boomers created. So when you had these institutions or attempts to create new institutions like commune living, those were coming typically from the left among boomers. But in the political sphere, you had a real right-wing backlash that the same generation also helped to fuel, right? So again, we talk about boomers. It’s really hard to talk about this one generation as a coherent whole.

And so you had these tremendous cultural changes, but you unfortunately didn’t have many of the necessary policy shifts to go along with it that would have allowed those changes to be sustainable or to perhaps morph into something more useful. There’s an academic named Dorothy A. Brown, who has a book out now about the racism of the tax code. Totally fascinating. I really recommend it. But one of the things that she points out is that we often think about things like the tax code, right, as racially neutral, as perhaps gender neutral. But in reality, that’s not actually how they function and that the people who are writing these policies are reflecting their own lives, assumptions, and ideals into them.

And the boomers who were living on communes and who are the new left were not necessarily the same people or were certainly not the same people who were writing, for example, the Reagan era policies that have very much shaped our current modern economic landscape. So, I mean, to me, that’s primarily where that disconnect comes in, which is why so much of lefty progress in the U.S. very much feels like an unfinished project.

EZRA KLEIN: So here then is my bold left-right compromise, Helen — tax-free opportunity zones for commune living. Will that fix it?

HELEN ANDREWS: [LAUGHS] Interesting thought.

EZRA KLEIN: Thank you.

HELEN ANDREWS: Unfortunately, people really overrate the extent to which sprawling, extended families were the norm in the United States. The truth is that for hundreds of years in Europe, there has been a Mediterranean family model, where women tend to get married very young and have lots of kids. And aunts and uncles and extended generations have a huge role in raising children then in people’s lives. And then there has been the model that prevailed in places like England, which has always been more nuclear family centric, even in the 18th century.

But even if that were not the case, the problem with the David Brooks recommendation of making a shift to bigger extended families now is that we just don’t have the people to do it. People have fewer siblings nowadays than they used to. So there just aren’t enough spinster aunts to go around to do child-minding in big, sprawling extended families of the kind that he envisions. So I don’t think that’s the way forward. I think fixing the nuclear family is probably a much better way forward.

EZRA KLEIN: How do you fix the nuclear family, though?

HELEN ANDREWS: By alleviating the two-income trap and making it easier to put together childcare and child minding within a nuclear family structure.

EZRA KLEIN: So I mean, I hear that, and I think the Bernie Sanders agenda. But but I suspect that’s not what you have in mind.

HELEN ANDREWS: Well, I’m not sure what you mean when you say the Bernie Sanders agenda.

EZRA KLEIN: Universal pre-K, $15 minimum wage, large tax and transfers to those who need them, a pretty broad system of social supports for anybody who falls through the cracks, guaranteed universal healthcare so that people never lose that, and probably sectoral bargaining and expansion of labor rights.

HELEN ANDREWS: Some of that is fine. I expect we will see some form of aid to families passed in the next four years. My one caution, as we consider what kind of aid to pursue, is that something like universal child care or paid parental leave puts a thumb on the scale in favor of the two-earner model. It says to women, if you want to go out into the workforce, we will subsidize. We will help you. And if you want to stay home, you get nothing. So any kind of aid that we want to pass has to be neutral on two-earners versus one-earner.

EZRA KLEIN: Jill, this reminds me, actually, that I had written a piece about the child allowance ideas going around, Mitt Romney’s and others. And you’d written in a tweet thread, worrying that some of those policies might actually lead to more women staying at home, instead of going out into the workforce. And that would lead to a reduction in female economic power. So I suspect you’re not neutral on which way this policy goes. Do you want to talk a bit about that?

JILL FILIPOVIC: Sure, I would say there’s already a thumb on the scale. And that thumb is very much putting pressure on women who are stuck in an impossible position. Now it is true that many women say, especially when their children are young, that they would like to work part-time, or they would like to be able to have more time with very, very young children. But most women don’t actually say that they want to be full-time stay-at-home parents for sort of the duration of their lives.

There are a lot of benefits to women working. Those benefits accrue to their children as well. So women who work are obviously much more financially independent, able to leave an abusive partner in a way that women who don’t have paid work aren’t able to. The daughters of women who work are more likely to do better in school. Sons of working mothers are more egalitarian in their own homes. They pitch in more around the house. They help more with childcare. Women who stay at home full time tend to have higher rates of certain mental health challenges, including depression.

That’s not to say that the current system that we have, which is push a model in which you need a two-income family to survive in the middle class and then give folks absolutely no support on the back end is the right one. But to me, we should be looking at why we’ve set up our workplaces the way we have, why we are one of the only countries in the entire world that doesn’t have leave for women who have just had children, and why we, frankly, aren’t looking at the fact that so many men also say that they feel out of balance when it comes to work and family, that men today, like women, have changed a tremendous amount, and that millennial men, in particular, do say they want more time with their kids.

They do say — many of them say that they wish they could take parental leave. But because of a combination of either not having it or because of workplace and cultural stressors that really punish men who are seen as feminized, they don’t take it. I mean, to me, those are much more pressing issues and I would imagine sound a lot more salient to millennial women than telling millennials, who are the most educated generation in American history, ladies, what you really want is to stay at home full-time.

I think that’s certainly true of some women. And that’s great. No individual should have to carry the weight of feminism on her shoulders alone. But generally, what most women want is the ability to do both. We just want the ability to have the time to do both well.

HELEN ANDREWS: Just two quick responses to that before we move on. The organization American Compass did a poll recently asking people what model of childcare they preferred for families with children under five. And the only group to favor two-earners in the workforce and full-time childcare for the kids was upper class respondents. The ***working class*** and the lower class favored the bread winner model at rates of 68 percent, 58 percent. So that’s one bias in a lot of these discussions, is that a lot of the people who are in the pundit class tend to be in the class that favors the two-earner model. And the people who prefer one-earner just don’t get heard, even though, as this poll shows, they are in the majority.

And the second and broader point is that the false promise of boomer feminism was that it would eradicate women’s dependence. It tried to make women no longer dependent on their husbands. But in too many cases, they didn’t get rid of dependence. They just displaced it.

And so instead of being dependent on your husband, you’re dependent on your employer, or in the case of single mother families, very frequently dependent on the government. And so I think any conversation about family has to start by admitting that children are helpless and dependent and will always be. And there’s no way to get rid of that. And the people who take care of these dependent babies are then necessarily, in some sense, dependent, too.

JILL FILIPOVIC: But it’s strange, though, to consider only women are dependent then on husbands, on workplaces, on the government. We don’t hear men talked about in that same language of dependence, even though, I mean, certainly, men are dependent on their workplaces for an income. Men also traditionally have been quite dependent on their wives to ensure that they can have the kind of rich family lives that they enjoy and that they can take the time that they need to focus on work and to financially thrive.

It’s really only women I think that are party to these kind of really condescending lectures about what we can and can’t have or how we are or aren’t dependent that always presumes that women are caretakers first and kind of people second. And that assumes as well that men and the way that men have largely constructed this world in this country are these sort of immovable beings. And I’m not sure any of that’s true.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: If the boomers are known for anything culturally, it is a much more sexually libertine generation. You have the pill. You have the pill, you have Gay Talese writing about swinger parties. You have free love and hippie communes and the whole of it. And then now, I remember being a kid reading about how the panic was rainbow parties and teen pregnancy. And now teen pregnancy has dropped precipitously, which is great.

But there’s a lot of fear that millennials are not having enough sex, that young kids today seem to not be dating as much, that there’s an explosion of porn sometimes as a substitute, not just a complimentary product, I guess. And that it’s a strange thing to watch the boomer generation’s children end up in what a lot of people now talk about as a sexual recession. And I’m curious how you read that.

HELEN ANDREWS: Millennials are the most porn saturated generation in human history, so not just in American history or in the last century, but for all time. And that has to do, again, with the rise of visual media. Technology made it so that any 11-year-old can pull up video of any sex act he wants to see anywhere that he has an internet connection. And millennials grew up in the midst of that. They were raised in a world where that was just taken as a given, streaming video pornography.

And it has warped their sexualities in ways that as they get older, they find they don’t like, that they recognize as unhealthy. So the over sexualization that the boomers brought about is not contradictory to the sex recession that we see among millennials. It’s tied up with it. They are the two sides of the same phenomenon, the decline in healthy sexual relationships and the oversaturation with video pornography.

JILL FILIPOVIC: I honestly think a lot of this is kind of the same old, the kids are doing it wrong, fear factor that we’ve seen for millennia. There was, obviously, tremendous outrage, fear around the boomer era sexual revolution. Ezra, like you, when I was growing up and was a young teenager, there was also a tremendous amount of fear among people our age having rainbow parties and having sex too young. And I don’t know how many talk show segments there were about babies having babies.

And now that we are adults and what I suppose people would consider kind of appropriate childbearing age, and we’re not having as many children as the generation before us, which is pretty normal — that’s part of a many centuries long decline in the average number of children that families have, which was shifted only in the era in which baby boomers were born. Now that we’re doing pretty much the same thing that many, many generations before us did, which is marry later and have fewer kids, that’s subject to a nationwide freak-out of, yet again, the young people are doing it wrong.

I think some of the critiques of pornography culture are important, are well taken. I’m not sure we have the whole story yet on porn. I think it’s a really, really complicated social dynamic that, obviously, has many negative side effects for a lot of folks. But I do think part of the demonization of millennial porn usage is also tied up in ideas about sex and shame and religiosity and the proper role of sex in someone’s life. I don’t think it’s a bad thing that sex is no longer primarily relegated to the confines of marriage. I don’t think it’s a bad thing that we are more sexually open minded, that millennials are much more likely, for example, to identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender than baby boomers were.

I think like much else we’ve talked about in this podcast, these shifts have brought some really significant, positive outcomes to millennials that all of us are living with. And they’ve also brought some serious downsides. And I’m not sure we even completely understand yet where each piece of that falls.

EZRA KLEIN: But you can tell me if I’m wrong on the data here, Jill. But isn’t the weird thing that while we’re dealing with a more sexually open generation, while there is, of course, more sex happening outside the confines of marriage, that you would expect that would lead to an explosion in sex, but instead, it’s gone down. That’s the part that I find a lot of sociologists are a bit more confused by, that there’s been a decline in relationships and also in sex at the same time that the culture has become more sexually open. What’s your theory of that?

JILL FILIPOVIC: So that’s right. Millennials have less sex than boomers, both in terms of average number of sex partners and average numbers of sexual interactions. I forget if it’s documented per month or per year. But as much as that millennial sex recession has been the topic of pretty significant hand-wringing, when you actually break it down and you look at, OK, how many fewer sexual acts per month are we talking about, it’s pretty negligible. Millennials are having about 2.5 fewer sexual acts per year, as compared to boomers. So 2.5 sex acts over the course of a year, I’m not sure is quite grounds to declare a millennial sex recession.

HELEN ANDREWS: One of the numbers that sociologists collect on sexual activity is the proportion of men under the age of 30 who report having had zero sexual partners since they turned 18. For the last 30 years, I think, that number has hovered around the 10 percent mark. In the most recent numbers, it had gone up above 25 percent, I think to 27 percent. So that’s a huge explosion, more than doubling in young male virginity.

EZRA KLEIN: 27 percent of men between age 16 and 30 have not had any sexual partners ever.

HELEN ANDREWS: I think it’s 18 and 30. And they might have had sexual partners before they turned 18. It’s about activity since they’ve turned 18, I believe. But basically, yes. And that’s exactly what Michel Houellebecq, the grumpy French novelist, predicted. He said the boomers made sex into more of a marketplace. They made it look more like capitalism.

So very naturally, we got what you always get in a capitalist market. You got lots of winners and losers. You have sexual millionaires who have lots and lots of partners. And you have sexual peasants who have none. And frankly speaking as a woman, neither kind of man, either the sexual millionaire or the sexual peasant, makes a very good life partner. So with men, you have winners and losers. And with women, mostly just losers.

JILL FILIPOVIC: I think this stat you’re pointing to is the percentage of men under 30 who haven’t had sex in the past year. I’m not sure it’s ever.

EZRA KLEIN: All right, before we wrap this up, we’ve been talking about a lot of trends that people are worried about. What’s one trend, starting with you, Jill, that you’re actually optimistic about?

JILL FILIPOVIC: I’m actually optimistic about a lot when it comes to millennials. I think one trend that I feel really, really heartened by — and I think this is, obviously, what conservatives malign as identity politics, but is this millennial insistence on decency, on kindness, on recognizing that many of us have very different things to bring to the table, that an old model of hierarchy, whether that’s racial hierarchy or gender hierarchy, is not just bad for people at the bottom of it, but fairly uninteresting for people at the top of it as well, and that our country, our culture is better, richer, and more interesting when it’s a loud cacophony of voices and ideas and experiences.

And when we are people who are open — and this is something that I’ll actually give boomers a bit of credit for — is that as much as the cranky folks on Fox News complain that millennials are all snowflakes who want participation trophies, it was boomers who raised us to believe that we have something to offer, who gave us those participation trophies, and who told us that, yeah, we belong here and maybe we have something to say and to share. And I think millennial life is all the richer for that.

EZRA KLEIN: Helen, what’s a trend you’re optimistic about?

HELEN ANDREWS: I see a very promising rise in self-education. One of the worst things the boomers did was destroy education in this country. It’s possible now to go to school and graduate from the best universities in America without having even a basic knowledge of the past and the sweep of human history. And so among young conservatives especially, I see young people reacting against the dismal state of education by teaching themselves. They are reading old books. And there’s really nothing better to do with your time than to read old books, so that makes me very, very optimistic.

EZRA KLEIN: What a beautiful segue to our final section, which is book recommendations. Thank you, Helen. So what is a book you would recommend every millennial should read to better understand boomers? And Jill, I’ll start with you.

JILL FILIPOVIC: So I would love every millennial to read “The Culture of Narcissism, American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations,” which was a 1979 book Christopher Lasch wrote. He’s a cultural historian. And part of the reason I find this book so fascinating is, it’s about boomers, but reading it, you can almost read it as being the same kinds of things you hear from boomers about millennials. Boomers were quite maligns when they were young as well. And so, I imagine that millennials reading this may read it as, OK, boomers have been narcissistic forever, or may read it as, wow, they were saying the same things about them that they now say about us.

EZRA KLEIN: Helen?

HELEN ANDREWS: My choice is Paul Berman’s “A Tale of Two Utopias.” It’s a book about the new left. And Berman himself was a fully paid up member. He was at Columbia University in 1968 for the student rebellion there. But as he got older, he soured on some of the student rebellions’ idealism and gives a very acute diagnosis of the ways that it went wrong, but also, for anti-boomer millennials, a good sense of what they thought they were doing when they first set out.

EZRA KLEIN: So then how about a book every boomer should read to better understand millennials? And obviously, they should read your book, Jill, which is all about this. But after they’ve read that book, what should they read?

JILL FILIPOVIC: They should read Anne Helen Petersen’s book, which is called “Can’t Even, How Millennials Became the Burnout Generation.” I think my book is very sort of data-driven and stat-heavy and policy focused. And Anne Helen’s book is really, really brilliant at getting to the more amorphous cultural stuff that millennials live in and experience, but that is a bit harder to quantify. And she does a really genius job of distilling it down in a way that I think, hopefully, will make boomers and anyone else a bit more sympathetic to what millennials struggle with.

EZRA KLEIN: Helen?

HELEN ANDREWS: My recommendation is “Coming of Age on Zoloft,” by the millennial journalist Katherine Sharpe. I think one of the worst things the boomers ever did was to stuff their children full of mind-altering drugs, whether that was Ritalin or antidepressants. And Sharpe’s book gives, on the one hand, a good, objective assessment of the problem of overdiagnosis within the discipline of psychiatry, but also a firsthand memoir of what it was like for her to be put on mind-altering drugs when she was a teenager and going through emotional problems, and then just stay on them for years and then wake up in middle age and realize she had no firsthand experience of her own personality unmediated by drugs.

EZRA KLEIN: And then what is always my last question here, which is favorite children’s book. And let’s mix it up. Helen, why don’t you go first?

HELEN ANDREWS: Stephen Vincent Benet was an American poet of the early 20th century, and he wrote “A Book of Americans,” which is lots of short, light verse about famous characters from American history, from Pocahontas all the way through Teddy Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. It’s wonderful poetry and also a good refutation of the claim that everybody before the boomers believed in this uncomplicated, triumphalist America rah, rah, rah, rah sort of patriotism. Because this is a very patriotic book, but it’s also not simple-minded. And they’re fun to memorize, too.

EZRA KLEIN: Jill?

JILL FILIPOVIC: So I’m a typical millennial without children. So it’s been a very long time since I’ve read children’s books. And I wasn’t sure if this was asking me a children’s book I would recommend or what my favorite was as a child. So I went with the latter, which is “Goodnight Moon.” Absolute classic. I have absolutely no political reason for recommending it, other than I thought about recommending “The Giving Tree.” But looking back, the boy chopping down the female tree and sitting on her at the end is not very nice. So that seemed a bit anti-feminist, and I couldn’t, in good political conscience, say it’s my favorite children’s book anymore.

EZRA KLEIN: I read Goodnight Moon now basically every day. And the page where it’s like, good night, nobody, is basically my favorite thing in children’s literature. Helen Andrews and Jill Filipovic, this has been wonderful. Thank you both so much.

HELEN ANDREWS: Thank you.

JILL FILIPOVIC: Thanks, Ezra.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show” is a production of New York Times Opinion. It is produced by Roge Karma and Jeff Geld, fact-checked by Michelle Harris, original music by Isaac Jones, and mixing by Jeff Geld.

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The New York Times

October 17, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 8; FICTION

**Length:** 878 words

**Byline:** By Andre Dubus III

**Body**

THE WAR FOR GLORIABy Atticus Lish

There is a polished gloss to so much early-career contemporary American fiction, a sense that behind the authorial talents that created these novels and stories, there is also a well-intentioned production team of editors and creative writing professors and various helpers along the way who have passed on the rules of what can and cannot be done on the page. And so one often gets the hollow feeling that these carefully made books are now part of a smoothly running machine whose ultimate purpose seems to be not so much art as commerce. This is not even remotely the case with Atticus Lish's profoundly affecting novel ''The War for Gloria.''

From its hypnotic opening pages, we find ourselves in the sure hands of a roaming omniscient narrator, one who knows intimately the beating hearts of its two central characters: Gloria, a young single mother, and Corey, her only child, a boy who early on shows a passion for sailing from studying books. ''Corey showed his mom the islands on the map, Boa Vista and Santiago off the coast of Senegal, telling her that he'd be sailing here someday when he grew up and went to sea,'' Lish writes. ''He had learned about the concept of a vessel from living in his mother's car. He had fastened on the concept early. Maybe it was always in his head, one of the basic concepts he was born with -- woman, sun, earth, boat.''

He is also born, it soon becomes clear, with a deep and abiding love for his mother, an aspiring writer and intellectual who struggles to pay the bills and is forced to constantly move, a woman whom her young son sees as his advocate at all times, despite the world's hazards: ''He saw her as having a glass jaw that she kept putting up and it kept getting cracked. But when it came to him, she was stalwart.''

Set in and around the ***working-class*** neighborhoods of Boston during Obama's presidency, the novel takes a dark early turn when Gloria is stricken with a terminal illness and Corey's father, Leonard, a man he's never known, comes back into the picture. Leonard works as a security guard at M.I.T. and claims to be a largely self-taught physicist writing his own groundbreaking dissertation. He is also obsessed with one of his neighbors, a man who got away with killing a woman. Leonard's presence soon becomes sinister, yet he is a fully realized character, just one of many here. There is Adrian Thomas Reinhardt, Corey's new friend who has been accepted to M.I.T., a boy with a sculpted physique who lifts weights and punches a heavy bag he hangs from a tree in his upper-class Cambridge neighborhood, who wears a leather jacket and a plastic groin cup at all times and reads Nietzsche for leisure. There is Tom Hibbard, a ''tin knocker,'' and his daughter, Molly, one of Corey's classmates, for whom he pines. When we meet her, we are given not so much a portrait as we are a feeling for what her appearance incites in Corey:

''He would always remember the sight of Molly standing in front of her house in the summer light when he was a boy of 13 and she was wearing cutoff shorts. The sun had been pouring down on the grass in the rutted yard, turning it verdant electric green. A beach blue sky soared overhead above the points of the treetops. Below the cliff and beyond the trees lay the sparkling ocean.''

Immediately following this light touch comes a full rendering of New England blue-collar culture:

''Charcoal smoke suffused the air. Pickup trucks were parked all over, on the street and on the grass. Rock was playing on a radio -- '80s hits. ... A group of older male construction workers stood in a line, staring contentedly out at the street, saying nothing. ... Many were heavily tattooed, like bikers or ex-cons, their skin leathered by sun and work. You could see invisible responsibility hanging on them -- payments for vehicles and homes, children and women. Steadied by weight, they were further restrained by a shared sense of the right way to act; they had to work with each other. There was no wildness; they were ships with ballasts and keels.''

Lish's substantial gifts, first shown in his acclaimed debut novel, ''Preparation for the Next Life,'' are in abundant display here and throughout this gorgeously written book -- his ability to render urban landscapes, the weather and its subtle effects on the emotions of his characters, the textural experience of poverty and class stratification in our early-21st-century America, physical labor, as well as physical and psychic violence. All of this is captured by a passionate narrative voice that has clearly been around, one that intimately knows not only the rigors of confined combat in a cage fight but also the bruised and hungry heart of a woman yearning to fulfill her potential before she dies. But at the heart of ''The War for Gloria'' is the unforgettable character of Corey, a young man who is left to care for his dying mother alone, a boy who is hurled into the hard streets to find his solitary way.

With this, only his second novel, Lish has not only created a work of enduring art, he has distinguished himself as one of our finest writers.Andre Dubus III's most recent novel is ''Gone So Long.''THE WAR FOR GLORIABy Atticus Lish452 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/07/books/review/atticus-lish-war-for-gloria.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/07/books/review/atticus-lish-war-for-gloria.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Atticus Lish (PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN HERMENS)

**Load-Date:** October 17, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Republicans Oust Collin Peterson in Minnesota***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616Y-WCD1-JBG3-63VW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 4, 2020 Wednesday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; National Desk

**Length:** 551 words

**Byline:** By Luke Broadwater

**Body**

The long-serving chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, who had bucked political trends in his conservative district for years, succumbed to a challenge from Michelle Fischbach.

Representative Collin C. Peterson, Democrat of Minnesota, the chairman of the Agriculture Committee who has represented his large agrarian district for three decades, lost his re-election bid early Wednesday, handing Republicans a pickup in the House.

Mr. Peterson, 76, had bucked political trends for years, winning re-election in a rural district that was increasingly shifting toward the Republican Party. Michelle Fischbach, 55, a former lieutenant governor who vowed to ''fire'' Speaker Nancy Pelosi upon arriving in Washington and sought to tie the congressman to his party's left flank, finally ended his run, according to The Associated Press.

''It really is the death knell for the moderate rural Democrat,'' said Tim Lindberg, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Minnesota Morris. ''It was clear he knew he was in trouble.''

President Trump won the district by 31 points in 2016, and Republican strategists had theorized that should Mr. Peterson face tough competition during the president's re-election year, they could flip the seat. His defeat underscored a growing divide between suburban areas that are increasingly aligning with Democrats and the white ***working-class*** rural districts that are shifting ever more sharply toward Republicans.

On the campaign trial, Ms. Fischbach had echoed Mr. Trump's ''law and order'' message, seeking to sow fear and blame Democrats for unrest in America's cities over the killings of Black people by the police.

''They want to make sure the stuff going on in Minneapolis is not going to happen in their back yard,'' Ms. Fischbach said of voters in the district during a recent debate.

Mr. Peterson sought to play up his seniority accumulated over years in the House, repeatedly making a practical pitch to his constituents. As chairman of the Agriculture Committee, he argued, he could help farmers in a way a newcomer to Congress such as Ms. Fischbach could not.

''Agriculture is this district,'' Mr. Peterson said, citing the sugar industry's importance to the local economy. ''Any ag meeting in Washington in the House doesn't start until I get into the room, and it ends when I leave. The secretary calls me all the time.''

Despite his powerful position in Washington, Mr. Peterson, a licensed pilot known to fly his private plane across his district, had grown increasingly endangered.

During the 2018 midterm election, Dave Hughes, an Air Force veteran endorsed by Mr. Trump, narrowly lost to Mr. Peterson as conservatives flipped two neighboring rural districts.

Outside money poured into the 2020 contest, with Mr. Peterson and groups supporting him spending more than $16 million to try to retain the seat, while Ms. Fischbach and her allies spent nearly $7 million to seize it.

On the campaign trail, Mr. Peterson repeatedly emphasized his independent streak from his party. He often votes with Republicans, including against the Affordable Care Act, and earned an ''A'' rating from the National Rifle Association.

He is the only current Democrat in Congress who voted against both articles of impeachment against Mr. Trump.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/us/politics/minnesota-michelle-fischbach.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/us/politics/minnesota-michelle-fischbach.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Michelle Fischbach had echoed President Trump's ''law and order'' message, seeking to blame Democrats for unrest in America's cities over the killings of Black people by the police. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stephen Maturen/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Just 5 Months Into His Term, Adams Is Busy Raising Money to Win Another***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65NX-52H1-DXY4-X1KT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 13, 2022 Monday 20:50 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1432 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Dana Rubinstein

**Highlight:** The mayor has kicked off a cross-country fund-raising blitz for re-election, taking his tour to Chicago and Beverly Hills, even as he confronts major challenges in New York City.

**Body**

The mayor has kicked off a cross-country fund-raising blitz for re-election, taking his tour to Chicago and Beverly Hills, even as he confronts major challenges in New York City.

Not long after celebrating his first 100 days as mayor this spring, Eric Adams was poolside in Beverly Hills, Calif., already thinking about the future.

Wearing a crisp blue suit and fuchsia tie, Mr. Adams spoke to a crowd of vegan enthusiasts about his allegiance to a plant-based diet in an event at the midcentury home of Naren Shankar, a Hollywood showrunner and producer of “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation.”

The underlying motivation, however, was about another passion: raising money for his re-election campaign in 2025.

The [*fund-raising event was hastily organized*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CdMLEb8PwtG/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=) while Mr. Adams was in town to speak on a technology panel at the Milken Institute Global Conference — part of a [*three-day*](https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2022/05/05/canceled-flight-leaves-mayor-adams-stranded-in-l-a-) trip in May where he also socialized with the [*comedian Dave Chappelle*](https://nypost.com/2022/05/05/mayor-adams-says-he-was-with-dave-chappelle-after-horrific-la-attack/) and the [*heiress Paris Hilton*](https://pagesix.com/2022/05/10/eric-adams-feted-at-top-secret-a-list-dinner-in-los-angeles/).

Even as Mr. Adams has struggled to address a series of pressing challenges in New York, he has launched an unusually early fund-raising blitz to secure a second term, a feat that no Black mayor of New York City has achieved.

The fund-raisers coincide with Mr. Adams’s efforts to establish a national profile. In March, the mayor held an event in Chicago at the home of Desirée Rogers, the former White House social secretary for President Barack Obama, which was attended by Robert Blackwell Jr., an entrepreneur and Obama ally.

Sometime this summer, Charles Phillips, the managing partner of Recognize, a technology investment firm, is planning to hold a fund-raiser for Mr. Adams — probably “out east,” in the Hamptons, he said in an interview.

The mayor’s team is hoping he will max out his fund-raising by the end of the summer, according to a Democratic consultant who was briefed on the campaign’s plans. A $2 million haul, coupled with the city’s [*generous*](https://www.nyccfb.info/program/how-it-works) matching funds program, could enable him to hit the $7.9 million spending cap for the 2025 mayoral primary. Collecting a huge war chest now could fend off potential competitors and capitalize on what remains of the mayor’s honeymoon period, when he is still relatively popular and donors are eager to get his attention.

“You want to raise money as a show of strength,” said Chris Coffey, the chief executive of Tusk Strategies and a manager of Andrew Yang’s campaign for mayor. “You don’t want to spend your last year running around doing fund-raisers.”

There is little precedent for such an early push. Bill de Blasio, in his first year as mayor, focused on [*raising*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/30/nyregion/de-blasio-fights-for-a-democratic-state-senate-with-calls-cash-and-ads.html) money for candidates for the State Senate and for the Campaign for One New York, a nonprofit group that supported his agenda — both of which became part of [*federal and state investigations into his fund-raising*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/16/nyregion/mayor-bill-de-blasio-investigation-no-criminal-charges.html). Michael R. Bloomberg did not have to bother with fund-raising; he used his own fortune to run for a second term, then [*wielded*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/20/nyregion/20term.html) his personal philanthropy to gain support to overturn term limits in 2008, [*spending a record $102 million*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/28/nyregion/28spending.html) on a third term.

There are also political risks to Mr. Adams’s fund-raising strategy, which could potentially cast him as an absentee leader unduly focused on politics.

When the mayor was in Beverly Hills, [*the risk level*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/nyregion/nyc-coronavirus-yellow-risk-level.html) for coronavirus cases had just increased in New York City, raising fresh concerns about the city’s economic recovery. Federal officials were [*weighing a takeover of the troubled Rikers Island jail*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/07/nyregion/rikers-island-louis-molina.html) in response to rising violence and inmate deaths there. A [*police officer was slashed in Brooklyn*](https://nypost.com/2022/05/05/nyc-cop-stabbed-in-hand-suspect-shot-in-coney-island-police/) by a man carrying a 16-inch knife.

And when his [*return flight from California was abruptly canceled*](https://www.cityandstateny.com/politics/2022/05/what-new-york-city-mayor-eric-adams-missed-while-his-extended-trip-los-angeles/366563/), Mr. Adams had to scrap most of his events for the day, including a rally at City Hall to put pressure on the State Legislature to extend mayoral control of city schools.

Mr. Adams has already seen his approval rating drop as he faces growing pressure to address rising crime and an affordable housing crisis. Only 29 percent of New Yorkers said his performance was good or excellent, and 56 percent said the city was headed in the wrong direction, according to a recent [*poll by NY1 and Siena College*](https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2022/06/06/exclusive--worried-about-crime--new-yorkers-give-tough-marks-to-mayor-adams-in-poll?cid=app_share).

Mr. Adams defended his polling numbers, arguing that New Yorkers were tough graders and that many had given him a “fair” rating, which he considered a C grade.

“Listen, a C is not an A, but a C is not an F,” Mr. Adams told reporters.

The mayor has proved to be a prolific fund-raiser. He raised more than $9 million for the Democratic primary and the [*general election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/nyregion/eric-adams-donors-sliwa.html) last year and another $10 million in matching funds. Mr. Adams spent much of last summer [*traveling to the Hamptons and Martha’s Vineyard*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/27/nyregion/eric-adams-donors-mayor.html) to court wealthy donors who favored his brand of centrism, attending as many as five fund-raisers a day.

Mr. Adams, a former state senator and Brooklyn borough president, has at times [*tested the boundaries of campaign-finance and ethics laws*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/nyregion/eric-adams-fund-raising.html). He was investigated for his role in backing a video lottery terminal bidder for the Aqueduct Racetrack and has been[*criticized for taking money*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/nyregion/eric-adams-fund-raising.html) from developers who were lobbying him to support crucial zoning changes.

As a mayoral candidate, Mr. Adams raised money from a wide array of donors, including [*real estate developers, billionaires, cannabis investors, hedge fund executives, Republicans and* ***working-class*** *New Yorkers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/nyregion/eric-adams-donors-sliwa.html). He raised more than $2.8 million from donors outside New York City, and a super PAC supporting his campaign raised about $7 million.

Now as mayor, Mr. Adams has again embraced fund-raising with vigor. On June 3, after delivering a commencement speech in Queens, Mr. Adams attended a fund-raiser at a construction company’s offices in Midtown Manhattan, hosted by the Bravo Group chief executive, Ehab Shehata. At the middle-of-the-workday event, Mr. Adams told the crowd that the city could only rebound if crime levels dropped and that he was the man for the job, according to a person who attended the event.

Mr. Shehata did not respond to requests for comment. But he is hardly the only local executive eager to curry favor with the mayor.

Marc Holliday, chief executive of SL Green Realty Corp., which co-owns the new One Vanderbilt skyscraper near Grand Central Terminal, reached out to fellow real estate executives in April on behalf of Mr. Adams’s 2025 campaign. The tower has been home to at least two mayoral appearances, including the Wells Fargo product launch in April where the mayor partied with the model and actress Cara Delevingne, earning himself a spread in the [*gossip pages*](https://nypost.com/2022/03/29/nyc-mayor-eric-adams-parties-with-cara-delevingne-aap-rocky-at-one-vanderbilt/).

“At a time when NYC needed it the most, Eric has stepped into the mayoralty and has quickly become the face and driving force behind New York’s recovery,” Mr. Holliday wrote in an email. “Anything you can do would be very much appreciated.”

The first public disclosures for the 2025 mayor’s race are due next month and will provide a clearer picture of the donors Mr. Adams is relying on.

Barry Gosin, the chief executive officer of Newmark Group, a commercial real estate firm, is hosting a fund-raiser for Mr. Adams on Wednesday on the fifth floor of a skyscraper near Grand Central Terminal. Attendees are [*requested*](https://secure.actblue.com/donate/parkave) to donate between $400 and $2,000 apiece.

“This is an opportunity to support a great, authentic mayor,” Mr. Gosin said. “He’s working his butt off, and I think the things he’s doing are the things that should be done. But that’s my opinion.”

In his trip to Chicago in March, Mr. Adams also held a news conference with Mayor Lori Lightfoot to discuss gang violence. [*Mr. Adams invited himself to Ms. Lightfoot’s office in City Hall*](https://chicago.suntimes.com/2022/3/18/22985431/chicago-new-york-mayors-crime-strategy-lightfoot-adams-mccarthy-police-cpd-gangs-guns) and [*announced the appearance*](https://twitter.com/royalpratt/status/1504809872214343680) before she could alert the local press, The Chicago Sun-Times reported.

The Chicago fund-raiser was attended by Mr. Blackwell, the leader of a table tennis company who donated $400 to Mr. Adams’s mayoral campaign last year. It was co-hosted by Ms. Rogers and Carol Adams, the former president of the DuSable Museum of African American History.

“To run for office, it takes money — expensive city, expensive ad market,” Mr. Phillips said. “And you have to tell your story before someone else does.”

Another [*fund-raiser in May at the Kimberly Hotel*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CdPlwZzObCc/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=) in Midtown Manhattan was attended by Taj Gibson, the New York Knicks forward, and Jean Shafiroff, a fixture on the charity circuit who attended a soiree for Mr. Adams in the Hamptons last summer.

“We have to give him a chance,” she said. “I like what he stands for. It’s really not fair to judge anyone after three months.”

PHOTO: Mayor Eric Adams at a Memorial Day parade on Staten Island. His next race would be in 2025. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** June 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Democrats, With Eye on Midterms, Search for Ways to Bring Down Rising Prices***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SY-PTH1-DXY4-X34J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 16, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1185 words

**Byline:** By Emily Cochrane and Michael D. Shear

**Body**

Democrats are looking to revamp their legislative agenda to focus on relief for rising prices before November's midterm elections while trying to salvage their social policy bill.

WASHINGTON -- The White House and congressional Democrats, concerned about rapidly rising prices across the nation that could sour voters ahead of looming midterm elections, are discussing temporarily suspending the federal gas tax and revamping their marquee domestic policy package to include an effort to reduce the budget deficit.

The discussions are aimed at addressing widespread economic anxiety and salvaging whatever they can of President Biden's sprawling social safety net, climate and tax increase bill, known as the Build Back Better Act, before members of Congress face voters in November.

During a private party lunch on Tuesday, Democrats batted around an array of legislation to help reduce costs on food and other essentials, according to senators and aides briefed on the private discussion, including a plan, proposed last week, to suspend the gas tax of 18.4 cents per gallon through Jan. 1.

''We're going to focus like a laser on reducing costs -- the new proposals and new ideas keep coming,'' said Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader, who pointedly prioritized questions about ''cutting costs'' at his weekly news conference. ''We're going to propose legislation and we're going to move forward, and we're going to go back to our states and start talking about these things.''

Many of the Democratic senators facing tough re-election fights this year have rallied behind the idea of a gas tax holiday, billing it as an easy way to provide economic relief. Senator Mark Kelly, Democrat of Arizona and a leading proponent of the legislation, described it on Tuesday as ''something that directly helps people right now when they need it.''

White House officials have not rejected the idea as a way to temporarily lessen high gas prices. But it appeared unlikely to secure enough support to pass the Senate, where a supermajority of 60 votes is needed to advance most legislation, and lawmakers in both parties raised concerns about how effective it would be in lowering prices for consumers and how it would be reinstated.

Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, a key Democratic centrist, bluntly declared on Tuesday that the plan ''doesn't make sense.''

Democrats are also quietly floating ways to revive Mr. Biden's domestic policy plan, including scaling it back extensively from the $2.2 trillion version that passed the House last fall, which Mr. Manchin has called unacceptable, particularly in light of rising inflation.

They have floated ways to narrow the measure's scope, prioritizing $500 billion to address climate change, expanded Affordable Care Act subsidies and a measure to lower the cost of prescription drugs, according to officials involved in preliminary discussions who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss them. Privately, Mr. Biden's economic team has talked for weeks about including a deficit reduction measure in the package, to address Mr. Manchin's concerns about the national debt.

Mr. Biden's economic advisers are also keenly aware of the need for him to aggressively confront rising prices, which are contributing to the feeling among many Americans that the economy is getting worse, despite record growth in jobs.

Privately, his top aides say they recognize the importance of confronting the economic pain that many Americans feel, and are hopeful that Congress may pass some legislation to help. The Consumer Price Index data for January exceeded forecasts, showing prices jumped 7.5 percent over the year and 0.6 percent over the past month.

On Capitol Hill, lawmakers have stepped up efforts to find a solution.

''It's more than trying -- I think it's important we do something about it,'' said Senator Jon Tester, Democrat of Montana, who spoke during Tuesday's lunch about his bipartisan proposal to address anti-competitiveness in the meatpacking industry as a way to lower prices, according to an aide.

Senator Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, a member of Democratic leadership and a co-sponsor of the gas tax legislation, said, ''There's more to do, and that's what we're focused on for the coming year, as it relates to the costs that families are feeling every single day.''

White House officials have also sought to focus attention on a series of actions aimed at reining in prices, including efforts to increase competition in the meatpacking industry, eliminate bottlenecks at ports and address the global shortage of semiconductors, which is driving up the cost of cars.

Republicans, who have gleefully hammered Democrats for their failure to address inflation, scoffed at a gas tax holiday, arguing that it would do little to address the country's economic problems and instead was a gambit to provide political cover.

''I think it's a desperate cry for help,'' said Senator John Thune of South Dakota, the No. 2 Republican and among the senators running for re-election this year. ''I think they realize that they're on the wrong side of the energy issue and the wrong side of the inflation issue, and that, you know, the American people are going to want answers.''

In remarks on Tuesday to the National Association of Counties, Mr. Biden made the case for his broader social spending measure, arguing that providing money for child care, prescription drugs and home health care workers could help bring down costs for millions of Americans.

''There is real inflation, and if you're in a ***working-class*** family, it hurts. That's why my Build Back Better plan -- what's it all about,'' he said. ''Look, families are getting clobbered by the cost of everyday things.''

But senior aides to Mr. Biden are eager to keep him away from a public back-and-forth with lawmakers. They have said they believe the endless negotiations with members of his own party last year made him look weak and helped drag down his approval ratings.

And on Capitol Hill, senators and aides cautioned that conversations remained preliminary, as they focus on confirming a replacement for Justice Stephen G. Breyer on the Supreme Court and negotiating an omnibus spending package to keep the government fully funded.

''We're having lots of discussions with individual senators to get Build Back Better moving again,'' Mr. Schumer said on Tuesday. ''We're sitting down and discussing things with Senator Manchin, and we want to hear what he has to say.''

While they initially aimed for a multitrillion-dollar domestic policy initiative, some Democrats said they would be willing to include deficit-reduction provisions if it meant seeing some of their spending priorities signed into law.

Senator Brian Schatz, Democrat of Hawaii, said he would consider doing so ''begrudgingly,'' if it was the only way of passing any part of Mr. Biden's plan.

But he added, ''I don't think there's any doubt that people are irritated and struggling with the increased cost of living, and we have to show a collective determination to focus on that.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/us/politics/democrats-inflation-gas-tax-deficit.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/us/politics/democrats-inflation-gas-tax-deficit.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: ''We're going to focus like a laser on reducing costs -- the new proposals and new ideas keep coming,'' said Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samuel Corum for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***As the candidates converge on Pennsylvania, a new Monmouth poll finds Biden still ahead there.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616H-B4P1-DXY4-X0T0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2020 Monday 11:29 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 527 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck, Annie Karni and Andy Newman

**Highlight:** Dashing to the finish, Joe Biden and President Trump have set up a showdown in Pennsylvania.

**Body**

Dashing to the finish, Joe Biden and President Trump have set up a showdown in Pennsylvania.

A final Monmouth University poll of Pennsylvania, released Monday morning, shows Joseph R. Biden Jr. hanging on to a modest but meaningful lead over President Trump in the state that the candidates are fighting hardest over on the campaign’s final day.

[*The poll*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_PA_110220/), conducted from Wednesday to Sunday, showed Mr. Biden leading the president 51 to 44 percent among likely voters in a model with high election turnout and 50 to 45 percent in a low-turnout scenario. Both are outside the poll’s margin of error of plus or minus 4.4 percentage points. The previous Monmouth poll, taken a month ago, showed Mr. Biden with an 11-point lead.

Mr. Biden has led Mr. Trump in Pennsylvania throughout the campaign. A New York Times/Siena College poll [*released on Sunday*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_PA_110220/) found the former vice president ahead by six percentage points.

The candidates and their surrogates are [*blanketing the state*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_PA_110220/), which Mr. Trump won by less than a percentage point in 2016, in the campaign’s closing hours. Pennsylvania has more Electoral College votes, 20, than any other traditional battleground state except Florida, and both campaigns see it as increasingly crucial to victory.

Both Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden held multiple rallies in the state over the weekend, and today, the candidates and their running mates are scheduled to hold a total of [*nine separate events*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_PA_110220/) there.

While much of the country has [*already voted early*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_PA_110220/), with turnout already equivalent to nearly 70 percent of the whole nationwide vote tally for the 2016 election, most Pennsylvanians may be waiting for Election Day to cast their votes: As of Monday morning, early voting turnout in Pennsylvania was at just under 40 percent of the number of votes cast in the 2016 election.

Democrats are flooding the state with door-knockers and Republicans hope to parlay Mr. Trump’s signature rallies into big turnout once again. The president is set to make an appeal to white, ***working-class*** voters this afternoon near [*Scranton*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_PA_110220/), where Mr. Biden was born, while Mr. Biden is aiming to solidify a broad coalition of white suburbanites and voters of color on a swing through Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and elsewhere in western Pennsylvania.

The president is already preparing legal challenges over the vote if it ends up close, telling reporters on Sunday, “As soon as that election’s over, we’re going in with our lawyers.”

In Pennsylvania in particular, the possibility of extended court battles and confusion hangs over the race, with the state Republican Party hoping the Supreme Court will reconsider its decision last week to allow the state to [*continue receiving absentee ballots*](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/monmouthpoll_PA_110220/) for three days after Election Day.

“Every day is a new reminder of how high the stakes are, how far the other side will go to try to suppress the turnout,” Mr. Biden said as he campaigned on Sunday. “Especially here in Philadelphia. President Trump is terrified of what will happen in Pennsylvania.”

PHOTO: Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. speaking at a rally in Philadelphia on Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Democrats Weigh Gas Tax Holiday and Deficit Cuts as Inflation Mounts***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SX-K0C1-JBG3-60SS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 15, 2022 Tuesday 00:19 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1211 words

**Byline:** Emily Cochrane and Michael D. Shear

**Highlight:** Democrats are looking to revamp their legislative agenda to focus on relief for rising prices before November’s midterm elections while trying to salvage their social policy bill.

**Body**

Democrats are looking to revamp their legislative agenda to focus on relief for rising prices before November’s midterm elections while trying to salvage their social policy bill.

WASHINGTON — The White House and congressional Democrats, concerned about [*rapidly rising prices*](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm) across the nation that could sour voters ahead of looming midterm elections, are discussing temporarily suspending the federal gas tax and revamping their marquee domestic policy package to include an effort to reduce the budget deficit.

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During a private party lunch on Tuesday, Democrats batted around an array of legislation to help reduce costs on food and other essentials, according to senators and aides briefed on the private discussion, including a plan, proposed last week, to suspend the gas tax of 18.4 cents per gallon through Jan. 1.

“We’re going to focus like a laser on reducing costs — the new proposals and new ideas keep coming,” said Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader, who pointedly prioritized questions about “cutting costs” at his weekly news conference. “We’re going to propose legislation and we’re going to move forward, and we’re going to go back to our states and start talking about these things.”

Many of the Democratic senators facing tough re-election fights this year have rallied behind the idea of a gas tax holiday, billing it as an easy way to provide economic relief. Senator Mark Kelly, Democrat of Arizona and a leading proponent of the legislation, described it on Tuesday as “something that directly helps people right now when they need it.”

White House officials have not rejected the idea as a way to temporarily lessen high gas prices. But it appeared unlikely to secure enough support to pass the Senate, where a supermajority of 60 votes is needed to advance most legislation, and lawmakers in both parties raised concerns about how effective it would be in lowering prices for consumers and how it would be reinstated.

Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia, a key Democratic centrist, bluntly declared on Tuesday that the plan “doesn’t make sense.”

Democrats are also quietly floating ways to revive Mr. Biden’s domestic policy plan, including scaling it back extensively from the $2.2 trillion version that passed the House last fall, which Mr. Manchin has called unacceptable, particularly in light of rising inflation.

They have floated ways to narrow the measure’s scope, prioritizing [*$500 billion to address climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/climate/build-back-better-climate-change.html), [*expanded Affordable Care Act subsidies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/01/us/politics/build-back-better-act-health-coverage.html) and a measure to lower the cost of prescription drugs, according to officials involved in preliminary discussions who spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss them. Privately, Mr. Biden’s economic team has talked for weeks about including a deficit reduction measure in the package, to address Mr. Manchin’s concerns about the national debt.

Mr. Biden’s economic advisers are also keenly aware of the need for him to aggressively confront rising prices, which are contributing to the feeling among many Americans that the economy is getting worse, despite record growth in jobs.

Privately, his top aides say they recognize the importance of confronting the economic pain that many Americans feel, and are hopeful that Congress may pass some legislation to help. The [*Consumer Price Index data*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/business/economy/inflation-cpi-january-2022.html) for January exceeded forecasts, showing prices jumped 7.5 percent over the year and 0.6 percent over the past month.

On Capitol Hill, lawmakers have stepped up efforts to find a solution.

“It’s more than trying — I think it’s important we do something about it,” said Senator Jon Tester, Democrat of Montana, who spoke during Tuesday’s lunch about his bipartisan proposal to address anti-competitiveness in the meatpacking industry as a way to lower prices, according to an aide.

Senator Debbie Stabenow of Michigan, a member of Democratic leadership and a co-sponsor of the gas tax legislation, said, “There’s more to do, and that’s what we’re focused on for the coming year, as it relates to the costs that families are feeling every single day.”

White House officials have also sought to focus attention on a series of actions aimed at reining in prices, including efforts to increase competition in the meatpacking industry, eliminate bottlenecks at ports and address the global shortage of semiconductors, which is driving up the cost of cars.

Republicans, who have gleefully hammered Democrats for their failure to address inflation, scoffed at a gas tax holiday, arguing that it would do little to address the country’s economic problems and instead was a gambit to provide political cover.

“I think it’s a desperate cry for help,” said Senator John Thune of South Dakota, the No. 2 Republican and among the senators running for re-election this year. “I think they realize that they’re on the wrong side of the energy issue and the wrong side of the inflation issue, and that, you know, the American people are going to want answers.”

In remarks on Tuesday to the National Association of Counties, Mr. Biden made the case for his broader social spending measure, arguing that providing money for child care, prescription drugs and home health care workers could help bring down costs for millions of Americans.

“There is real inflation, and if you’re in a ***working-class*** family, it hurts. That’s why my Build Back Better plan — what’s it all about,” he said. “Look, families are getting clobbered by the cost of everyday things.”

But senior aides to Mr. Biden are eager to keep him away from a public back-and-forth with lawmakers. They have said they believe the endless negotiations with members of his own party last year made him look weak and helped drag down his approval ratings.

And on Capitol Hill, senators and aides cautioned that conversations remained preliminary, as they focus on confirming a replacement for Justice Stephen G. Breyer on the Supreme Court and negotiating an omnibus spending package to keep the government fully funded.

“We’re having lots of discussions with individual senators to get Build Back Better moving again,” Mr. Schumer said on Tuesday. “We’re sitting down and discussing things with Senator Manchin, and we want to hear what he has to say.”

While they initially aimed for a multitrillion-dollar domestic policy initiative, some Democrats said they would be willing to include deficit-reduction provisions if it meant seeing some of their spending priorities signed into law.

Senator Brian Schatz, Democrat of Hawaii, said he would consider doing so “begrudgingly,” if it was the only way of passing any part of Mr. Biden’s plan.

But he added, “I don’t think there’s any doubt that people are irritated and struggling with the increased cost of living, and we have to show a collective determination to focus on that.”

PHOTO: “We’re going to focus like a laser on reducing costs — the new proposals and new ideas keep coming,” said Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samuel Corum for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Fate of Biden’s Agenda Hangs in the Balance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62B9-8HY1-JBG3-6509-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 31, 2021 Wednesday 10:17 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2716 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** And it isn’t all about the filibuster.

**Body**

And it isn’t all about the filibuster.

Every 10 years, after the collection of census data, states are required to redraw the boundaries of their congressional districts to ensure that they remain equal in population.

The process — as readers of this newspaper know — is vulnerable to gerrymandering, in which districts are redrawn to give favored parties, office holders or constituencies an advantage in elections.

At the moment, Democrats control the House by a slim [*219-211 majority*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), with five seats vacant. The loss of just five seats in 2022 would flip control to the Republican Party, which would then be empowered to block President Biden’s agenda.

Both geographically and politically, the deck is stacked against Democrats, forcing the party and its leader to adjust election strategies every 10 years.

This time around, states with Republican governors and Republican legislative majorities contain more than [*twice as many*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) congressional districts as states under full Democratic control.

Further compounding Democratic difficulties, [*Jowei Chen*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) and [*Jonathan Rodden*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), political scientists at the University of Michigan and Stanford, write in the 2013 paper “[*Unintentional Gerrymandering*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown)”:

In many urbanized states, Democrats are highly clustered in dense central city areas, while Republicans are scattered more evenly through the suburban, exurban, and rural periphery.

As a result, according to Chen and Rodden, “when districting plans are completed, Democrats tend to be inefficiently packed in homogeneous districts.”

Despite winning the White House and the Senate, Democrats suffered [*a major setback*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) in 2020 as their plans to wrest control of one or both branches of key state legislatures fell short. Democrats failed to take control of the statehouses in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Iowa and Texas, and of both branches in North Carolina — all states with large congressional delegations.

Still, there is hope.

First and foremost, Democrats have become competitive in many of the high-growth areas that benefit from redistricting; they have done so by pulling ahead of Republicans among voters with college degrees, who make up a disproportionate share of these prosperous communities.

In addition, a total of [*18 states*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) have switched from partisan to independent redistricting. And finally, Republican attempts at voter suppression have proven at times to backfire, prompting higher turnout among minorities and increased Democratic Party mobilization.

“One might be tempted to think that seat gains largely driven by economic prosperity favor Republicans while seat losses are found in impoverished and declining Democratic areas,” [*SoRelle Wyckoff Gaynor*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) and [*James G. Gimpel*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), political scientists at the University of Maryland, write in their Feb. 21 article “[*Reapportioning the U.S. Congress*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown): The shifting geography of political influence.”

In practice, Gaynor and Gimpel argue, Democrats have “adapted most impressively to compete and win in the newly emergent districts in Florida and the Far West,” narrowly eking out victories for control of Congress.

As states await census data to guide redistricting, there is one wild card in the mix: the possible enactment of voting rights reform, HR 1 or the [*For the People Act of 2021*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) — the measure that passed the House on March 3 on a 220-210 vote, but faces the threat of a filibuster in the Senate.

I asked [*Nicholas Stephanopoulos*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a law professor at Harvard whose specialties include election law, about the bill. He emailed me to say that

The voting legislation currently before Congress would revolutionize the redistricting process if it passed. It would require all states to use truly independent commissions, effective immediately. Separate from this structural reform, the bill would also include quantitative partisan bias thresholds that maps wouldn’t be allowed to exceed. These thresholds would have real teeth.

At the same time, Stephanopoulos continued, the legislation would put the brakes on voter suppression laws:

The bill affirmatively requires a series of participation-enhancing policies for congressional elections: automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration, at least 15 days of early voting, expanded mail-in voting, restrictions on voter purges, restrictions on photo ID requirements, etc.

[*David Lublin*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a political scientist at American University, similarly described the transformative potential of HR1 in an email:

The proposed legislation before Congress could have a huge effect in two ways. First, by putting in place a new trigger for the Voting Rights Act, Section 5 would become operative again and the Biden administration could use it to block discriminatory maps as well as an array of laws designed to suppress voting.

Second, Lublin continued, by preventing

members of either party from using district boundaries to entrench their advantage through redistricting. Even though Republicans would undoubtedly benefit from the geographic concentration of Democrats and racial redistricting, it would prevent egregious abuses.

In the case of Republican voter suppression laws, [*Nicholas Valentino*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) and [*Fabian G. Neuner*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), political scientists at Michigan and Arizona State Universities, found in their February 2016 paper “[*Why the Sky Didn’t Fal*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown)l: Mobilizing Anger in Reaction to Voter ID Laws” that

Surprisingly, empirical evidence for significant demobilization, either in the aggregate or among Democrats specifically, has thus far failed to materialize. We suspect strong emotional reactions to the public debate about these laws may mobilize Democrats, counterbalancing the disenfranchising effect.

In an email, Neuner cautioned that “our research is about short-term evocations of anger that may spur mobilization and it is not clear how long such anger can be sustained.”

Black voters have proven exceptionally determined in the face of electoral adversity, including Supreme Court rulings weakening the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and voter suppression legislation.

[*Kyle Raze*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a graduate student in economics at the University of Oregon, studied turnout patterns in the wake of the 2013 Supreme Court ruling in [*Shelby County v. Holder*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown). The court declared Section 5 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which required jurisdictions with a history of discrimination to get preclearance from the Justice Department for any change in election law, unconstitutional. Shelby opened the door to the enactment of voter suppression measures.

Raze, in his February 2021 paper, “[*Voting Rights and the Resilience of Black Turnout*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown),” writes that

Despite well-founded fears to the contrary, the Shelby decision does not appear to have widened the turnout gap between Black and White voters in previously covered states.

Instead, Raze found

an accumulating body of evidence that suggests that voters mobilize in response to increases in the cost of voting when those increases are perceived as threats to the franchise.

While 2020 census data is not yet complete, it will determine the specific allocation of House seats to each state. [*Justin Levitt*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a law professor at Loyola Marymount University, provided The Times with estimates of the number of House seats over which each party will exercise redistricting control. Levitt wrote in an email:

It looks like Democrats will control 73 congressional seats this cycle, Republicans will control 188, and 167 will be under split partisan control, plus 7 in states with one district.

These numbers represent a considerable improvement for Democrats compared with a decade ago, Levitt observes, when the party “controlled 44 seats, with Republicans controlling 213.”

The Gaynor-Gimpel article I discussed earlier describes the shape of old and new districts in past decennial redistricting. In the two most recent reapportionments, based on the 2000 and 2010 census results, clear patterns emerge.

Areas with high levels of manufacturing — a declining sector in recent decades — lost seats, as did districts with large percentages of Black voters. In 2000 and 2010, abolished districts were 37 percent Black, while newly created districts were 8 to 12 percent Black.

The median household income in abolished districts was well below the national median — 79 percent of the national median in 2000 and 77 percent in 2010 — while the new districts were decidedly above the national median, with income at 121 and 106 percent.

The abolished districts voted Democratic by strong margins, 67 and 70 percent in 2000 and 2010, while the newly created districts tilted Republican by slightly smaller but still substantial margins.

These developments handicapped Democrats in the past, but changing income and education patterns of partisanship — changes that intensified during the Trump years — will inevitably work to Democrats’ advantage.

In the past two presidential elections, Democratic gains among high income and well-educated voters — the kind of voters who benefited from redistricting in 2000 and 2010 — accelerated.

[*Thomas J. Wood*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a political scientist at Ohio State, recently posted a [*chart*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) on Twitter showing the income levels of white voters in each of the 19 presidential elections since 1948.

In the first 17 of these — through President Barack Obama’s re-election in 2012 — whites with incomes in the 96th to 100th percentile were consistently the strongest supporters of Republican presidential nominees among all white income groups. In 2016 and in 2020, with Trump as the nominee, that pattern abruptly shifted.

These super affluent whites not only shifted to vote Democratic, but they became the least Republican income group after decades of being the most Republican.

At the same time, Trump drove up Republican support among white ***working-class*** men — this is not news — many of them former Democrats living in declining communities that, according to Gaynor and Gimpel’s calculations, had lost political power as a result of redistricting.

In 2020, white men without college degrees voted 60-35 for Trump and similarly educated white women voted 54-40 for Trump, according to survey data from the [*Cooperative Election Study*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown).

In other words, the political losers in redistricting have shifted toward the Republican Party and the winners toward the Democratic Party.

[*Robert M. Stein*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a political scientist at Rice, emailed me his analysis of the consequences of these changes in Texas redistricting:

With a Republican governor and majorities in the Texas State House and Senate, Republicans are strongly positioned to control redistricting in 2020 and to add to the number of Republican U.S. House seats in Texas.

But, Stein added,

there are several obstacles facing Republican mapmakers that might constrain how many of the three new seats Republicans will gain in 2022.

The two most important of these are the fact that

The concentration of population growth has been in the triangle formed by Dallas in the north, Houston in the east and San Antonio in the southwest. These areas/counties are Democratic with their suburban areas increasingly trending Democratic.

and that “the loss of population has been greatest in west and northwest Republican counties.”

In sum, Stein wrote,

though the Republicans control all the levers to redistricting in 2020, they are constrained by a having to populate more U.S. House districts with a changing population and electorate that favors Democratic candidates.

[*Christopher Warshaw*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a political scientist at George Washington University, pointed out in an email that the nationalization and polarization of elections, have

made it much easier for mapmakers to predict how people will vote in future elections. This, in turn, has made the partisan advantage gained during gerrymandering more durable in future elections than it used to be.

Despite the enhanced ability to draw partisan district lines, Warshaw wrote, other developments make him

cautiously hopeful that, overall, partisan gerrymandering will be slightly less extreme this cycle than in 2011.

These developments include the growing number of states that have nonpartisan redistricting commissions; the shift of some major states from one-party control in 2011 — Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan — to divided government, forcing compromise; and the growing willingness of state courts to rule against extreme gerrymandering, including in North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

Warshaw is critical of the surge in Republican efforts to pass voter suppression legislation — “they are clearly anti-democratic” — but, he added:

They could actually backfire on Republicans by dampening turnout among lower-income, rural voters that increasingly support Republicans.

Put another way, Republican efforts to claim the mantle of “[*the party of the* ***working class***](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown)” may be at cross purposes with the drive to enact voter suppression laws that will fall heavily on the ***working class***.

[*David Magleby*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), a political scientist at Brigham Young University, pointed out another twist in the redistricting process that will lessen the traditional Republican advantage.

While reapportionment will shift seats from blue states that voted for Biden to red states that voted for Trump, Magleby noted that “the story is a little more complicated.”

He cited the example of New York, a reliably Democratic state that [*may lose*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) one or two seats, depending on the final census count. On the surface, that would seem to threaten Democrats, but in fact, Magleby notes that if the state loses one seat, it could be a Republican seat:

Within New York, population growth in Republican leaning areas has lagged behind Democratic leaning areas. Thus, a neutral districting process is likely to generate one fewer Republican seat in New York.

All of the above suggests that continued Democratic control of the House in 2022 and 2024 may hinge on passage of HR1 — the [*For the People Act*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown)— which in turn requires the Senate to either eliminate the legislative filibuster or agree on a rule change making voting rights measures exempt from the filibuster.

“If the filibuster remains,” Stephanopoulos, the Harvard law professor, wrote by email,

the next round of redistricting will be a dogfight. It won’t be as bad for Democrats as the 2010 round, because numerous states that had egregious Republican gerrymanders back then now have some sort of impediment to that happening again” (commissions, Democratic governors, interventionist courts).

“My best guess,” Stephanopoulos continued,

is that the congressional playing field will be a little more tilted in a Republican direction than it currently is, but significantly less skewed than in the early 2010s.

The problem for Biden, Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer is that they are pressing for enactment of a momentous agenda —$3 trillion for infrastructure, immigration reform — that faces overwhelming Republican opposition.

They have, in effect, [*no room*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) for a House “a little more tilted in a Republican direction.” Even with the passage of the voting rights bill, the odds (based on historical midterm voting patterns) favor a Republican takeover of both branches of Congress.

“Since the end of World War II, elected presidents’ parties have suffered an average loss of three Senate and 22 House seats in midterms,” [*Charlie Cook*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), editor and publisher of The Cook Political Report, [*wrote*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) on Feb. 16.

The enactment of Biden’s $1.9 trillion Covid stimulus bill has increased his popularity, but voters’ memories are short. At the same time that he retains high favorability ratings on his handling the economy and the pandemic, voters surveyed in a [*NPR/Marist March 22-25 Poll*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown), registered unfavorable views of his handling of immigration (34 percent approve, 53 percent disapprove), and a [*March 20-23 Economist/YouGov survey*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) found voters split on Biden’s handling of crime (39 approve, 40 disapprove).

Without approval of the kind of election reform the voting rights bill seeks, the odds will shift further against continued Democratic control of the House and Senate and possibly result in another Democratic president ground down by gridlock.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://pressgallery.house.gov/member-data/party-breakdown).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Matt Black/Magnum Photos FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***What Is Labor Day? A History of the Workers’ Holiday.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63HJ-TGK1-JBG3-63HM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 3, 2021 Friday 13:30 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 840 words

**Byline:** Karen Zraick Karen Zraick covers legal affairs for the Climate desk and the courtroom clashes playing out over climate and environmental policy.

**Highlight:** President Grover Cleveland made it a national holiday in 1894, during a crisis over federal efforts to end a strike by railroad workers.

**Body**

President Grover Cleveland made it a national holiday in 1894, during a crisis over federal efforts to end a strike by railroad workers.

* This article was first published in 2018.

In the late 1800s, many Americans toiled 12 hours a day, seven days a week, often in physically demanding, low-paying jobs. Children worked too, on farms and in factories and mines. Conditions were often harsh and unsafe.

It was in this context that American workers held the first Labor Day parade, marching from New York’s City Hall to a giant picnic at an uptown park on Sept. 5, 1882.

“Working Men on Parade,” [*read The New York Times’s headline*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8). The article, which appeared on the last page, reported that 10,000 people marched “in an orderly and pleasant manner,” far fewer than the organizers had predicted would attend. The workers included cigarmakers, dressmakers, printers, shoemakers, bricklayers and other tradespeople.

Because it wasn’t yet an official holiday, many of the attendees risked their jobs by participating in the one-day strike. On their signs, they called for “Less Work and More Pay,” an eight-hour workday and a prohibition on the use of convict labor. They were met with cheers.

The American labor movement was among the strongest in the world at the time, and in the years that followed, municipalities and states adopted legislation to recognize Labor Day. New York did so in 1887, and The Times reported that that year’s parade was larger than ever, even amid political tension over the role of socialist groups. Parks, shops and bars in the city were full.

“The barrooms were never more resplendent,” [*The Times wrote*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8). “Liquidly, the first legal celebration of Labor Day may go down to history as an unqualified success.”

But it took several more years for the federal government to make it a national holiday — when it served a greater political purpose. In the summer of 1894, [*the Pullman strike*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8) severely disrupted rail traffic in the Midwest, and the federal government used an injunction and federal troops to break the strike.

It had started when the [*Pullman Palace Car Company*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8) lowered wages without lowering rents in the company town, also called Pullman. (It’s now part of Chicago.)

When angry workers complained, the owner, George Pullman, had them fired. They decided to strike, and other workers for the American Railway Union, led by the firebrand activist Eugene V. Debs, joined the action. They refused to handle Pullman cars, bringing freight and passenger traffic to a halt around Chicago. Tens of thousands of workers walked off the job, wildcat strikes broke out, and angry crowds [*were met with live fire*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8) from the authorities.

During the crisis, President Grover Cleveland signed a bill into law on June 28, 1894, declaring Labor Day a national holiday. Some historians say he was afraid of losing the support of ***working-class*** voters.

“There were many political advantages at that moment to provide recognition for Labor Day,” said [*Joshua B. Freeman*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8), a distinguished professor of history at Queens College and the City University of New York Graduate Center.

But it wasn’t the only workingman’s holiday on the table. Starting in 1884, the labor movement had called for strikes and protests on May 1 to push for an eight-hour workday. That would-be holiday was called May Day, and it’s now [*celebrated around the world*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8), though it’s not officially recognized in the United States.

You might blame the Haymarket affair. On May 4, 1886, a bomb went off at a demonstration in Chicago’s Haymarket Square in support of an eight-hour workday and against police killings of protesters. The authorities opened fire in response, and seven officers and four protesters were killed.

The episode made headlines around the world, and the police response in Chicago was fierce. “The Anarchists Cowed,” read the headline on [*a front-page Times article*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8) on May 8, with a subtitle, “Forced to Seek Hiding Places — The Disorderly Element Thoroughly Frightened.” Eight anarchists were convicted, and four were hanged. Critics argued the trial was conducted poorly, and seven years later, Gov. John P. Altgeld [*pardoned the three*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8) who were still alive.

In the years that followed, May Day became an occasion for protesting the arrests of socialists, anarchists and unionists. As it became associated with the radical left — and as Labor Day was recognized by more and more states — the latter came to be the dominant holiday in the United States.

In recent decades, Labor Day [*has been dominated more by barbecues*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8), sales and last-chance beach days than strident labor protests. The labor movement has weakened, and in New York, there are scheduling conflicts, such as out-of-town vacations and the large West Indian American Day Parade in Brooklyn, which generally includes [*a sizable labor contingent*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8).

PHOTO: A Labor Day parade on Main Street in Buffalo in 1900. President Grover Cleveland made Labor Day a national holiday in June 1894, as he faced a crisis of railway workers striking in Chicago. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Library of Congress FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 31, 2024

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[***With just two days until Election Day, all eyes are on Pennsylvania.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616B-JMN1-DXY4-X322-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 1, 2020 Sunday 16:42 EST

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**Section:** US; elections

**Length:** 511 words

**Byline:** Sydney Ember

**Highlight:** All eyes are on Pennsylvania, which both presidential campaigns seem to believe could determine the outcome of the race.

**Body**

All eyes are on Pennsylvania, which both presidential campaigns seem to believe could determine the outcome of the race.

As the election winds to a close, President Trump and Joseph R. Biden Jr. are converging on Pennsylvania, with both candidates holding a flurry of events in a last-minute quest for votes.

Mr. Trump held four rallies in Pennsylvania on Saturday — in Newtown, Reading, Butler and Montoursville. And on Monday, in what is a clear attempt to needle Mr. Biden, he will head to Scranton, Mr. Biden’s hometown. Mr. Trump is also holding five rallies on Sunday across other Rust Belt states, as well as in the Southeast.

Mr. Biden, for his part, is heading to Philadelphia on Sunday, for a “Souls to the Polls” event in the afternoon and a drive-in rally in the evening. His campaign will then barnstorm the state on Monday, with appearances by Mr. Biden; his wife, Jill Biden; his running mate, Senator Kamala Harris of California; and her husband, Doug Emhoff. Former President Barack Obama recently campaigned on Mr. Biden’s behalf in the state as well.

The Biden campaign is also going on offense in neighboring Ohio, announcing on Sunday that the Democratic nominee would travel to Cleveland on Monday. Mr. Trump won the state by eight percentage points in 2016.

Recent surveys of Pennsylvania indicate the race there is close: An average of polls shows Mr. Biden with a six-point lead.

But beyond its electoral significance, the state carries great symbolic meaning for both parties. For Republicans, it was one of several longtime Democratic bastions that Mr. Trump flipped four years ago, underscoring the party’s new strength with union voters and suburban white women. For Democrats, the state was a key brick in its once stable “blue wall” of Northern swing states, and Hillary Clinton’s defeat there was a devastating electoral and psychological blow.

To win back the state, Democrats are not so much trying to flip counties that went for Mr. Trump in 2016, as they are doing in some other swing states. Instead, the focus is on whether voters who back Mr. Biden can prevent Mr. Trump from running up the score in white, ***working-class*** areas as he did in 2016. If Mr. Biden can cut into Mr. Trump’s margins in these areas while putting up big numbers in suburbs and cities, officials say his odds of winning the state look pretty good.

Of course, the Trump campaign has been doing all it can to hinder Mr. Biden from doing just that. In addition to its frenzy of activity, his campaign is also pursuing [*multiple strategies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/29/us/elections/trump-pennsylvania-voter-suppression.html) that would effectively suppress mail-in votes in the state.

There is a good chance Pennsylvania could hold the nation’s attention far after Election Day. Analysts don’t expect all of the mail-in ballots to be in until the later part of this week, meaning there most likely won’t be a winner called on election night. Even when the results are known, both parties are bracing for potential litigation.

PHOTO: Biden supporters in Washington, Pa., on Saturday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ruth Fremson/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2020

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[***Rising Rents, And No Cure On Horizon***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:662J-P4Y1-JBG3-606K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 2, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1718 words

**Byline:** By Mihir Zaveri

**Body**

A half a century ago, city planners warned that New York had the potential to swell into a ''monster city'' of 55 million people. To avoid this fate, the city passed a major overhaul of zoning rules in 1961, limiting the size of buildings and how many people could live in them.

Now, a longstanding housing shortage, partly fueled by those old constraints, is inflaming a crisis in affordability.

It may feel counterintuitive that the largest city in America has a housing shortage. Cranes and construction crews appear to be constantly in motion, stacking together new residential apartment buildings, condos and tall skyscrapers.

But the problems reflect a national phenomenon and are further fueled by the popularity of New York City itself. More people want to live here than the city can accommodate, driving up prices for the housing that is available.

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 study from the Citizens Budget Commission, a nonprofit research group. And new housing is not keeping up with new job growth.

At the same time, the number of homes that rent at less than $1,500 is shrinking, and the median rent on Manhattan apartments newly leased in June reached a staggering $4,000, the real estate firm Douglas Elliman reported.

There are numerous barriers to increasing the supply of housing to meet the demand, including:

â— Zoning restrictions that limit the size of buildings and enable many neighborhoods to all but shut out new development;

â— The cost of building, and particularly the cost of subsidizing and supporting affordable homes;

â— The inability of state and local politicians to agree on meaningful solutions.

Not everyone agrees that making it easier to build more homes is a panacea. Some housing advocates say government officials should also prioritize rent controls and public housing to make living here more affordable.

Most everyone, however, agrees that without some intervention, the situation could grow even more dire as the city tries to recover from the pandemic, exacerbating homelessness, making it difficult for businesses to retain workers and squeezing out poorer residents.

''I'm usually a pretty optimistic person,'' said Vicki L. Been, a former deputy mayor for housing and economic development under the former mayor, Bill de Blasio who supports making it easier to build housing. ''I would describe myself as very concerned.''

Cynthia Reel, 66, is one of the thousands of renters worried about the increasing cost of living. In March, she moved from the Upper West Side to a cheaper apartment a few blocks north of the George Washington Bridge. But at $2,000 a month, even that feels difficult to manage, especially if she gets hit with a rent increase when her lease renews next year.

If the increase is ''ridiculous,'' she may move to New Jersey, she said, ''although I don't want to do that.''

An invisible web of constraints

At the center of the problem is zoning.

The rules put in place in 1961 preserved a lower-density, suburban feel throughout vast swaths of the city, essentially making it illegal to build anything other than one- or two-family homes in many areas, said Jason Barr, an economics professor at Rutgers University-Newark who has written about the history of zoning.

Within years, the rules prompted worries they might create a housing shortage.

The city, grappling with crime and financial difficulties, lost population in the 1970s, dropping from about 7.9 million in 1970 to about 7.1 million in 1980. But it rebounded and reached 7.3 million in 1990 and more than 8 million in 2000.

When Mayor Michael Bloomberg took office after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, he undertook a huge reshaping of the city, to help it recover and boost its economy and population. And while the plan made way for higher density development and opened many of the city's waterfront areas for residential uses, some of his efforts placed limits on new housing.

Between 2003 and 2007, the Bloomberg administration rezoned nearly one-fifth of the city, according to a 2010 study by the New York University Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy. But nearly 90 percent of the lots analyzed in the study had their capacity reduced or only modestly increased.

At the same time, New Yorkers who didn't want their neighborhoods to change increasingly found ways to slow down projects.

Evolving rules over zoning enabled individuals and neighborhood groups to file lawsuits against projects they didn't like. Now, developers often will not propose a project at all if they sense they will face significant opposition, said Kirk Goodrich, the president of Monadnock Development.

Even when they do propose a project, the path can be rocky: A recent project in Harlem that could have contained more than 900 new homes was recently withdrawn after the opposition of the local council member. Council members have opposed two other projects -- one in Astoria in Queens and another in Throgs Neck in the Bronx -- that would add more than 3,000 units of housing, including some 800 that would rent below market rate.

An effort to rezone parts of the Gowanus neighborhood in Brooklyn, which was approved in 2021 and includes a Monadnock project, took more than a decade, in part because of political fights. The time taken up by these battles, Mr. Goodrich said, ''doesn't allow us to deliver housing of scale in a time frame that has enabled us to alleviate the shortage.''

The cost of building is also high, and increasing every year, according to the Citizens Budget Commission study. Interest rates, which are rising to combat inflation, threaten to make development even more expensive.

Even without inflation, unique provisions in New York City's building code, plumbing code and electrical code drive up the cost of development, according to the study.

A political quagmire blocking solutions

State and local officials have so far not been able to agree on meaningful solutions.

State lawmakers this year considered and failed to pass at least four different measures to boost the supply of housing in and around the city: Bills that would have made it easier to build apartment buildings around mass transit and that would allow cities to legalize basement and garage homes died after opposition from lawmakers representing New York City suburbs.

A bill that would have removed a state cap on residential building size also died in the Legislature.

And lawmakers let a contentious tax break that helped finance the development of big new apartment buildings, known as 421-a, expire without replacing or reforming it.

The city and state have also long failed to retool the uneven underlying tax system that puts more of a burden on big apartment buildings than on smaller properties.

Mayor Eric Adams has promised to make it easier to build in New York City, for example, by eliminating or relaxing some requirements that new buildings provide parking spaces for residents, and streamlining the building code.

But the changes, which are slated to be introduced in early 2024, may face fierce political opposition.

''More people than ever before got hit by the housing crisis over the course of the pandemic,'' said Jessica Katz, the city's chief housing officer. ''We are hoping that we can build a coalition around that.''

Yvonne Stennett, executive director of the Community League of the Heights, a community development group in Washington Heights, says the city should be pushing for more projects like a 174-unit affordable housing development in Inwood that her group is involved with, made possible after a neighborhood rezoning and public and private subsidies.

Building and preserving affordable homes requires a vast amount of public investment to subsidize below-market rents. While Mr. Adams has pledged to spend $22 billion over 10 years on affordable housing -- a historically high number -- his administration has not set specific housing production targets, and housing advocates fear the investment may not go far enough.

To some, the housing supply problems are overstated.

Samuel Stein, a senior policy analyst at the Community Service Society, an anti-poverty nonprofit group, said other factors, like investors seeking higher profits from housing, also fuel the affordability problems.

He said lawmakers should prioritize measures that would curtail exorbitant rent increases, like the ''good cause eviction'' bill that also failed in the State Legislature, and channel public investments into projects that benefit the lowest-income New Yorkers.

A precarious future

As solutions remain stalled, affordability problems are forcing New Yorkers to make difficult decisions about where to live that could change the nature of the city.

Many New Yorkers wonder if middle- and lower-income people can continue to make a home here. Ms. Stennett said that many longtime residents in her neighborhood, long a largely ***working-class*** area, have been ''pushed out,'' as wealthier people moved in.

''This city is becoming so rich -- who can afford some of this stuff?'' Ms. Stennett said. ''How is a newly married couple supposed to do that? How is a student coming out of college supposed to do that? How is a family that is on public assistance ever expected to get off of public assistance?''

Taylor Sicko, 25, used to commute from a Brooklyn apartment where she lived with roommates to Midtown Manhattan, until she lost her job during the pandemic and could no longer afford her $1,300 monthly rent. Ms. Sicko took an online quiz about where to live and decided to book a flight in late 2020 to Denver, a city she had never visited.

Almost two years later, Ms. Sicko, is still living there, with a new car and her own apartment and no plans to leave any time soon. And she would not have to: Her new job is a fully remote role with a legal tech company based in New York.

''I find myself missing New York very rarely,'' Ms. Sicko said.

Matthew Haag contributed reporting.Matthew Haag contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/01/nyregion/nyc-affordable-apartment-rent.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/01/nyregion/nyc-affordable-apartment-rent.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Large residential buildings like this one in Brooklyn could relieve New York City's housing shortage. But they can run into opposition from neighborhoods and City Council members, and developers are leery of making proposals.

Cynthia Reel moved from the Upper West Side to a cheaper apartment in Washington Heights. But if her rent goes up, she may have to move again. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMIR HAMJA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Taylor Sicko relocated to Denver after she lost her job and was unable to afford rent. She now works remotely for a company based in New York. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RACHEL WOOLF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** August 2, 2022

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[***The Twisted Reality of Selling Plasma for Money***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66C4-DGT1-DXY4-X0W1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 11, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 10; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 2021 words

**Byline:** By Vanessa Veselka

**Body**

I first sold plasma in 2009 after years of avoiding it. It was a temporary solution to a continuous state of financial instability.

I was 40 years old and failing to find steady restaurant work in Portland, Ore., where I live, because I couldn't compete with the flexible hours of childless applicants. After the 2008 crash, the number of server jobs plummeted, and college graduates flooded the market. For me, it was a knockout blow.

I ended up on food stamps with a 7-year-old, working two part-time minimum-wage jobs, in crisis whenever a roommate left and dependent on a CareCredit card at 27 percent A.P.R. for my health care. I can't remember the specific instigation for selling plasma, whether it was an empty tank of heating oil or a broken alternator, but one morning when my daughter was at her dad's, I went out early to see what I could make.

Plasma donation centers tend to occupy the same real-estate market as tanning and nail salons, dialysis clinics, Goodwill stores, fast-food chains and carwashes, which means they are often found in medium-crime neighborhoods subdivided by arterial roadways or freeway exchanges. The intake process for first-time donors can take the better part of a day. I arrived only a few minutes after opening, but the place was packed. A large man from a private security company stood in the corner with his arms crossed, gossiping about recent arrests and car crashes. I took a number and sat down.

The people around me seemed to be regulars who were trying to squeeze a donation in before work. I know because I heard them lying on their phones to their employers about why they were going to be late as the morning wore on. More women came in after nine, presumably because their children were now at school. There were men in the building trades with mud on their Carhartts, young Russian-speaking women in scrubs, one tweaker and a freshly shaved guy in a crisp white shirt trying to make deals on the phone who I thought worked for either a church or a cleaning supplies company.

After a few hours in the waiting room, I was called into the back office where I answered a range of questions, from ''Have you ever been paid for sex?'' to ''Have you ever had a blood transfusion in the Falkland Islands?'' The screener asked me to spread my hands so she could see my fingernails. ''Wonderful, they're all there!'' she said, and stained one of my nails with a yellow dye.

The dye, which was semipermanent and visible only under a black light, was a tracking method used to make sure that people weren't donating in multiple places simultaneously. Desperate people sometimes filed off an entire fingernail to get around it, so the screener had to check.

The screener then pulled out a paper with the pay scale on it. As a new client, I would get $40 for my first ''donation'' and $60 for my second. After that I would make no more than $25 a visit. Each time, I would spend one to two hours in a waiting room, then roughly 90 minutes in a bed while the company siphoned off roughly as much plasma as federal regulations allowed.

Plasma is a physical manifestation of the body's ability to bounce back. Albumin, immunoglobulins and fibrinogen, some of the key components of plasma, perform essential functions, including transporting hormones, enzymes and vitamins; defending the body from infections; and controlling bleeding. Plasma therapies have many uses, among them helping high-risk patients weather illnesses like avian flu and Covid-19.

The problem is that while plasma does many wonders for those who receive treatments derived from it, its removal threatens the health of the people who sell it. Repeated plasma donations can weaken a donor's immune system and lead to other negative side effects. Very few countries allow payment for plasma, in part out of concern that financially vulnerable people would risk their health for money.

Other developed nations place stricter limits on the number of times one can donate. In Britain, plasma can be given every two weeks; in Germany, it's up to 60 times a year. The United States allows a person to sell plasma 104 times a year. The word ''sell'' is, of course, rarely used in the United States. Instead, the term is ''donate,'' which allows companies to pretend they are not in the business of scavenging the bodies of poor people for biological treasure.

Our system of ''donation'' is so successful that the United States provides about two-thirds of the plasma available worldwide and accounts for 35 percent to 40 percent of the plasma used in medicine in Europe -- so much of which comes out of the veins of America's poor.

The first time I heard that you could sell plasma was in the mid-1980s. I was 15 and living under a bridge. The people around me called the plasma center the ''stab lab.'' I was too young to donate but would have signed up in a second if I'd had a fake ID.

Living on the street is very hard, and donating plasma was far from the only way to put your health at risk. I remember an 18-year-old sex worker at a Denny's showing me what to do if I ever had to perform oral sex for money and a guy refused to wear protection. Out of nowhere, she produced a condom, then popped it between her cheek and gum so fast, I barely caught it, then rolled it down over two of her fingers with her mouth. ''In case you ever need to know,'' she said.

There were also worse things to sell than plasma. The 1984 National Organ Transplant Act, which made it illegal to pay for organs, had just gone into effect, but I remember meeting a man who had sold one of his kidneys. In a moment of bravado, he hoisted his shirt to show everyone the scar. Soon, the conversation died away as his shame became palpable. The math had not penciled out. His plan to get ahead had failed. He looked sick and was back in temporary housing.

In my mind, a 1980s ''stab lab'' looked like a shooting gallery, an image inspired by Martin Scorsese's ''Mean Streets'' and promotional stills from ''One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.'' My own experience in 2009 turned out to be more like a long day at the D.M.V.

Paperwork completed, I was taken to a room with maybe 30 beds, which were filled with people hooked to apheresis machines, staring up at an episode of ''Law & Order'' that was playing on TVs suspended from the ceiling. The bottles they were filling were bigger than I thought they would be. I'd also never seen plasma before and had assumed it would be red, but it was yellowish amber, a shade or two lighter than Lipton iced tea.

The phlebotomist punctured a vein in my arm with a 17-gauge needle and had me pump my fist until the blood started to flow up the line and into the machine where it would be separated into red and white blood cells, platelets and plasma. The plasma would go into the bottle, and the rest, along with complimentary saline solution, would flow back into me. She tinkered with the rate of draw so that it wouldn't be too overwhelming for a first-time donor, and said that if I saw a bubble, I should call out right away.

My bottle took at least an hour to fill. I know because I was halfway into a second ''Law and Order'' episode before my machine stopped. When the phlebotomist was unhooking me, I asked how much they were going to make off my plasma. She shook her head and told me I did not want to know because it would only make me mad.

I sold plasma twice a week for a little over a month. After donating, I usually wanted to sleep. Sometimes I just felt mildly under the weather.

I was told that to make the most money quick, you had to hit all of the major plasma centers in the area in succession. That way you could rack up the incentive bonuses before you were a regular everywhere and permanently relegated to roughly $25 a donation. I also learned that if you drank a gallon of water in the afternoon the day before, the hydration would make donating faster.

I stopped doing it because $25 wasn't worth it and, as a night shift worker, I didn't need to feel more exhausted than I already was. But the strange thing about plasma, like many less than desirable ways to make money, is that once you know it's an option, you can't quite forget that it's there. Economic precarity makes it hard to walk away from quick money.

Recently, I saw a flier saying I could make $825 a month selling plasma. Most of my life, I've lived under the delusion that there wasn't a problem of mine that $400 to $800 wouldn't fix. I don't believe that anymore, but I am also not beyond a world where a hole like that wouldn't have a real effect. I decided to go see how plasma donation had changed in the decade since I'd done it.

If my 2009 donation experience was like a trip to the D.M.V., my 2022 experience was more like shopping at a small Target. There were check-in kiosks in cheery colors and organized lines for regular donors, rewards programs, phlebotomists with preferred pronouns on name tags, and pictures of people helping each other hanging on the wall.

The clientele, however, was the same: poor people in need of cash. During the pandemic, the number of donations went down, forcing compensation to rise, particularly for people with Covid antibodies. Some donors reportedly began intentionally exposing themselves to Covid to earn more money.

During intake, my information popped up in the database along with a photo of me from 2009. Although this was a different location, I had apparently returned to the same company. I asked the screener if I could still get the higher new donor rate. He gave me a ''you and me against the Man'' smile and promised to make it happen.

I was examined for tracks, had my liver palpated and pulled down my eyelids so they could check me for jaundice. I answered dozens of screening questions, including the one about visiting the Falkland Islands. Employees weighed me, pricked my finger, and ran my hematocrit level to make sure I could donate. Instead of staining my nail yellow, they took my fingerprint, which, they told me, could be shared with the government at its request. I downloaded the company's app, and I was given the debit card I'd need to get my money, along with a warning that A.T.M. fees apply.

Afterward, standing in the parking lot surrounded by 20-year-old cars and dented minivans, holding a new debit card with notifications of coupons coming up on my new app, with a laundromat on one side of me and a liquor store on the other, I could not help thinking that I had found my way into an exceptional American experience. It's one to which I no longer fully belong, but neither am I separate from it.

I have no problem with people being paid for plasma. I just think that companies should take less of the plasma and that donors should be paid more. I have always found poor and ***working-class*** people to be deeply altruistic. They know what it is to work sick, be dependent on a car you can't afford to fix and need help from family, friends and sometimes strangers. Such experiences lead to empathy, and like all people, they want to be a part of something bigger, something with a purpose.

I was paid $100 for my recent donation. The next donation will pay me $125 plus $10 from a coupon I was given, but only if I go back within 45 days. If I go back later, I lose the new donor benefits and will make only $40 to $60 like the other regulars. Once or twice a week it goes through my head that I should just do the eight donations at the higher rate and then quit, and if not that, at least do the next one. I could get an oil change or maybe knock a little more off the balance transfer before the interest hits. After all, that $135 is just sitting there, cash on the table.

Vanessa Veselka is a former labor organizer and the author of the novels ''The Great Offshore Grounds'' and ''Zazen.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/09/opinion/plasma-donation-poverty.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/09/opinion/plasma-donation-poverty.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Antoine Cossé FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 11, 2022

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[***'The Most Dangerous Person in the World Is Randi Weingarten'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:684C-P151-JBG3-64NJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 26

**Length:** 7972 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Mahler

**Body**

When the former secretary of state and C.I.A. director Mike Pompeo, a man who had dealt firsthand with autocrats like Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, described Randi Weingarten as ''the most dangerous person in the world'' last November, it seemed as though he couldn't possibly be serious.

Weingarten is 65 and just over five feet tall. She is Jewish and openly gay -- she's married to a rabbi -- and lives in Upper Manhattan. She is the longtime president of the American Federation of Teachers, which is not even the country's biggest union of public-school educators. (The A.F.T. has 1.7 million members; the National Education Association has three million.) The A.F.T. did give in excess of $26 million to Democratic candidates and causes in the 2022 election cycle, but the Carpenters and Joiners union gave more than twice as much.

Pompeo, whose remarks appeared in a widely quoted interview with the online news site Semafor, had nevertheless put his finger on something: The pandemic and the ongoing culture wars over race and gender had shifted America's educational landscape, and with it the political landscape. ''It's not a close call,'' Pompeo elaborated. ''If you ask, 'Who's the most likely to take this republic down?' It would be the teachers' unions, and the filth that they're teaching our kids, and the fact that they don't know math and reading or writing.''

Other Republicans quickly piled on. Pompeo had set the bar high, and they needed to invoke equally hot rhetoric and florid imagery to ensure headlines of their own. ''Big labor unions have taken over public education,'' Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina told Fox News in late January. ''That's bad for parents, bad for kids, bad for America.'' Senator Marco Rubio of Florida mounted his attack in The American Conservative magazine: ''Our schools are a cesspool of Marxist indoctrination. Dangerous academic constructs like critical race theory and radical gender theory are being forced on elementary school children.'' Gov. Ron DeSantis, who had already garnered national attention with his book bans, Florida's ''Stop WOKE Act'' and its so-called Don't Say Gay legislation, unveiled a new proposal designed to rein in ''overreaching teachers' unions,'' which a column on the Fox website enthusiastically embraced as ''a blueprint to dominate union bosses.'' Donald Trump, declaring that public schools ''have been taken over by the radical left maniacs'' and ''pink-haired communists,'' released his own plan to Save American Education. It was clear that Weingarten had come to stand for something much larger than herself.

The last few years have been historically convulsive ones for education in America. Some 1.3 million children left the public schools during the pandemic. The results from the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress -- known as the nation's report card -- revealed the largest average score decline in reading since 1990 and the first average score decline in math since 1969. Schools have reported major increases in rates of student depression, anxiety and trauma. School districts around the country are experiencing severe teacher shortages. Last fall, a Gallup poll found that the percentage of adults who are satisfied with the nation's public schools had fallen to 42 percent, a 20-year low.

This crisis has political consequences. The pandemic closures and classroom culture wars have fueled the revival of the dormant school-choice movement, with Republican-led states around the country passing an array of far-reaching school-voucher bills. These bills come in different forms but share a common goal: to enable parents to move their children out of America's government-run education system en masse. All of the prospective Republican presidential candidates for 2024 have committed to building on this growing movement, whose roots can be traced back more than 50 years, to the battle over desegregation. The same pandemic closures that demonstrated how central public schools are to the communities they serve also became the inciting event for an unprecedented effort to dismantle them.

The public-education system may not be very popular right now, but both Democrats and Republicans tend to like their local schools and their children's teachers. The unions that represent those teachers, however, are more polarizing. One reason for this is that they are actively involved in partisan politics, and, more specifically, are closely aligned with the Democrats, a reality powerfully driven home during the pandemic. A study by Brown University's Annenberg Institute found that Democratic districts, with correspondingly strong teachers' unions, returned to in-person learning more slowly and gradually than Republican districts with weaker unions. In some ways, Randi Weingarten and the A.F.T. -- the union ''boss'' and ''big labor'' -- are a logical, even inevitable target for the G.O.P.

A frequent knock on the A.F.T. is that it puts teachers before students, a framing neatly encapsulated by a quote attributed to the union's former president Al Shanker: ''When schoolchildren start paying union dues, that's when I'll start representing the interests of schoolchildren.'' Shanker's biographer, Richard Kahlenberg, found no record of Shanker's ever saying this and doesn't think he ever did, but that hasn't stopped the union's critics from citing it. Weingarten has a rebuttal: Good working conditions for teachers make good learning conditions for students. But Weingarten does in fact represent teachers, not students. Often, such as when it comes to issues like classroom size or school budgets, their interests align. Sometimes they don't.

For a period during the pandemic, the two groups' apparent interests diverged, and a series of fault lines started opening across the country, separating not only Republicans from Democrats but also parents from teachers, centrist Democrats from progressives and urban Black parents from suburban white parents, and even dividing the teachers' union itself. These fault lines widened as the reopening debates merged into fights over how schools should deal with the teaching of the country's racial history as well as sexuality and gender identity.

What became increasingly clear to me over the last several months, as I spoke to dozens of politicians, political consultants, union leaders, parent activists and education scholars about the convulsions in American education, is that it's no longer possible to separate education from politics, and that public schools are more vulnerable than they've ever been. How did Randi Weingarten wind up at the center of the 2024 Republican primary? The only way to answer that question is to re-examine America's education wars and the competing political agendas that are driving them. ''Oh, goodness, no! Not at all!'' Pompeo answered when I asked if he was, perhaps, being hyperbolic in his remarks about Weingarten. ''It's not just about Ms. Weingarten, but she has been the most visible face of the destruction of American education.''

In the chaotic early months of the pandemic, teachers were celebrated as essential workers, heroically continuing to serve America's children from their homes, often with limited resources and inadequate technology. But during the summer of 2020, things started to shift. There was already early research showing that students were suffering academically from remote learning. Schools across Europe had begun reopening without any major outbreaks, and many of America's private and parochial schools were making plans to resume in-person learning at the start of the new school year. A lot of public-school parents wanted their children to be back in the classroom, too. But many teachers seemed resistant to the idea.

Because of the decentralized structure of America's public-education system, which has some 14,000 different school districts, the federal government could not order schools to reopen for in-person learning, but in July 2020, President Trump threatened to withhold federal funds from those that didn't. His education secretary, Betsy DeVos, echoed his sentiments, demanding that the nation's schools be ''fully operational'' by the fall without providing a specific plan for doing so.

Many members of the A.F.T. remained worried about putting themselves, their families and their communities at risk. The A.F.T. had issued its own reopening plan in late April, calling for adequate personal protective equipment, a temporary suspension of formal teacher performance evaluations, a limit on student testing, a cancellation of student-loan debt and a $750 billion federal aid package to help schools prepare to reopen safely and facilitate ''a real recovery for all our communities.'' Weingarten did not believe the Trump administration was giving schools what teachers needed to return to work safely. She publicly denounced Trump and DeVos's call to reopen as ''reckless,'' ''callous'' and ''cruel,'' and the A.F.T. passed a resolution supporting local strikes if schools were forced to reopen in areas where a variety of safety conditions hadn't been met. As if to underscore the point, some teachers took to the streets in protest with mock coffins.

Florida became a test case. Even as the state's Covid death rate was surging in July, its Department of Education issued an emergency order requiring schools to fully reopen in August. The state's largest teachers' union, the Florida Education Association, affiliated with both the A.F.T. and the N.E.A., sued DeSantis and his education commissioner, Richard Corcoran, among others, to block the reopenings, arguing that the order violated the state's Constitution, which guarantees Florida residents the right to ''safe'' and ''secure'' public schools. At a virtual news conference announcing the lawsuit, Weingarten accused DeSantis of being in ''intense denial.'' After some Florida schools started reopening, an A.F.T. political action committee produced a TV ad attacking Trump, citing claims that schools were becoming superspreader sites and that children were being used as ''guinea pigs.''

As the lawsuit was working its way through the legal system -- the union won in the lower court but lost on appeal -- Florida was holding its biannual school-board elections, and the prospective return to in-person learning became the defining issue in many races. In Brevard County, Tina Descovich, the incumbent, was in favor of an immediate return to the classroom and opposed mask mandates. She was challenged by a public-school speech-language pathologist, Jennifer Jenkins, who called for a more cautious approach, including a mask mandate for all but the youngest children.

Jenkins easily won the late-August election, but Descovich was just getting started. She called Tiffany Justice, a fellow school-board member in nearby Indian River County, to suggest that they create their own parents' rights group, Moms for Liberty. ''We've got to do something here,'' Justice recalled Descovich's telling her. ''We have to help these parents because they're trying to step up and speak out, and the schools are just slamming them at every turn.''

Other parents across the political spectrum started organizing, too. Many public schools hadn't fully reopened for the start of the new school year, and they were frustrated. They wrote op-eds, held rallies or met via Zoom with school-board members and other elected officials, often finding themselves at odds with local teachers' unions and union-backed school-board members. The first fault lines had started to open.

By the fall of 2020, the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement had prompted a national reckoning over race, as well as an ensuing backlash. The politics of the pandemic had begun to merge with the culture wars, and both were playing out most vividly in the American classroom. An esoteric academic term -- critical race theory, or C.R.T. -- had improbably become the rallying cry for a conservative campaign focused on the teaching of the nation's racial history. President Trump, running for re-election, eagerly took up the cause, blaming ''decades of left-wing indoctrination in our schools'' for the Black Lives Matter protests and urging America's parents to fight back against efforts to teach their children ''hateful lies about this country.''

The A.F.T. championed the new movement for racial equity, committing publicly to the fight to end ''systemic racism in America.'' Some of the A.F.T.'s locals went further. The Chicago Teachers Union took to the streets to demand that the city's board of education cancel a $33 million contract between Chicago's public schools and its Police Department for the safety officers who staff the city's public schools. United Teachers Los Angeles helped lead a successful fight to press its school district to slash its police budget by $25 million and use the money instead to hire more counselors, psychologists and social workers.

That October, Weingarten embarked on a cross-country bus tour to get out the vote for Joe Biden. His Democratic predecessor, Barack Obama, had not always been in sync with the A.F.T.; the union opposed elements of Obama's Race to the Top program, which sent money to states that reformed their public-education systems by, among other things, weakening teacher tenure, introducing data-driven accountability measures and adding more nonunionized charter schools. Biden, by contrast, vowed to focus on neighborhood public schools rather than charters and criticized the standardized-testing regimes and teacher evaluations that were a hallmark of Race to the Top. Weingarten's name was even floated as a candidate for secretary of education. She didn't get the job, but she and the head of the N.E.A., Becky Pringle, were invited to the White House on the day after Biden's inauguration. The teachers' unions finally had a true ally in the Oval Office. The first lady, Jill Biden, taught at a public community college herself. (''I sleep with an N.E.A. member every night,'' President Biden would later quip.) The new administration gave teachers preferential access to the Covid vaccine, behind some other essential workers but ahead of the general population. Biden had pledged to quickly reopen America's schools, and the A.F.T. was communicating with top officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention about its guidelines for doing so, suggesting that the agency add a provision allowing for its recommendations to be revisited if a highly contagious Covid variant emerged. But the anger that had been unleashed by the pandemic closures and the culture wars had not abated.

Justice and Descovich, the former Florida school-board members, incorporated Moms for Liberty in early 2021 with a far more ambitious and political agenda than simply advocating a return to maskless, in-person classes. As the group's mission statement explained, it was ''dedicated to fighting for the survival of America by unifying, educating and empowering parents to defend their parental rights at all levels of government.'' The group built its brand with bumper magnets and T-shirts emblazoned with the motto ''We Do NOT Co-Parent With the Government.'' It was embraced by the right-wing media and then by donors eager to turn it into a national movement, while nurturing its grass-roots image, mirroring the model created by the Tea Party, the quasi-populist uprising fueled by conservative billionaires and Fox News. The former Fox host Megyn Kelly headlined a fund-raising event in Florida, speaking about, as Justice recalled, ''the woke ideology'' coming out of America's classrooms. Moms for Liberty soon expanded beyond Florida. That summer, a chapter in Tennessee presented an 11-page letter of complaint to the state's Department of Education, objecting to a curriculum that it said ''focuses repeatedly and daily on very dark and divisive slivers of American history'' and works to ''sow feelings of resentment, shame of one's skin color and/or fear.'' After several Republican states passed laws limiting the teaching of race-related subjects and banning C.R.T., Weingarten gave a speech citing a historian who had compared their efforts to the censorship of the Soviet regime. A clip of the speech spent days in heavy rotation on Fox News, and it inspired an editorial in The Wall Street Journal: ''The Teachers Unions Go Woke.''

It was not Glenn Youngkin's plan to turn Virginia's 2021 governor's race into a referendum on America's battles over education. Initially, he was just hoping to prevent his opponent, Terry McAuliffe, from owning an issue that historically favored Democrats. ''We couldn't afford to let them take the fight to us,'' Jeff Roe, one of Youngkin's chief strategists, told me.

By almost every measure, Youngkin, a former private-equity executive with no political experience, was the underdog. McAuliffe, a Democratic stalwart dating back to the Clinton presidency, served as Virginia's governor between 2014 and 2018. (A state law barring governors from serving consecutive terms prevented him from running for re-election.)

Biden had beaten Trump by 10 points in Virginia, and McAuliffe led in the early polls. But Virginia's schools had been among the last on the East Coast to fully reopen, and the lingering bitterness from these pandemic closures had formed a politically combustible mix with the rising culture wars. Amid the national racial reckoning of 2020, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax County -- one of the top public high schools in the nation -- had jettisoned its admissions exam, prompting a lawsuit by 17 families, many of them Asian American, who viewed the change as a form of discrimination against their children.

Some of the most bitter fights were unfolding in suburban Loudoun County, where a proposal to allow transgender children to choose which bathrooms and pronouns they wished to use had sparked an angry backlash among conservative parents. The tensions were later exacerbated by news of a sexual assault in a high school girls' bathroom perpetrated by a boy who was wearing a skirt at the time. Loudoun's increasingly contentious school-board meetings became spectator events, attracting the sustained attention of right-wing media outlets like Fox News and The New York Post.

Youngkin held ''Save Our Schools'' rallies and pledged to ban C.R.T. from the state's schools. But his campaign's internal education polls revealed a wide range of voter priorities across the state. The race and gender issues that resonated with his base -- Trump voters -- weren't going to be enough to win. He microtargeted other education voters with different ads; it was a scattershot approach, though, at least until a gubernatorial debate in late September.

During his tenure as governor, McAuliffe had vetoed a bill -- prompted by a mother who objected to her high school senior son's reading Toni Morrison's ''Beloved'' in an A.P. English class -- that would have enabled parents to prevent their children from studying material they deemed sexually explicit. When Youngkin criticized that decision on the debate stage, McAuliffe shot back, ''I don't think parents should be telling schools what they should teach.''

Recognizing that they had just been handed a political gift, Youngkin's staff cobbled together a digital and TV ad that very night, hoping to take advantage of the apparent gaffe before McAuliffe tried to clarify it. ''I was sure he was going to walk it back on 'Morning Joe,''' Roe told me. Instead, McAuliffe stood by his comment, saying that states and local school boards should have authority over what's taught in schools.

Youngkin unified his diffuse education campaign under a new phrase, ''Parents Matter,'' printing up T-shirts and bumper stickers and holding Parents Matter rallies in suburban and exurban counties that supported Biden in 2020. McAuliffe's quote became the centerpiece of a rolling series of ads accusing him of going ''on the attack against parents.'' A longtime critic of organized labor, Youngkin also sought to drive a wedge between teachers and their unions, promising to devote at least $100 million to raise teacher salaries while at the same time saying that McAuliffe would bow to his special-interest allies rather than doing what's best for children.

A vast majority of Virginia's teachers belong to the N.E.A., which tends to cover more rural areas, not the A.F.T., whose members are generally concentrated in big cities. But Weingarten was friendly with McAuliffe from the Clinton days and was supporting his candidacy on Twitter and cable news, and the A.F.T. was helping him develop his education platform. Weingarten told me that she called McAuliffe after the debate to tell him that he was wrong -- that parents should have a role in their children's education. ''Terry made a very bad mistake, which Youngkin capitalized on,'' she said. (Through a spokesman, McAuliffe said that he talked to Weingarten regularly during the campaign but has no recollection of her criticizing his remark.)

By the fall of 2021, America's public schools were fully open, but mask mandates were still being hotly contested. Weingarten had been working to try to rebuild trust between some families and their schools. In late September, just a couple of days after the McAuliffe debate, she held a virtual town hall on mask mandates with Open Schools USA, an anti-masking right-wing parents' rights group that was rallying families to pull their children out of public schools, in an effort to foster open dialogue with the union's critics.

Under Weingarten, who was elected president of the A.F.T. in 2008, the national union has gone all in on electoral politics, significantly increasing its political spending in the belief that the best way to serve its rank and file is by electing Democrats. The A.F.T. gave more than $1 million to McAuliffe, and Weingarten even knocked on doors for him in Alexandria. But Youngkin had the momentum in the final weeks of the race. His candidacy received another boost in October when Attorney General Merrick Garland ordered the F.B.I. to help address the rising threats of violence toward some school-board members. The order stemmed from a letter written to the Biden administration by the National School Boards Association, asking that federal law enforcement address threats against public school officials that ''could be the equivalent to a form of domestic terrorism.'' But Republican lawmakers and the right-wing media seized on the language in the letter to falsely accuse Garland of labeling parents ''domestic terrorists.'' Youngkin quickly exploited the opportunity, releasing an ad claiming that the F.B.I. was trying to ''silence parents.''

On the night before the election, Weingarten headed down to Virginia to warm up the crowd at McAuliffe's closing rally in Fairfax County. She was eager to be on hand for the final push, and her staff asked for her to be given a speaking role at the rally. Because she had been such a generous and loyal supporter of McAuliffe's, the campaign didn't want to say no, even though some Democrats worried that they could be handing Youngkin another gift.

Politically speaking, Weingarten played perfectly into Youngkin's Parents Matter campaign. That spring, a right-wing watchdog group, Americans for Public Trust, had gotten hold of email communications between top officials at the A.F.T. and the C.D.C. about the agency's school-reopening guidelines through the Freedom of Information Act and had passed them on to The New York Post. The tabloid, which had been gleefully attacking Weingarten for years -- dubbing her Whine-garten -- trumpeted the story: ''Powerful Teachers Union Influenced C.D.C. on School Reopenings, Documents Show.'' The rest of the right-wing media and numerous Republican officials instantly jumped on the narrative. Senator Susan Collins of Maine grilled the C.D.C.'s director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, at a committee hearing over what she called the C.D.C.'s ''secret negotiations'' with the teachers' union. Weingarten told me that the C.D.C. had solicited the A.F.T.'s input and that the union hadn't suggested anything that the agency wasn't already considering incorporating into its guidelines. But the appearance of a partisan union leader who had privately discussed the future of the nation's schools with a government agency could be counterproductive in Virginia's charged political climate.

Youngkin's staff was giddy at the prospect. ''I wanted to send them a gift basket,'' Kristin Davison, another senior Youngkin strategist, told me. ''It was almost as good as when Stacey Abrams came.'' Republican elected officials around the country took potshots at their emerging villain. ''The union boss responsible for shutting down schools is the final surrogate for Terry McAuliffe's failing campaign,'' Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas wrote on Twitter. ''Virginians should vote accordingly!''

Youngkin won narrowly, motivating the G.O.P. base and making critical inroads in Loudoun, which had voted overwhelmingly for Biden. ''For a closer for a campaign, you would think you would bring in a showstopper,'' Betsy DeVos gloated on Fox News on election night. ''I guess, in this case, he did bring in a showstopper in Randi Weingarten, because she definitely stopped the show for kids across the country.''

To Republicans, Weingarten may be too progressive, but to some members of her own union, she is not progressive enough. As the pandemic dragged on, she found herself caught between the wishes of the Democratic establishment she did not want to alienate and the left-leaning rank and file she represented. In Chicago, this tension came down, in early 2022, to the most elemental question for unions: whether or not to strike.

At the time, the new Omicron variant was surging, and Illinois was experiencing a record number of Covid cases and hospitalizations. The A.F.T.'s left-wing local, the Chicago Teachers Union, was concerned about sending its 25,000 members back to the classroom after winter break. The union was hearing similar worries from the Black families whose children make up a large percentage of the 320,000 students in Chicago's public schools. Many white suburban and exurban parents had been desperate to see their children return to the classroom and were now committed to keeping them there; but many urban Black parents -- who tended to live in smaller homes with more family members, had generally lower vaccination rates and had lost more loved ones to the pandemic -- had been and remained wary, especially with a new variant spiking.

The union demanded mandatory testing for all teachers and students or a temporary return to remote learning. Mayor Lori Lightfoot, a Democrat, balked. President Biden and other prominent Democrats had been unambiguous about their desire for the nation's schools to remain open. And the recent governor's election in Virginia had underscored the political danger of introducing more disruptions to in-person learning, especially with the 2022 midterms just around the corner. For Weingarten and the national union, a strike in the country's third-largest school system would obviously be politically costly.

The insurgent group that leads the C.T.U. first came together in 2008, when the bipartisan education-reform movement was sweeping across the country, dividing the Democratic Party. Centrist billionaires and centrist Democrats joined forces to lead the effort to introduce more testing, accountability and free-market competition to the public schools. But the more progressive wing of the party viewed these measures as an attack on the very institution of public education, unleashing the forces of capitalism on what is supposed to be a public good.

In Chicago, the reform efforts were led by Arne Duncan, the chief executive of the city's public-school district and President Obama's future education secretary. ''Neoliberal education reform hit Chicago like a ton of bricks,'' Jesse Sharkey, a high school history teacher, told me. Sharkey was a leader of this insurgency and would go on to become president of the C.T.U. from 2018 to 2022. ''You'd flip on the TV or pick up a newspaper, and you couldn't avoid hearing our so-called leaders trashing our schools, talking about their culture of failure,'' he says. ''It was an environment that was downright hostile to public education.''

Sharkey and his fellow insurgents didn't believe the national union was fighting aggressively enough against these Democratic reformers. Tapping into Chicago's long history of community-based organizing, they built their own grass-roots movement within the union called the Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators, or CORE. Led by Karen Lewis, a chemistry teacher and union activist, CORE challenged the C.T.U.'s incumbent leadership in 2010 and won control of the Chicago union. Two years later, after the city's new Democratic mayor, President Obama's former chief of staff Rahm Emanuel, embarked on an ambitious program to close public schools and replace them with charters, the C.T.U. called Chicago's first teachers' strike in 25 years. While the C.T.U. was voting on the strike authorization, Weingarten arrived in Chicago to appear on a panel with Emanuel at a conference hosted by the Clinton Global Initiative. It was a stunning turn of events that spoke to the tension between the A.F.T. and its left wing. For the political health of the union, Weingarten felt she needed to preserve her relationships with the country's most powerful Democratic leaders, many of whom, like Emanuel, were centrist reformers.

As the 2012 strike wore on, Emanuel tried to turn the city against the teachers, accusing them of using Chicago's children as ''pawns,'' and unsuccessfully sought a court order to force them to return to work. After seven days, the city backed down; the union won major concessions, including a 16 percent raise over four years and the right for teachers who were laid off as part of Emanuel's ongoing school closures to be given priority for positions at other schools. The strike instantly became a galvanizing event for the union's more progressive members. Not only does CORE still control the C.T.U., but like-minded left-wing slates have since taken control of A.F.T. locals in several other cities, too, including Los Angeles and Baltimore.

These insurgent caucuses are unified by what they call ''social justice unionism.'' They see public schools' ongoing struggles to educate their students as inseparable from the larger societal and economic issues facing their ***working-class*** members and the poor communities whose children dominate their classrooms. ''We are trying to promote a brand of unionism that goes all out in its fight for educational justice and is brave about taking on conflicts,'' Sharkey says. ''In some ways, we're less careful about who we piss off nationally.''

There is a natural tension between these insurgent movements and the more establishment-oriented national union. In 2015, some rank-and-file members protested the A.F.T.'s decision to issue an early endorsement of Hillary Clinton, to whom Weingarten is close, who was running against the pro-labor Bernie Sanders. But the tension is about more than just politics; it also goes to the heart of the A.F.T.'s identity. To these caucuses, the union's power comes from the collective strength of its members -- from the bottom up -- which can conflict with the top-down leadership style of Weingarten, who has cultivated a distinct public profile, sometimes characterized by her own tendency toward political hyperbole. An impulsive user of Twitter, she has been known to send out the occasional overheated message. During the pandemic, when DeSantis supporters were selling ''Don't Fauci My Florida'' merchandise, including beer koozies, on the G.O.P.'s WinRed website, she wrote: ''Disgusting. Millions of Floridians are going to die from Ron DeSantis' ignorance.'' She later apologized for the tweet.

Two days after returning from winter break in January 2022, with their demands still unmet, the C.T.U. called a strike. ''The union isn't stupid,'' Sharkey, who was president at the time, told me. ''We knew people were sick of the pandemic.'' But, he went on, ''for better or for worse we're a union that strikes. We didn't think it would be an easy or strategically wise thing, but there was a principle around it. It was something we had to do.''

The union already had a contentious relationship with Lightfoot, dating back to an 11-day strike over wages and class sizes in 2019 that ended with the city making major concessions. This time, though, the mayor had public opinion on her side, and she leveraged it in a flurry of media interviews, accusing the C.T.U. of holding Chicago's children ''hostage.'' Lightfoot had long seen the A.F.T.'s local as a ''political movement'' whose ambitions extended well beyond protecting the rights of its workers. ''I think, ultimately, they'd like to take over not only Chicago Public Schools, but take over running the city government,'' she told The Times in 2021.

The 2022 strike quickly became a political nightmare for national Democrats: A Democratic mayor was at war with a Democratic union, shutting down Chicago's schools at a moment when children were finally back in the classroom and the country was just beginning to confront the learning loss and emotional trauma caused by the pandemic. Splinter groups of teachers in Northern California were also planning sickouts in the face of the Omicron surge. The Chicago strike put Weingarten in a difficult position. Publicly, she supported the C.T.U., while also saying that children needed to be in the classroom. Behind the scenes, she was calling and texting Sharkey constantly, offering to do anything she could -- even arrange a call with people at the White House -- to help press Lightfoot and end the strike. After a few days, under intensifying public pressure, the C.T.U.'s members voted to return to work. They had lost this battle, but they already had their sights on a bigger one: the city's upcoming mayoral election.

In late October, just before the 2022 midterms, the results from the first full National Assessment of Educational Progress since the start of the pandemic were released, revealing that 40 percent of the country's eighth-grade public-school students were not proficient in math, and 32 percent were not proficient in reading. The strikingly low scores instantly became a G.O.P. talking point: The culprit wasn't the pandemic, schools or teachers but the unions and Democratic politicians beholden to them. ''We cannot let the nation forget how teachers' unions tried to hold our children's futures for ransom,'' said Representative Virginia Foxx of North Carolina, then the ranking Republican on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. ''These union bosses, and the politicians who enabled them, must be held accountable.'' Republicans up and down the ballot accused their Democratic opponents of carrying water for the teachers' unions. A week before the election, Fox News ran a segment headlined ''Have the Teachers Unions Sold Out Your Kids to the Democrats?''

Christopher Rufo, the right-wing activist who manufactured the obsession with C.R.T. two years earlier, was now on Fox News railing against another crisis -- the ''academic queer theory'' that he charged was being ''mainlined'' into America's public schools -- while Republican candidates condemned the ''grooming'' of children to identify as different genders in the nation's classrooms. Many Republican candidates pledged their allegiance to a ''Parents' Bill of Rights,'' requiring schools to provide information on reading lists, curriculums and whether a family's child used another name or pronoun in school.

The A.F.T. spent in excess of $20 million in the 2022 midterms, more than it ever had in an off-year election, and Weingarten campaigned tirelessly with high-profile Democrats around the country, her arrival on the stump invariably inspiring glee among local Republican leaders. When she appeared in Michigan with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, one G.O.P. pundit, Kaylee McGhee White, described her on Fox Business Network as ''the kiss of death.'' Whitmer won easily, as did many other Democrats whose opponents had railed against drag-queen shows for children or L.G.B.T.Q.-themed books in school libraries. But Republican candidates who campaigned on another education issue -- school choice -- fared much better.

As a political matter, all the education battles that had erupted since the start of the pandemic -- over school closures, over how the country's racial history should be taught, over what sort of role parents ought to have in the classroom -- were really about the same thing: whether America's children should continue to be educated in government-run public schools. Did the pandemic and the culture wars reveal the indispensability of these schools to their communities and to the broader fabric of the nation, or did they only underscore their inherent limitations -- in effect, making the case for school choice?

It was the University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman who first proposed the modern concept of school vouchers in a paper in 1955. Friedman was a champion of free markets, and his idea was to leverage the transformative power of capitalism to prod schools to compete for families' dollars. But vouchers served another purpose too. The Supreme Court had just ruled on Brown v. Board of Education, and many white Americans were worried about the looming prospect of being forced to send their children to desegregated schools. Friedman saw an opening for his proposal, writing, ''Under such a system, there can develop exclusively white schools, exclusively colored schools and mixed schools.''

Thirty years later, with Friedman serving as an economic adviser, President Reagan tried repeatedly to introduce federal school-voucher legislation. One of his most vocal opponents was Al Shanker, then the A.F.T.'s president, who argued that choice might be the point of ''shopping malls,'' but it was not the point of education, nor was it the reason taxpayers were expected to fund the nation's public schools: ''We do so not to satisfy the individual wants of parents and students but because of the public interest in producing an educated citizenry capable of exercising the rights of liberty and being productive members of society.''

Even Congress, where Republicans held the Senate majority, considered Reagan's voucher proposals too radical. But the concept endured. In the 1990s, vouchers were championed by Christian conservatives like Paul Weyrich, a founder of the Heritage Foundation and mentor to Justice Clarence Thomas. Weyrich believed that the nation's public schools had become ''morally decadent institutions'' and argued that the only answer was for Christians to educate their children themselves, ideally with government money. Over the years, some states experimented with limited voucher programs, typically designed to target discrete populations like children with special needs. But the pandemic created an opening for voucher advocates to think more ambitiously and move more aggressively. In fact, this had been the plan almost from the very beginning. Two months into the school closures, in the spring of 2020, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the Catholic archbishop of New York, asked DeVos -- then the education secretary and a longtime supporter of school choice -- in an interview on SiriusXM radio if she intended to ''utilize this particular crisis to ensure that justice is finally done to our kids and the parents who choose to send them to faith-based schools.'' DeVos answered unequivocally: ''Yes, absolutely.''

In 2021, at least 18 states created new school-choice programs or expanded existing ones, and more followed suit in 2022. Some of these new programs represent a significant departure from those of the past. Known collectively as universal voucher programs, they are available to everyone and can be applied toward any kind of school. The goal is not merely to disrupt public education but to defund and dismantle it. For years, the country's lower courts largely agreed that spending taxpayer money on religious schools was unconstitutional. But last summer, the Supreme Court created a new precedent, ruling that it was in fact unconstitutional for voucher programs -- in this case, one in rural Maine -- to exclude religious schools.

DeVos, now back in the private sector, is one of the leading funders of this new national voucher campaign, primarily through an organization that she helped found called the American Federation for Children. The group and its affiliates spent $9 million on school-choice campaigns in 2022, at least $2.5 million of which came directly from DeVos and her husband. They spent much of this money in the primaries, turning support for school choice into a litmus test and targeting Republican incumbents opposed to it. Three-quarters of the candidates they supported won. ''There wasn't a red wave or a blue wave in the midterms, but there was a school-choice wave,'' Corey DeAngelis, a senior fellow at the American Federation for Children, wrote to me in an email. Echoing Weyrich's sentiments about the moral decadence of American public education, DeAngelis quoted Voddie Baucham, a Christian home-schooling advocate: ''We cannot continue to send our children to Caesar for their education and be surprised when they come home as Romans.''

DeAngelis identified Weingarten as a useful political foil long before Mike Pompeo. He has been trolling her relentlessly on Twitter since 2021, ostentatiously thanking her for starting ''the school choice revolution.'' In March, at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference in suburban Washington, he posed with a life-size cardboard cutout of her clutching an award labeled ''Threat to America's Children,'' his left thumb raised in approval.

Lori Lightfoot, the mayor of Chicago, was right about the local teachers' union's political ambitions. In February, Brandon Johnson, a former middle-school teacher and paid union organizer, challenged her in the city's mayoral election. It was a long shot -- one early poll put his support at 3 percent -- but for the C.T.U., the Johnson campaign was a natural progression. To pursue their broader agenda, which reaches beyond education into areas like housing and policing, they needed the kind of power that can come only from winning partisan political elections. And they had both a powerful grass-roots movement and a source of campaign funds, in the form of members' dues, that could be leveraged to support Johnson's candidacy.

Johnson's campaign was underwritten largely by the teachers' unions. Though the A.F.T. and the C.T.U. had their differences in the past, they have become more closely aligned in recent years. While there are still some divisions within the Democratic Party over education policy, the bipartisan education-reform movement that once posed such a formidable existential threat to the A.F.T. is a shadow of its former self. The threat to the A.F.T. is now partisan, which means that Weingarten is no longer facing as much pressure from centrist Democrats. Backed by the financial and organizational muscle of the national and local teachers' unions, Johnson knocked Lightfoot out of the two-person runoff, making her the first incumbent mayor in Chicago to be unseated after a single term in 40 years.

By now, Pompeo, Tim Scott, Marco Rubio, Ron DeSantis, Donald Trump and the rest of the Republican Party were busy elevating education to a central plank in its 2024 platform and in the process transforming Weingarten into the new Hillary -- a G.O.P. stand-in for everything that was wrong with America. The Republican-led House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic was continuing to build its case that Weingarten and the A.F.T. exerted undue influence over the C.D.C.'s school-reopening guidelines, summoning Weingarten to appear in Washington on April 26 at a hearing titled ''The Consequences of School Closures.''

But Weingarten was building her own case. Public education was now itself a hyperpartisan issue, and she addressed it in hyperpartisan terms in a fiery speech at the National Press Club. Calling out by name some of the people who had demonized her since the pandemic, including Betsy DeVos, she described the ongoing effort to defund public schools as nothing less than a threat to ''cornerstones of community, of our democracy, our economy and our nation.'' She pointed to studies that have shown that vouchers don't improve student achievement, characterizing them as a back door into private and parochial schools that are not subject to the same federal civil rights laws as public institutions and can therefore promote discrimination. ''Our public schools shouldn't be pawns for politicians' ambitions!'' she thundered, moving toward her emotional conclusion. ''They shouldn't be defunded or destroyed by ideologues.''

Like the Virginia's governor's race one and a half years earlier, Chicago's mayoral runoff became, at least in part, a referendum on education. The effects of the pandemic on Chicago's public schools have been profound. More than 33,000 students have left the school system since the fall of 2020, and the recent National Assessment of Educational Progress scores showed steep declines in math and a widening achievement gap between white and Black students.

Brandon Johnson's opponent, Paul Vallas, ran Chicago's public schools in the late 1990s. Chicago has no Republican Party to speak of, but Vallas, a vocal proponent of charter schools and vouchers, was the conservative candidate. In 2009, he said he was ''more of a Republican than a Democrat.'' He was supported by the local business community and endorsed by the city's police union. A group affiliated with the American Federation for Children spent $60,285 on a pro-Vallas digital media effort. But Arne Duncan and a number of other centrist Democrats endorsed Vallas, too.

On the eve of the April runoff election, Weingarten headed to Chicago to speak at a Johnson political rally headlined by Bernie Sanders. Both the A.F.T. and the C.T.U. continued to funnel money into Johnson's campaign as the election approached, their combined contributions totaling $4.6 million. ''All of this stuff is about power,'' observed a local community activist, Ja'Mal Green, who had run in the first round of the election but didn't make the runoff and was now supporting Vallas.

When Johnson narrowly won, it was a stunning upset, not just for the candidate but for the left. Even as the Republicans were ramping up their attacks on Weingarten and on the institution of public education, the teachers' unions had effectively elected the mayor of America's third-largest city, who was himself an avowedly progressive union organizer promising to raise taxes on the rich, reform the police and increase funding for the city's schools. Maybe Pompeo hadn't been wrong, at least as far as his own party was concerned. It was those who had underestimated the political power of the unions who were mistaken. ''They said this would never happen,'' Johnson said in his victory speech. ''If they didn't know, now they know!''

Jonathan Mahler is a staff writer for the magazine. He has written about Donald Trump's legal accountability, the post-pandemic future of New York City and the state of politics in Wisconsin.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/28/magazine/randi-weingarten-teachers-unions.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/28/magazine/randi-weingarten-teachers-unions.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH WHITAKER) (MM26-MM27)

Randi Weingarten photographed in April. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAL CHELBIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM29) This article appeared in print on page MM26, MM27, MM28, MM29, MM30, MM31, MM46, MM47, MM49.

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2023

**End of Document**



[***Why It’s So Hard to Find an Affordable Apartment in New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:662C-2411-JBG3-643K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 1, 2022 Monday 01:16 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1812 words

**Byline:** Mihir Zaveri

**Highlight:** There simply aren’t enough places to live, a crisis decades in the making and one that poses a threat to the city’s continuing recovery.

**Body**

A half a century ago, city planners [*warned that New York*](https://archive.org/details/rezoningnewyorkc00newy/page/6/mode/2up) had the potential to swell into a “monster city” of 55 million people. To avoid this fate, the city passed a major overhaul of zoning rules in 1961, limiting the size of buildings and how many people could live in them.

Now, a longstanding housing shortage, partly fueled by those old constraints, is inflaming a crisis in affordability.

It may feel counterintuitive that the largest city in America has a housing shortage. Cranes and construction crews appear to be constantly in motion, stacking together new residential apartment buildings, condos and tall skyscrapers.

But the problems reflect [*a national phenomenon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/14/upshot/housing-shortage-us.html) and are further fueled by the popularity of New York City itself. More people want to live here than the city can accommodate, driving up prices for the housing that is available.

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 study from the Citizens Budget Commission, a nonprofit research group. And new housing is [*not keeping up with new job growth*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/planning-level/housing-economy/nyc-geography-jobs2-1019.pdf).

At the same time, the number of homes that rent at [*less than $1,500 is shrinking*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/services/2021-nychvs-selected-initial-findings.pdf), and the median rent on Manhattan apartments newly leased in June [*reached a staggering $4,000*](https://www.elliman.com/resources/siteresources/commonresources/static%20pages/images/corporate-resources/q2_2022/rental-06_2022.pdf), the real estate firm Douglas Elliman reported.

There are numerous barriers to increasing the supply of housing to meet the demand, including:

● Zoning restrictions that limit the size of buildings and enable many neighborhoods to all but shut out new development;

● The cost of building, and particularly the cost of subsidizing and supporting affordable homes;

● The inability of state and local politicians to agree on meaningful solutions.

Not everyone agrees that making it easier to build more homes is a panacea. Some housing advocates say government officials should also prioritize rent controls and public housing to make living here more affordable.

Most everyone, however, agrees that without some intervention, the situation could grow even more dire as the city tries to recover from the pandemic, exacerbating homelessness, making it difficult for businesses to retain workers and squeezing out poorer residents.

“I’m usually a pretty optimistic person,” said Vicki L. Been, a former deputy mayor for housing and economic development under the former mayor, Bill de Blasio who supports making it easier to build housing. “I would describe myself as very concerned.”

Cynthia Reel, 66, is one of the thousands of renters worried about the increasing cost of living. In March, she moved from the Upper West Side to a cheaper apartment a few blocks north of the George Washington Bridge. But at $2,000 a month, even that feels difficult to manage, especially if she gets hit with a rent increase when her lease renews next year.

If the increase is “ridiculous,” she may move to New Jersey, she said, “although I don’t want to do that.”

An invisible web of constraints

At the center of the problem is zoning.

The rules put in place in 1961 preserved a lower-density, suburban feel throughout vast swaths of the city, essentially making it illegal to build anything other than one- or two-family homes in many areas, said Jason Barr, an economics professor at Rutgers University-Newark who has written about the history of zoning.

Within years, the rules prompted worries they might create[*a housing shortage*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1967/07/31/issue.html).

The city, grappling with crime and financial difficulties, lost population in the 1970s, dropping from about 7.9 million in 1970 to about 7.1 million in 1980. But it rebounded and reached 7.3 million in 1990 and more than 8 million in 2000.

When Mayor Michael Bloomberg took office after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, he [*undertook a huge reshaping*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/16/nyregion/going-out-with-building-boom-mayor-pushes-billions-in-projects.html) of the city, to [*help it recover*](https://www.nytimes.com/2002/12/13/nyregion/mayor-s-proposal-envisions-lower-manhattan-as-an-urban-hamlet.html) and [*boost its economy and population*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/29/nyregion/29develop.html). And while the plan made way for higher density development and opened many of the city’s waterfront areas for residential uses, some of his efforts placed limits on new housing.

Between 2003 and 2007, the Bloomberg administration rezoned nearly one-fifth of the city, according to a 2010 study by the New York University Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy. But nearly 90 percent of the lots analyzed in the study had their capacity reduced or only modestly increased.

At the same time, New Yorkers who didn’t want their neighborhoods to change increasingly found ways to slow down projects.

Evolving rules over zoning enabled individuals and neighborhood groups to file lawsuits against projects they didn’t like. Now, developers often will not propose a project at all if they sense they will face significant opposition, said Kirk Goodrich, the president of Monadnock Development.

Even when they do propose a project, the path can be rocky: A recent project in Harlem that could have contained more than 900 new homes [*was recently withdrawn after*](https://gothamist.com/news/developer-kills-plan-for-harlems-one45-complex-after-local-opposition) the opposition of the local council member. Council members have opposed two other projects — one in [*Astoria in Queens*](https://queenseagle.com/all/2022/3/9/innovation-qns-hits-snag-as-local-councilmember-raises-concerns) and [*another in Throgs Neck in the Bronx*](https://www.bxtimes.com/bruckner-rezoning-cb10-rejection/) — that would add more than 3,000 units of housing, including some 800 that would rent below market rate.

An effort to rezone parts of the Gowanus neighborhood in Brooklyn, which was approved in 2021 and includes a Monadnock project, took [*more than a decade*](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/planning/download/pdf/plans/gowanus/gowanus.pdf), in part because of political fights. The time taken up by these battles, Mr. Goodrich said, “doesn’t allow us to deliver housing of scale in a time frame that has enabled us to alleviate the shortage.”

The cost of building is also high, and increasing every year, according to the Citizens Budget Commission study. Interest rates, which are rising to combat inflation, threaten to make development [*even more expensive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/23/business/housing-market-crisis-supply.html).

Even without inflation, unique provisions in New York City’s building code, plumbing code and electrical code drive up the cost of development, according to the study.

A political quagmire blocking solutions

State and local officials have so far not been able to agree on meaningful solutions.

State lawmakers this year considered and failed to pass at least four different measures to boost the supply of housing in and around the city: Bills that [*would have made it easier*](https://www.newsday.com/news/region-state/hochul-affordable-housing-accessory-unit-development-y43611) to build apartment buildings around mass transit and that would allow cities to legalize basement and garage homes died after opposition from lawmakers representing New York City suburbs.

A bill that would have removed a state cap on residential building size also [*died in the Legislature*](https://www.lizkrueger.com/nyc-far-legislation-is-off-the-table/).

And lawmakers let [*a contentious tax break*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/26/nyregion/tax-exemption-housing-development.html) that helped finance the development of big new apartment buildings, known as 421-a, expire without replacing or reforming it.

The city and state have also long failed to retool [*the uneven underlying tax system*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/30/nyregion/property-tax-reform-nyc.html) that puts more of a burden on big apartment buildings than on smaller properties.

Mayor Eric Adams has promised to [*make it easier to build*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/nyregion/01adams-dancing-cabaret.html) in New York City, for example, by eliminating or relaxing some requirements that new buildings provide parking spaces for residents, and streamlining the building code.

But the changes, which are slated to be introduced in early 2024, may face fierce political opposition.

“More people than ever before got hit by the housing crisis over the course of the pandemic,” said Jessica Katz, the city’s chief housing officer. “We are hoping that we can build a coalition around that.”

Yvonne Stennett, executive director of the Community League of the Heights, a community development group in Washington Heights, says the city should be pushing for more projects like [*a 174-unit affordable housing development*](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/hpd/news/024-21/city-officially-launches-inwood-development-project-soon-bring-affordable-housing-new#/0) in Inwood that her group is involved with, made possible after a neighborhood rezoning and public and private subsidies.

Building and preserving affordable homes requires a vast amount of public investment to subsidize below-market rents. While Mr. Adams has pledged to spend $22 billion over 10 years on affordable housing — a historically high number — his administration has [*not set specific housing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/14/nyregion/eric-adams-housing-crisis-plan.html) production targets, and [*housing advocates fear the investment may*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/24/nyregion/nyc-housing-adams.html) not go far enough.

To some, the housing supply problems are overstated.

Samuel Stein, a senior policy analyst at the Community Service Society, an anti-poverty nonprofit group, said other factors, like investors seeking higher profits from housing, also fuel the affordability problems.

He said lawmakers should prioritize measures that would curtail exorbitant rent increases, like[*the “good cause eviction” bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/realestate/good-cause-eviction-renters-new-york.html) that also failed in the State Legislature, and channel public investments into projects that benefit the lowest-income New Yorkers.

A precarious future

As solutions remain stalled, affordability problems are forcing New Yorkers to make difficult decisions about where to live that could change the nature of the city.

Many New Yorkers wonder if middle- and lower-income people can continue to make a home here. Ms. Stennett said that many longtime residents in her neighborhood, long a largely ***working-class*** area, have been “pushed out,” as wealthier people moved in.

“This city is becoming so rich — who can afford some of this stuff?” Ms. Stennett said. “How is a newly married couple supposed to do that? How is a student coming out of college supposed to do that? How is a family that is on public assistance ever expected to get off of public assistance?”

Taylor Sicko, 25, used to commute from a Brooklyn apartment where she lived with roommates to Midtown Manhattan, until she lost her job during the pandemic and could no longer afford her $1,300 monthly rent. Ms. Sicko took an online quiz about where to live and decided to book a flight in late 2020 to Denver, a city she had never visited.

Almost two years later, Ms. Sicko, is still living there, with a new car and her own apartment and no plans to leave any time soon. And she would not have to: Her new job is a fully remote role with a legal tech company based in New York.

“I find myself missing New York very rarely,” Ms. Sicko said.

Matthew Haag contributed reporting.

Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

Matthew Haag contributed reporting. Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

PHOTOS: Large residential buildings like this one in Brooklyn could relieve New York City’s housing shortage. But they can run into opposition from neighborhoods and City Council members, and developers are leery of making proposals.; Cynthia Reel moved from the Upper West Side to a cheaper apartment in Washington Heights. But if her rent goes up, she may have to move again. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AMIR HAMJA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Taylor Sicko relocated to Denver after she lost her job and was unable to afford rent. She now works remotely for a company based in New York. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RACHEL WOOLF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** June 22, 2023

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[***New Brand of Texas Republican as Latinas Emerge on the Far Right***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65W1-FDD1-JBG3-645B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1648 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Medina

**Body**

Representative Mayra Flores is one of three Republican Latinas vying to transform South Texas politics by shunning moderates and often embracing the extreme.

WASHINGTON -- For years, Texas Republicans tried to win the Hispanic vote using a Bush-era brand of compassionate conservatism. The idea was that a moderate's touch and a softer rhetoric on immigration were key to making inroads with Hispanic voters, particularly in Democratic strongholds along the southern border.

Such was the Texas of old. The Trump age has given rise to a new brand of Texas Republicans, one of whom is already walking the halls of Congress: the far-right Latina.

Representative Mayra Flores became only the second Republican to represent the Rio Grande Valley after she won a special election last month and flipped the congressional seat from blue to red. She also became the first Latina Republican ever sent by Texas to Congress. Her abbreviated term lasts only through the end of the year, and she is seen as a long shot to win re-election to a full one.

But what is most striking is that Ms. Flores won by shunning moderates, embracing the far right and wearing her support for Donald J. Trump on her sleeve -- more Marjorie Taylor Greene than Kay Bailey Hutchison.

Her campaign slogan -- ''God, family, country'' -- was meant to appeal to what she calls the ''traditional values'' of her majority-Hispanic district in the border city of Brownsville. She called for President Biden's impeachment. She tweeted QAnon hashtags. And she called the Democratic Party the ''greatest threat America faces.''

In an interview in her still-barren office the day after her swearing-in ceremony, Ms. Flores was asked whether she considered Mr. Biden the legitimately elected president.

''He's the worst president of the United States,'' she said.

When asked three more times whether Mr. Biden had been legitimately elected, she repeated the same nonanswer.

Two other Latina Republicans, Monica De La Cruz in McAllen and Cassy Garcia in Laredo, are also on the ballot in congressional races along the Mexican border. All three -- G.O.P. officials have taken to calling them a ''triple threat'' -- share right-wing views on immigration, the 2020 election and abortion, among other issues.

They share the same advisers, have held campaign rallies and fund-raisers together and have knocked on doors side by side. They accuse the Democratic Party of taking Hispanic voters for granted and view themselves, as do their supporters, as the embodiment of the American dream: Ms. Flores often speaks of working alongside her parents as a teenager in the cotton fields of the Texas Panhandle.

Ms. Flores, Ms. De La Cruz and Ms. Garcia grew up in the Rio Grande Valley, a ***working-class*** four-county region at the southernmost tip of Texas where Hispanics make up 93 percent of the population. All three are bilingual; Ms. Flores was born in Tamaulipas, Mexico, and the other two in South Texas. Only Ms. De La Cruz has been endorsed by Mr. Trump, yet they all remain outspoken advocates for him, his movement and his tough talk on restricting immigration and building the border wall.

The Rio Grande Valley has long been a politically liberal yet culturally conservative place. Church pews are packed on Sundays, American flags wave from their poles on front lawns and law enforcement is revered. Ms. Flores's husband is a Border Patrol agent, a note she often emphasized on the campaign trail.

In 2020, the Valley's conservative culture started to exert a greater influence on its politics. Mr. Trump flipped rural Zapata County and narrowed the Democratic margin of victory in the four Valley counties and in other border towns.

''Growing up down there, you always have closeted Republicans,'' said Ms. Garcia, a former aide to Senator Ted Cruz of Texas. ''Now, the desire to embrace Republicans is really spreading. They feel a genuine sense of belonging.''

Other pro-Trump Latinas are running for House seats in Virginia, Florida and New Mexico, among other places.

Republican leaders and strategists say Ms. Flores's win and the candidacies of other right-wing Hispanic women are proof that Latino voters are increasingly shifting to the right. More than 100 Republican House candidates are Hispanic, a record number, according to the National Republican Congressional Committee.

Democrats view the situation much differently. Some Democratic leaders dismiss Ms. Flores's victory as a fluke -- the product of a low-turnout special election in which 28,990 people cast ballots -- and a fleeting one.

Ms. Flores, who was elected to serve the last six months of a retiring Democratic congressman's term, is running in November for a full term. She faces a popular Democratic incumbent who is switching districts, Representative Vicente Gonzalez.

Democratic leaders are optimistic that Mr. Gonzalez will defeat Ms. Flores, and that Ms. Garcia will lose her race against Representative Henry Cuellar, the conservative Democrat who narrowly beat a progressive challenger in a primary runoff.

Ms. De La Cruz, however, is running in the most competitive House race in Texas and will face Michelle Vallejo, a progressive Democrat.

Representative Ruben Gallego, an Arizona Democrat who heads the campaign arm of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, dismissed Ms. Flores's win as a ''public relations coup'' for Republicans.

''It does not mean she represents mainstream Hispanic voters,'' Mr. Gallego said.

Mr. Gonzalez, the Democratic congressman, nearly lost to Ms. De La Cruz two years ago when she challenged him in Texas' 15th Congressional District. He won by 6,588 votes. Now, he is challenging Ms. Flores in the 34th District.

''This was a profound message to the party,'' he said of Ms. Flores's victory. ''It's really woken up the Democratic base. I've never had so many people volunteer for free in all my years.''

As she moved into her congressional office across from the Capitol, Ms. Flores, an evangelical Christian, eyed the bare walls. She planned to put up a large photo of the SpaceX launch site in her district as well as images of Jesus.

She had campaigned with the support of evangelical churches; her pastor carried out a ''Make America Godly Again'' outreach effort and traveled to Washington for her swearing-in. ''I do believe that pastors should be getting involved in politics and in guiding their congressmen,'' Ms. Flores said. ''Our pastors know our people better than we do.''

Ms. Flores wasted no time displaying a combative style with Democrats. Minutes after her swearing-in, Speaker Nancy Pelosi posed with Ms. Flores and her family for a photo. What happened next is a matter of debate. To Democrats, it looked as if Ms. Pelosi had brushed her arm against Ms. Flores's 8-year-old daughter as the two stood side by side. To Republicans, it looked as if Ms. Pelosi had shoved her aside.

''No child should be pushed to the side for a photo op. PERIOD!!'' Ms. Flores later wrote on Twitter.

To hear Ms. Flores tell it, her switch to the G.O.P. was inevitable.

Early on, she said, she had voted Democratic, primarily because everyone she knew did the same. The first time she cast a ballot for a Republican for president, she said, was for Mitt Romney in 2012.

After attending a Republican event for the spouses of Border Patrol agents, Ms. Flores began to volunteer for the Hidalgo County Republican Party in McAllen. By 2020, she was organizing pro-Trump caravans through the Rio Grande Valley.

She was also posting tweets using the hashtag #QAnon.

When asked about QAnon, Ms. Flores denied ever having supported the conspiracy theory, which claims that a group of Satan-worshiping elites who run a child sex ring is trying to control the government and the media. Hashtags have long been considered social media shorthand for expressing support for a cause or an idea, but Ms. Flores insisted her intention was to express opposition to QAnon.

''It's just to reach more people so more people can see like, hey, this needs to stop,'' she said of using the QAnon hashtag. ''This is only hurting our country.''

Ms. Flores deleted the tweets about QAnon, but she did not refrain from expressing other right-wing views. After the 2020 election, she insisted on Twitter that Mr. Trump had won, writing in one post, ''Ganamos y lo vamos a demostrar!'' or ''We won, and we will prove it!'' Following the Jan. 6, 2021, assault on the Capitol, she retweeted a post falsely calling it a ''setup'' by antifa. She has called Mr. Biden ''president in name only'' and has demanded his impeachment. And as her own oath of office coincided with the hearings by the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack, Ms. Flores largely dismissed the proceedings.

''Honestly, my district doesn't care about that,'' she said of the hearings. ''My district is struggling to pay their bills. That's what we're supposed to be focusing on.''

Like Ms. Flores, Ms. De La Cruz describes herself as a former Democrat who ''walked away'' from the party. She said she cast her first vote in a Republican primary for Mr. Trump in 2016.

''I believe that the president was bringing to light the terrible things that we were doing to our country,'' Ms. De La Cruz said.

After she narrowly lost her challenge to Mr. Gonzalez in 2020, Ms. De La Cruz suggested, without evidence, that both she and Mr. Trump had been victims of voter fraud in the district.

Ms. Garcia, by contrast, said she has been a Republican her whole life. Raised conservative, she went to church three times a week and entered politics soon after college, working as the outreach director for Mr. Cruz in McAllen.

As a candidate, she has focused on religious liberty, school choice and abortion bans -- issues on which she said the region's Hispanic voters were increasingly like-minded.

''The red wave is here,'' Ms. Garcia said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/06/us/politics/mayra-flores-latina-republicans.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/06/us/politics/mayra-flores-latina-republicans.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Representative Mayra Flores of Texas with Kevin McCarthy, the House minority leader. She is the first Republican Latina the state has ever sent to Congress. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SHURAN HUANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Monica De La Cruz, who is in one of Texas' most competitive House races, has been endorsed by Donald J. Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VERÓNICA G. CÁRDENAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

''The desire to embrace Republicans is really spreading,'' said Cassy Garcia, who is also vying for a House seat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTIAN K. LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Best Sellers: Audio Nonfiction: Sunday, January 17th 2021***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61VN-GWX1-DXY4-X35H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 17, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 592 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the January 17, 2021 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending January 2, 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: Audio Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | A PROMISED LAND, by Barack Obama. (Random House Audio) In the first volume of his presidential memoirs, Barack Obama offers personal reflections on his formative years and pivotal moments through his first term. Read by the author. 29 hours, 10 minutes unabridged. |
| 2 | 2 | 3 | GREENLIGHTS, by Matthew McConaughey. (Random House Audio) The Academy Award-winning actor shares snippets from the diaries he kept over the last 35 years. Read by the author. 6 hours, 42 minutes unabridged. |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | CASTE, by Isabel Wilkerson. (Penguin Audio) The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist reveals a rigid hierarchy in America today. Read by Robin Miles. 14 hours, 26 minutes unabridged. |
| 4 | 7 | 10 | UNTAMED, by Glennon Doyle. (Random House Audio) The activist and public speaker describes her journey of listening to her inner voice. Read by the author. 8 hours, 22 minutes unabridged. |
| 5 | 6 | 26 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Random House Audio) The former first lady describes how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. Read by the author. 19 hours, 3 minutes unabridged. |
| 6 | 12 | 30 | EXTREME OWNERSHIP, by Jocko Willink and Leif Babin. (Macmillan Audio) Applying the principles of Navy SEALs leadership training to any organization. Read by the authors. 8 hours, 15 minutes unabridged. |
| 7 | 14 | 15 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Hachette Audio) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts. Read by the author. 8 hours, 42 minutes unabridged. |
| 8 |  | 2 | HILLBILLY ELEGY, by J.D. Vance. (HarperAudio) A Yale Law School graduate looks at the struggles of America?s white ***working class***. Read by the author. 6 hours, 49 minutes unabridged. |
| 9 |  | 27 | SAPIENS, by Yuval Noah Harari. (Harper Audio) How Homo sapiens became Earth?s dominant species. Read by Derek Perkins. 15 hours, 17 minutes unabridged. |
| 10 |  | 4 | BREATH, by James Nestor. (Penguin Audio) A re-examination of a basic biological function. Read by the author. 7 hours, 18 minutes unabridged. |
| 11 | 3 | 2 | THE BEST OF ME, by David Sedaris. (Hachette Audio) A collection of the humorist?s essays including ?Me Talk Pretty One Day? and ?A Guy Walks Into a Bar Car.? Read by the author. 13 hours, 8 minutes unabridged. |
| 12 |  | 33 | BORN A CRIME, by Trevor Noah. (Audible Studios) A memoir about growing up in South Africa by the host of ?The Daily Show.? Read by the author. 8 hours, 50 minutes unabridged. |
| 13 |  | 3 | THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE, by Bessel van der Kolk. (Gildan Media) How trauma affects the body and mind, and innovative treatments for recovery. Read by Sean Pratt. 16 hours, 17 minutes unabridged. |
| 14 |  | 6 | MY OWN WORDS, by Ruth Bader Ginsburg with Mary Hartnett and Wendy W. Williams. (Simon & Schuster Audio) A collection of articles and speeches by the Supreme Court justice. Read by Linda Lavin. 13 hours, 16 minutes unabridged. |
| 15 |  | 1 | THE WARMTH OF OTHER SUNS, by Isabel Wilkerson. (Brilliance) An account of the Great Migration of 1915-70, in which six million African-Americans abandoned the South. Read by Robin Miles. 22 hours, 44 minutes unabridged. |

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2021

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[***Wrong Again: How Polls Misread 2020 Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618W-K4G1-DXY4-X07F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 13, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 4485 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

Senator Susan Collins did not lead in a single publicly released poll during the final four months of her re-election campaign in Maine. But Ms. Collins, a Republican, won the election comfortably.

Senator Thom Tillis, a North Carolina Republican, trailed in almost every poll conducted in his race. He won, too.

And most polls underestimated President Trump's strength, in Iowa, Florida, Michigan, Texas, Wisconsin and elsewhere. Instead of winning a landslide, as the polls suggested, Joseph R. Biden Jr. beat Mr. Trump by less than two percentage points in the states that decided the election.

For the second straight presidential election, the polling industry missed the mark. The miss was not as blatant as in 2016, when polls suggested Mr. Trump would lose, nor was the miss as large as it appeared it might be on election night. Once all the votes are counted, the polls will have correctly pointed to the winner of the presidential campaign in 48 states -- all but Florida and North Carolina -- and correctly signaled that Mr. Biden would win.

But this year's problems are still alarming, both to people inside the industry and to the millions of Americans who follow presidential polls with a passion once reserved for stock prices, sports scores and lottery numbers. The misses are especially vexing because pollsters spent much of the last four years trying to fix the central problem of 2016 -- the underestimation of the Republican vote in multiple states -- and they failed.

''This was a bad year for polling,'' David Shor, a data scientist who advises Democratic campaigns, said. Douglas Rivers, the chief scientist of YouGov, a global polling firm, said, ''We're obviously going to have a black eye on this.''

The problems spanned the public polls that voters see and the private polls that campaigns use. Internal polls, conducted for both Democratic and Republican candidates, tended to make Republican candidates look weaker than they were.

In response, polling firms are asking whether they need to accelerate their shift to new research methods, such as surveying people by text message. And media organizations including The New York Times, which financially support and promote polls, are re-evaluating how they portray polls in future coverage. Some editors believe the best approach may be to give them less prominent coverage, despite intense interest from readers and despite the dominant role polls play in shaping campaign strategies.

This year's misleading polls had real-world effects, for both political parties. The Trump campaign pulled back from campaigning in Michigan and Wisconsin, reducing visits and advertising, and lost both only narrowly. In Arizona, a Republican strategist who worked on Senator Martha McSally's re-election campaign said that public polling showing her far behind ''probably cost us $4 or $5 million'' in donations. Ms. McSally lost to Mark Kelly by less than three percentage points.

Mr. Biden spent valuable time visiting Iowa and Ohio in the campaign's final days, only to lose both soundly. Democrats also poured money into races that may never have been winnable, like the South Carolina Senate race, while paying less attention to some of their House incumbents who party leaders wrongly thought were safe. The party ended up losing seats.

''District-level polling has rarely led us -- or the parties and groups investing in House races -- so astray,'' David Wasserman of the Cook Political Report, a nonpartisan publication that analyzes races, wrote last week.

The full explanation for the misses will not be knowable for months, until the election results are finalized, detailed poll data is released by survey firms, and public voter files -- showing exactly who voted -- are also released. Once this information is available, some of the immediate postelection criticism of polls may end up looking even worse than the polls themselves, academic researchers caution.

But the available facts already point to some likely conclusions:

People's decreasing willingness to respond to polls -- thanks partly to caller ID -- has reduced average polling response to only 6 percent in recent years, according to the Pew Research Center, from above 50 percent in many polls during the 1980s. At today's level, pollsters cannot easily construct a sample of respondents who resemble the population.

Some types of voters seem less willing to respond to polls than others, perhaps because they are less trusting of institutions, and these voters seem to lean Republican.

The polling industry tried to fix this problem after 2016, by ensuring that polling samples included enough white ***working-class*** voters in 2020. But that is not enough if response rates also vary within groups -- for instance, if the white or Hispanic ***working-class*** voters who respond to polls have a different political profile than those who do not respond.

This year's polls may have suffered from pandemic-related problems that will not repeat in the future, including a potential turnout decline among Democratic voters who feared contracting the coronavirus at a polling place.

A much-hyped theory that Trump supporters lie to pollsters appears to be wrong or insignificant. Polls did not underestimate his support more in liberal areas, where supporting Mr. Trump can be less socially acceptable, than in conservative areas.

In what may be the most complex pattern, polls underestimated the support of multiple Senate Republican candidates even more than Mr. Trump. This means the polls missed a disproportionate number of Americans who voted for both Mr. Biden and a Republican Senate candidate -- and that the problems do not simply involve Mr. Trump's base.

Defenders of the polling industry point out that the final national error may not be very different from the historical average -- and that polls can never be perfect, given the difficulty of capturing the mood of a large, diverse country. National polling averages showed Mr. Biden with a lead of about eight percentage points. Once all the votes are counted, he appears likely to win the popular vote by about four or five percentage points.

''The problem is,'' Patrick Murray, the director of polling at Monmouth University said, ''even if the polls end up being significantly closer to the final results when it's counted, most people remember how they felt the morning after.''

Regardless, there are reasons for concern: Polling now seems to suffer from some systemic problems, which create a misleading picture of the country's politics.

This problem has sprung up at the same time that a deeply polarized country has become more intensely interested in politics than it once was. The share of eligible voters who turned out this year may have reached the highest level since 1900. Book sales about politics have soared, as have ratings for television news and subscriptions to publications that cover politics. Many people crave polls, which can have an addictive quality, especially during an election that both parties described as an existential battle for America's future.

Politics has become a high-stakes spectator sport at the same time that the country's ability to understand it has weakened.

History as a Preview

Pollsters have been grappling with some of the same challenges since the creation of the industry in the early 20th century.

One of the first polls to receive widespread attention came from The Literary Digest, a magazine, and it was published days before the 1916 presidential election. The magazine asked readers in 3,000 communities to mail in sample ballots and then reported that President Woodrow Wilson was in a stronger position than his Republican opponent, Charles Evans Hughes.

Wilson won the election, and The Literary Digest poll became a national phenomenon, correctly pointing to the winners from 1920 through 1932. In 1936, though, the poll showed that Alf Landon, the Republican nominee, would easily defeat Franklin D. Roosevelt. Instead, Roosevelt won in a landslide, and the error changed the industry.

Although Literary Digest's sample of 2.4 million respondents was enormous, it was not representative. The magazine's circulation skewed toward affluent Americans, who were more hostile to Roosevelt and the New Deal than most voters. A less prominent pollster that year, George Gallup, had surveyed many fewer people -- about 50,000 -- but he had been careful to ensure they matched the country's demographic mix. Mr. Gallup correctly predicted a Roosevelt win.

Mr. Gallup's methods shaped the industry, which today consists of dozens of organizations, with a wide range in quality. Typically, a poll surveys hundreds or a few thousand people and then extrapolates their answers to represent the broader population. If a poll cannot reach enough people in a certain demographic group -- say, white Catholics or older Black men -- it counts those it does reach in the group more heavily.

Still, the Gallup methods were not perfect, for some of the same reasons that polls have struggled recently. Within some demographic groups, Gallup turned out to be interviewing more Republican voters than Democratic ones, and it overestimated the Republican vote share in 1936, 1940 and 1944.

In retrospect, a front-page article in The New York Times on the Sunday before the 1936 election is a telling case study. Written by Arthur Krock, the newspaper's Washington bureau chief, the article asked more than 200 experts to forecast the result. The article's headline read: ''Experts Predict Roosevelt Victory With Probably 406 Electoral Votes.'' In the House and Senate, Republicans would likely make gains, the experts said.

That forecast was roughly consistent with the Gallup poll -- and it ended up being badly off. Roosevelt won 523 electoral votes, and Democrats made big gains in Congress. But neither the Gallup error nor the misleading Times survey attracted much attention, because they had still forecast a Roosevelt victory.

''This was merely due to luck,'' Dennis DeTurck, a mathematician at the University of Pennsylvania, has pointed out. ''The spread between the candidates was large enough to cover the error.''

In 1948, the pollsters' luck ran out. They continued to overestimate the Republican vote share, reporting throughout the campaign that President Harry Truman trailed his Republican opponent, Thomas Dewey. This time, the election was close enough that the polls pointed to the wrong winner, contributing to perhaps the most famous error in modern journalism, The Chicago Tribune's banner headline ''Dewey Defeats Truman.''

That error led to a new overhaul of polling. Pollsters redoubled their efforts to build samples that were representative of the country. They were not perfect: Presidential polls in the 1950s and 60s missed by about four percentage points on average, similar to this year's miss, according to the website FiveThirtyEight.

''Polling has always been challenging,'' Nate Silver, FiveThirtyEight's editor in chief, said.

But polls still tended to point correctly to the winner of the presidential race in those years, partly because Americans were so willing to respond to polls.

People tended to answer their telephone when it rang. They also tended to trust major institutions, like the government, the media and higher education. And they did not have a constant source of entertainment in their pocket -- a smartphone -- that an extended telephone survey kept them from using, as Mr. Shor, the data scientist, said.

''Decades ago, most people would be happy to answer the door to a stranger or answer the phone to a stranger,'' Courtney Kennedy, the director of survey research at Pew, said, ''and those days are long gone.''

A Shock in 2016

When response rates began falling in the 1980s and 1990s, many people in the polling industry worried that they were facing a crisis: How could they accurately measure Americans' opinions if many refused to respond to surveys?

But no crisis materialized. If anything, surveys became somewhat more accurate, as pollsters refined their methods. Once researchers analyzed the data, they landed on an explanation for why low response rates were manageable: ''Whether somebody was going to participate in a survey was not really related the things surveys tended to measure,'' Ms. Kennedy, of Pew, said.

Some groups, like college graduates and politically engaged people, were more willing to respond to polls. But the differences did not break down along partisan lines. Similar numbers of Democratic and Republican voters were declining to answer questions, which allowed the polls to be accurate.

Then came the election of 2016.

Nearly every poll showed Hillary Clinton to be leading Mr. Trump in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The leads were big enough that her campaign paid relatively little attention to those states. But she lost all three narrowly, giving Mr. Trump a stunning victory.

Afterward, pollsters dug into their data, comparing it to precinct-by-precinct election results and to voter files, which show who voted but not how they voted. In early 2017, the leading industry group, the American Association of Public Opinion Research, or AAPOR, released its conclusions.

One factor was largely unsolvable: Late-deciding voters, accurately identified as undecided in polls, broke strongly for Mr. Trump. Many may have been swayed by James Comey, the F.B.I. director, who nine days before the election sent a letter to Congress announcing that he was again looking into Mrs. Clinton's use of a private email server as secretary of state.

A second factor was more damning for pollsters. Many had not ensured that their samples included enough people without college degrees, especially among white voters.

In the late 20th century and early 2000s, missing some of these voters had not been a big problem, because white college graduates and white non-graduates voted similarly. In 2016, these voters shifted to Mr. Trump, and the polls had failed to capture it.

The report by AAPOR offered an optimistic conclusion. The national polls had been close to correct, overestimating Mrs. Clinton's vote share by only about one percentage point. That was well within the range of historical polling errors. And there were obvious steps the industry could take to improve in the future, by including more ***working-class*** voters or weighting the ones who responded more heavily.

Perhaps most important, the polling association argued, the 2016 experience did not suggest a systematic problem in which polls favored one party. In some years, like 2012, polls slightly underestimated the Democratic share, and in other years, like 2016, they slightly underestimated the Republican share. The report said the direction of those misses was ''essentially random.''

The midterm elections of the following year, 2018, initially seemed to support this conclusion. The polls correctly suggested that Democrats would sweep to victory in the House, while Republicans would retain the Senate. State polls were off by an average of about four percentage points, which was historically normal.

The underlying details contained some reasons for concern, though. While polls in some liberal states, like California and Massachusetts, had underestimated the Democrats' vote share in 2018, polls in several swing states and conservative states, including Florida, Georgia, Michigan and Pennsylvania, again underestimated the Republican share.

For the second time since Mr. Trump's entry in politics, the polls had somehow failed to reach enough Republican voters in the swing states that decide modern presidential elections. A third election -- his re-election campaign -- was looming in 2020, and it was one that millions of Americans, both his supporters and critics, would be following passionately.

Missing Republican Voters

By the final weeks of this year's campaign, the polls seemed to be telling a clear story: Mr. Biden had led Mr. Trump by a significant margin for the entire race, and the lead had widened since the summer. Some combination of the coronavirus, Mr. Trump's reaction to police brutality and his erratic behavior at the first debate had put Mr. Biden within reach of the most lopsided presidential win since Ronald Reagan's in 1984.

In the campaign's final 10 days, a Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll showed Mr. Biden up by 10 percentage points nationwide, as did a YouGov poll. Fox News put the lead at eight points, and CNN at 12. Other polls also showed the lead to be at least eight points.

In Wisconsin, which Mr. Trump had won narrowly in 2016, a YouGov poll found Mr. Biden up by nine percentage points. A New York Times/Siena College poll showed the lead was 11 points, while Morning Consult said 13 points. A Washington Post/ABC News poll reported the lead was 17 points. In congressional races, the Cook Political Report called the Democrats clear favorites to retake the Senate and gain seats in the House.

That, of course, did not happen. Mr. Biden won Wisconsin by less than one percentage point, while Republicans fared much better in congressional races than polls had suggested.

Even Republican-aligned firms struggled. The Trafalgar Group, for example, was closer than other pollsters in some states. But Trafalgar fared worse than the competition in other states, suggesting that Mr. Trump was ahead in Arizona, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Because polling challenges evidently varied by region, reporting more Republican-friendly results everywhere did not solve the problem.

Since Election Day, some campaign operatives have claimed that their private polls were more accurate than the public ones. They have offered no proof, however, and the behavior of campaigns, including both Mr. Biden's and Mr. Trump's, suggests private polls were also inaccurate.

What went wrong? There are almost certainly multiple causes, pollsters and political scientists say. One possibility is that the pandemic may have led to an unexpected falloff in Election Day voting among Democrats, given that the party emphasized mail voting. Another is that Democratic voters, energized by the Trump presidency and bored during the pandemic, became newly excited to respond to polls.

But the most likely explanation remains an unwillingness among some Republican voters to answer surveys. This problem may have become more acute during Mr. Trump's presidency, because he frequently told his supporters not to trust the media.

''I think when all the votes are counted, what we are going to see is a far smaller polling error, potentially even minimal, in many of the states where the presidential was competitive,'' Jefrey Pollock, a Democratic pollster and president of the Global Strategy Group, said. But he acknowledged that some polls were off and added, ''As professionals, we have to question whether a segment of the electorate has opted out of talking to us.''

B.J. Martino, a partner at the Tarrance Group, which works for Republicans, said, ''If there is an underlying issue, it's not getting those folks on the phone to begin with.'' Paul Maslin, a Democratic pollster, said: ''They don't trust the news media. They don't trust elites. They don't trust scientists. They don't trust academics. They don't trust experts.''

These voters do not fit any one demographic group, which is part of why they are so difficult to reach. Instead, they appear to be a distinct group of voters within some groups. Imagine if, say, the independent, Hispanic, middle-aged, ***working-class*** women who were willing to answer a survey also happened to lean more Democratic than the same demographic profile of voters who were unwilling. And then imagine that the pattern holds only in certain states.

Even if pollsters constructed samples with the right mix of groups -- by race, gender, age, income, education, religion and party registration -- they might not capture the electorate's mood. Those demographic factors, Mr. Shor said, ''are not enough to predict partisanship anymore.''

In some ways, the problem is new. It is a reflection of modern technology, political polarization and more. In other ways, though, the problem has existed since the 1930s, when polls also undercounted segments of the ***working-class*** vote.

One difference is that those undercounted voters leaned Democratic at the time, which led polls to understate the strength of Roosevelt and Truman. The partisan effect has since flipped, with the white ***working class*** now backing Republicans, but the underlying dynamic has remained the same.

Pollsters managed to fix the problem after their ''Dewey Defeats Truman'' reckoning. The question is how they can do it again now, when survey response rates have fallen well below 10 percent.

The Media's Polling Problem

Perhaps the one pollster who has emerged from the last few years with the best reputation is J. Ann Selzer, who runs a firm in West Des Moines, Iowa, and who conducts polls with The Des Moines Register.

This year, while other polls were showing a tossup in both Iowa's Senate and presidential races, Selzer & Co. reported on the campaign's final weekend that Mr. Trump held a seven-point lead and Senator Joni Ernst, the Republican incumbent, held a four-point lead.

They both went on to win by somewhat more, which suggests that Ms. Selzer is not immune from the current problems. But in both 2016 and 2020, her final polls correctly showed that Iowa had changed from a tossup state to a largely Republican one.

One of her methods, she said in an interview, is keeping her surveys short, because there are differences between voters who are willing to talk at length to a pollster and those who are not. Most of her surveys last less than 15 minutes. In her final survey before an election, she tries to keep the interviews under eight minutes.

''There's a self-selection in people's willingness to talk to polls,'' she said. She recalled conducting a 45-minute-long survey for a private client years ago about Transcendental Meditation. ''Our finding was that about half the people we talked to had an experience with Transcendental Meditation,'' she said. ''Do you think that's true?''

The polling industry group, AAPOR, had announced months before the election that it would conduct a post-mortem analysis for 2020. This analysis -- and others, done by individual pollsters -- will probably shape the specific measure that pollsters take.

Regardless, there is unlikely to be any single step that fixes the polls' recent anti-Republican lean. Instead, pollsters are likely to try a mix of many small measures, like Ms. Selzer's short interviews.

One option is to create new screening questions about whether respondents trust other people and major institutions -- and then weight less trustful respondents more heavily in a poll's final results. Pew, in recent years, has asked questions about whether people spend time volunteering, as one measure of trust.

Another is to expand the use of text messages and other nonverbal communication, like Facebook messages, in surveying people. ''We're going to see more diversity in polling methodologies,'' said Kevin Collins, the co-founder of Survey160, which collects data through text messaging.

Some pollsters also wonder whether the problems may recede when Mr. Trump is not on the ballot. But he seems unlikely to be the only cause of errant polling, given how badly many congressional surveys missed the mark this year. In Arizona, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina and South Carolina, the final publicly released Senate polls fell short by more on average than the final presidential polls.

A separate set of changes may involve how the media present polling and whether publications spend as much money on it in the future. ''The media that sponsor polls should demand better results because their reputations are on the line,'' James A. Baker III, the former secretary of state, wrote in The Wall Street Journal this week.

Among other questions, editors are grappling with the best way to convey the inherent uncertainty in polls.

Mr. Silver, then an independent blogger, created a breakthrough in 2008 when he began writing about every available poll, focusing on the swing states and talking about the probability of one candidate beating another. Before that, most publications had focused on national polls and largely ignored those done by competing publications.

The New York Times published Mr. Silver's blog, FiveThirtyEight, from 2010 through 2013, and it is now part of ABC News. Other publications have since taken a similar approach, creating their own probabilistic models.

Mr. Silver and others have tried to emphasize the uncertainty in polls, by giving both candidates in a race a percentage that reflects their likelihood of winning. But many people seem to struggle to make sense of these probabilities in a one-time event like an election. They see that a candidate has a 71 percent chance of winning, as FiveThirtyEight gave Mrs. Clinton in 2016, and incorrectly think it is akin to a guarantee.

This year, FiveThirtyEight used a dot to portray each percentage-point possibility, stressing that either candidate could win.

The Times, which in 2016 had given Mrs. Clinton an 85 percent chance of winning, did not create a probabilistic model this year. It instead published a table that included both polling averages and a column showing the likely result if each state's polls were as wrong as they had been in 2016. That column looks better in hindsight than the polling averages.

Virtually nobody thinks polling is going away. It is too important in a democracy, Mr. Collins, of Survey160, said. It guides campaign strategies and politicians' policy choices. And there is no alternative method of election analysis with anywhere near as good a track record as polling's imperfect record.

The only short-term solution, some people believe, is for pollsters and the media to emphasize -- and for Americans to recognize -- that polling can be misleading. Even an aggregate picture, from dozens of polls, can be meaningfully off, especially in an intensely divided political era.

''There's something in U.S. culture that has developed a fetish with quantitative forecasting,'' Dahlia Scheindlin, a Tel Aviv-based pollster who has worked in 15 countries, said.

If nothing else, the polling of the last four years may have given Americans a better understanding that they should not take polls literally. ''The narrative around polling has to change,'' Cornell Belcher, a Democratic pollster, said, ''because it's misinforming and it's setting polling up to fail.''

Reporting was contributed by Thomas Kaplan, Annie Karni, Giovanni Russonello and Matina Stevis-Gridneff.Reporting was contributed by Thomas Kaplan, Annie Karni, Giovanni Russonello and Matina Stevis-Gridneff.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/12/us/politics/election-polls-trump-biden.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/12/us/politics/election-polls-trump-biden.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Models showed that Hillary Clinton had a high probability of winning the 2016 election, which led some to incorrectly assume she was guaranteed victory. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Polling made Chicago Tribune editors confident enough in Thomas Dewey's challenge to President Harry Truman that they called the race a little too soon. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BYRON ROLLINS/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A16)

Jaime Harrison, a Democratic challenger in South Carolina, polled well but lost to Senator Lindsey Graham. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMERON POLLACK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Senator Thom Tillis, Republican of North Carolina, trailed in almost every poll but won his bid for re-election. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Senator Susan Collins, Republican of Maine, did not lead in public polls toward the end but won comfortably. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

While most polls correctly predicted an electoral loss for President Trump, they also underestimated his strength. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLINE YANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

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[***Wonking Out: Very Serious Folk Economics; Paul Krugman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64RY-8531-JBG3-6554-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2022 Friday 22:01 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1203 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** Lessons from 2010’s debates for 2022.

**Body**

A few days ago, Tressie McMillan Cottom published an insightful article in The Times about the power of “[*folk economics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/07/opinion/crypto-nfts-folk-economics.html)” — which she defined as “the very human impulse to describe complex economic processes in lay terms.” Her subject was the widespread enthusiasm for cryptocurrency, but her article sent me down memory lane, recalling the role folk economics has played in past policy debates.

Just to be clear, the “folk” who hold plausible-sounding but wrongheaded views of the economy needn’t be members of the ***working class***. They can be, and often are, members of the elite: plutocrats, powerful politicians and influential pundits. In fact, elite embrace of folk economics was a large part of what went wrong in the global response to the 2008 financial crisis. And it’s starting to have a destructive effect now.

So, memories: When the 2008 financial crisis struck, economists, believe it or not, had an intellectual framework ready to go, pretty much custom-made for that situation — because it was devised in the 1930s during the Great Depression. The “[*IS-LM model*](https://krugman.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/09/is-lmentary/)” was introduced by the British economist [*John Hicks*](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1907242?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents) in 1937 as an attempt to encapsulate the insights of John Maynard Keynes, who had published “The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money” the previous year. There’s endless argument about whether Hicks was true to Keynes’s vision — which is irrelevant for my discussion now — because Hicks is what economists brought to the table in 2008.

According to IS-LM (which stands for investment-savings, liquidity-money), public policy normally has two tools it can use to fight an economic slump. Loosely speaking, the Fed can print more money to drive interest rates down, or the Treasury can engage in deficit spending to pump up demand. After a financial crisis, however, the economy gets so depressed that monetary policy hits a limit; interest rates can’t go below zero. So, large-scale deficit spending is the appropriate and necessary response.

But folk economics sees deficits as irresponsible and dangerous; if anything, many people have the instinctive feeling that governments should cut back in hard times, not spend more. And this instinct had a big, adverse effect on policy. True, the Obama administration did respond to the slump with fiscal stimulus, but it was underpowered in part because of unwarranted deficit fears. (This isn’t hindsight, and I was [*tearing my hair out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/09/opinion/09krugman.html) at the time.) And by 2010, influential opinion — the opinion of what I used to call [*Very Serious People*](https://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/02/opinion/02krugman.html) — had shifted around to the view that debt, not mass unemployment, was the most important problem facing the United States and other wealthy nations.

This wasn’t what conventional economics said, and there was no hint that investors were losing faith in U.S. debt. But deficit scaremongering came to dominate political and media discussions, and governments turned to austerity policies that slowed recovery from the Great Recession.

Did economists unanimously oppose austerity? Hey, have economists ever unanimously agreed on anything? (There’s less disagreement within the profession than legend has it, but still.) Indeed, a handful of prominent economists managed to come up with arguments that seemed to support the folk theory that deficits are always bad — an episode that I always think of when I see demands for new economic thinking. You see, during the last crisis the new ideas that actually influenced policy did indeed go against conventional economics — but in ways that supported, rather than challenged, the prejudices of the powerful.

Two papers in particular had a malign influence. One, by Alberto Alesina and Silvia Ardagna, [*asserted*](https://www.nber.org/papers/w15438) that cutting spending in a depressed economy was actually expansionary, because it would increase confidence. The other, by Carmen Reinhart and Kenneth Rogoff, [*declared*](https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/rogoff/files/growth_in_time_debt_aer.pdf) that government debt had big, negative effects on growth when it crossed a critical threshold, around 90 percent of gross domestic product.

Both papers were widely criticized by other economists as soon as they were circulated, and in fairly short order their empirical claims were pretty much demolished by other researchers. But their arguments were eagerly adopted by influential people who liked their message, and a funny thing happened to the discourse in the media: To a large extent, these speculative (and wrong) arguments for austerity were both accepted as fact and presented as the consensus of the economics profession. Back in [*2013*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/19/opinion/krugman-the-excel-depression.html), I cited a Washington Post editorial that declared “economists” believed that terrible things happen when debt exceeds 90 percent of G.D.P., when in fact this was very much not what the rest of us were saying.

And I’ve been hearing echoes of that misrepresentation in some current debates, as people advocating new economic ideas — or at least what they claim are new ideas — assert that conventional economic thinking was responsible for austerity policies after 2008. Um, no: Fiscal austerity was exactly what conventional economics told us not to do in a depressed economy, and it was only the peddlers of unorthodox economics who gave austerity policies intellectual cover.

Which brings us to our current moment. This time around, fiscal stimulus wasn’t underpowered, and there’s definitely a case to be made that excessive deficit spending in 2021 was a factor in rising inflation (although we can argue about how big a factor, since inflation is also up a lot in countries that didn’t engage in much stimulus). But now what?

As I said, the IS-LM model tells us that policymakers have two tools for managing the overall level of demand: fiscal and monetary policy. When you’re trying to boost a deeply depressed economy, monetary policy becomes unavailable, because you can’t push interest rates below zero. But if you’re trying to cool off an overheated economy, monetary policy is available: Interest rates can’t go down, but they can go up.

And because changing monetary policy is easy, conventional analysis says that monetary tightening is the way to go. Indeed, the Fed has made it clear that it intends to do just that. Getting the pace and size of rate hikes right will be tricky, but conceptually it isn’t hard.

But the folk economics position — where by “folk,” I mainly mean Senator Joe Manchin — is that excessive government spending caused inflation, so now we have to call off any new spending, even if it’s more or less paid for with new revenue.

Well, that’s not what conventional economics says; on the contrary, the standard model says that the Fed can handle this while we deal with other priorities.

And while conventional economics isn’t always right, any people attacking it now should ask themselves whether they’re doing so in a constructive way. In particular, I’m seeing a lot of denigration of monetary policy from people who don’t seem to realize that they are, de facto, giving aid and comfort to politicians who don’t want to invest in America’s children and the fight against climate change.

Quick Hits

The origins of [*expansionary austerity*](https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/the-case-against-expansionary-austerity-by-jeffrey-frankel).

How the media [*abandoned objectivity*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2013/02/20/the-problem-with-alan-simpson/) over deficits.

Monetary policy [*matters*](https://www.nber.org/system/files/chapters/c10964/c10964.pdf).

How high can [*debt*](https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/PSDOTUKA) go?

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY LM Otero/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 11, 2022

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[***The Shrinking of the Middle-Class Neighborhood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65W1-FDD1-JBG3-644J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 7, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1555 words

**Byline:** By Sophie Kasakove and Robert Gebeloff

**Body**

NASHVILLE -- When Ashley Broadnax thinks of the East Nashville neighborhood she grew up in during the '90s, the images that rush in have a modest, middle-class tinge.

After school, she and other neighborhood children bought snacks at the corner store and threw balls on the street as their parents returned home, some in uniform from blue-collar work, others from jobs as teachers or office workers. Neighbors chatted on porches and lawns of unassuming single-story homes. There were some poor families and a few wealthy ones, but more than a third of her neighbors made between $40,000 and $75,000 in today's dollars -- enough to live comfortably.

But by 2020, the income distribution had tilted so that half the families made $100,000 or more, census data shows. All across the neighborhood, the modest houses of Ms. Broadnax's youth have been replaced by high-end homes known informally as ''tall skinnies'' that tower over the older homes that remain.

So when it was Ms. Broadnax's turn to pay the rent, using her own middle-income salary as an educator, the cost was out of reach.

Like many other Americans, Nashville residents are increasingly being buffeted by economic tides that push them into neighborhoods that are either much richer or much poorer than the regional norm, a New York Times analysis has found. A smaller share of families are living in middle-class neighborhoods, places where incomes are typically within 25 percent of the regional median.

In Nashville, the share of families living in middle-class neighborhoods dropped by 15 percentage points between 1990 and 2020. But the portion of families in wealthy ones jumped by 11 points, and the segment living in poor neighborhoods grew by four points.

In some ways, the pattern reflects how wealthy Americans are choosing to live near other wealthy people, and how poorer Americans are struggling to get by.

But the pattern also indicates a broader trend of income inequality in the economy, as the population of families making more than $100,000 has grown much faster than other groups, even after adjusting for inflation, and the number of families earning less than $40,000 has increased at twice the rate of families in the middle.

Ms. Broadnax has become part of a great chase nationally for affordable housing. High rents in the city initially sent her to the more affordable Antioch neighborhood in 2011. But home prices nearly doubled there since 2018, so buying a home meant moving farther out to a suburban community called La Vergne.

''The same people that's working in their city can't afford to live in their city,'' Ms. Broadnax said about Nashville.

Nationally, only half of American families living in metropolitan areas can say that their neighborhood income level is within 25 percent of the regional median. A generation ago, 62 percent of families lived in these middle-income neighborhoods.

''People are getting pushed out, and that is breaking up some historically sort of ***working-class*** neighborhoods,'' said Marybeth Shinn, a Vanderbilt University professor who studies homelessness and social exclusion. ''You gradually convert a neighborhood from a pretty modest kind of neighborhood that a lot of people could live in to one where only people that have a little more means are able to live in.''

That evolution has mixed consequences for people seeing their neighborhoods change.

When Jim Polk bought his home in East Nashville in 1979, the community left some amenities to be desired. The park near his house was run-down, and the neighborhood had few sidewalks or streetlights.

As the firefighters, nurses and local government employees in the neighborhood were replaced by tech workers, engineers and lawyers, Mr. Polk mourned the loss of their old, familiar neighborhood where his four daughters had learned to accept people of diverse backgrounds.

''So many families have moved out over time,'' said Mr. Polk, who worked for decades as a community education coordinator for the city public schools. ''It didn't remind them of the place they used to live, and it was so expensive to stay.''

But Mr. Polk and his wife were able to keep up with the property tax increases on their city pensions, and they could not ignore the improvements to the neighborhood: New sidewalks and streetlights were installed, and the long-neglected park was cleaned up. When his church was destroyed by a tornado in 2020, his new neighbors had the resources to help the congregation buy a new building.

Even more significant has been the rapid price appreciation of homes in the neighborhood. Mr. Polk bought his home for $36,000. A home just across the street sold for more than $1.5 million in February, according to Zillow.

''There have been improvements in services available to the people living in the neighborhood,'' he said. ''But who gets to participate?''

Experts say the changes in housing patterns represent a form of economic segregation, as Americans are less likely to live in neighborhoods with people from other socioeconomic classes. Economic segregation exacerbates the problems often associated with income inequality. There are what researchers call ''neighborhood effects,'' with studies finding that poor children have better odds of climbing the socioeconomic ladder if they grow up outside of concentrated poverty.

And wealthy neighborhoods tend to command a disproportionate share of resources, such as better schools, more parks and greater access to health professionals.

This economic segregation not only ''concentrates low-income families in high poverty neighborhoods, but it concentrates affluent families in affluent neighborhoods, where they can engage in a kind of opportunity hoarding,'' said Sean F. Reardon, a sociologist at Stanford University. He and another sociologist, Kendra Bischoff of Cornell University, have written several papers on economic segregation.

Consider Durham, N.C.

Since 1990, it has seen a surge of wealth and investment pouring into the city's downtown. At the same time, the percentage of families living in lower-income neighborhoods has doubled.

Turquoise LeJeune Parker, an elementary school technology instructor, said the split reality of rich and poor neighborhoods did her low-income students no good. Describing what she saw as the prevailing mind-set of people flocking to prosperous parts of town, she said, ''We won't push for resources for our schools, we won't push for any of that because 'I've got what I need on my side of the city, so I'm good.'''

To some degree, economic segregation has gone hand in hand with the hollowing out of the middle class in general.

At the same time, local governments across the country have done little to maintain or expand affordable housing, instead investing in attracting highly paid workers, which drives up prices and displaces lower-income residents.

And exclusionary zoning laws often prevent denser, lower-cost housing from being built in high-end enclaves -- Tennessee has even barred cities from putting zoning laws into place that would protect affordability. Property taxes on many homes have spiked, pushing longtime residents to sell to investors.

But whatever the cause, similar trends can be seen across the country.

The Boston metropolitan area saw middle-class neighborhoods shift in both directions. In the 1990s and 2000s, many fell behind economically. In the past decade, because of widespread gentrification in the city, many modest neighborhoods have been transformed into much wealthier ones.

A generation ago, Seattle's tech industry was starting to boom, but the area also was a major manufacturing hub, and seven out of 10 families lived in middle-class neighborhoods. Today, only five out of 10 do. Nearly a third live in wealthy enclaves.

In the Midwest, the share of families living in middle-class neighborhoods has fallen by 13 percentage points in Columbus, Ohio, since 1990, by 12 in Chicago, and by nine in Indianapolis.

And in Orlando, nearly 70 percent of area residents lived in ''average'' neighborhoods back in 1990, according to census data. In 2020, the same was true for just 46 percent.

That leaves a lot of people feeling like they are on the outside looking in.

Michael Street is a union electrician who moved from Nashville to Goodlettsville about 25 minutes away. He said he spent his days driving around Nashville, working on houses that have all been rehabbed, rebuilt or rendered unrecognizable in neighborhoods he can no longer afford.

''Either you're poor, or you're rich,'' he said. ''Middle class is kind of phasing out. Either you have a lot of money, or you're just barely getting by.''

Methodology

To measure the growing level of economic segregation in the United States, The New York Times used census data to compare the median family income of every census tract with the median for the surrounding metropolitan area for the years 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2020. The analysis counted how many families lived in middle-class tracts, where the median family income was within 25 percent of the regional median, and how many lived in tracts where the income level was 25 percent or more above or below the regional median. All figures were inflation-adjusted to 2020 values.

Source data and maps were from socialexplorer.com and nhgis.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/06/us/economic-segregation-income.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/06/us/economic-segregation-income.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''So many families have moved out over time'' from East Nashville, said Jim Polk, who bought his home there in 1979 for $36,000

a home across the street sold for more than $1.5 million in February, according to Zillow. Right, construction near his home. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WHITTEN SABBATINI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12)

New housing and upgrades to existing residences are making the Tennessee neighborhood East Nashville unaffordable for many longtime residents. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEPTEMBER DAWN BOTTOMS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12-A13)

Ashley Broadnax at her family's new home in La Vergne, Tenn., right, a suburb 20 miles southeast of Nashville that has become popular as a more affordable alternative. Like many who grew up in East Nashville, Ms. Broadnax can no longer afford its housing. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WHITTEN SABBATINI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** July 7, 2022

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[***British Prime Minister Survives One Political Crisis, but Another Looms***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MV-8R11-DXY4-X0B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 8, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1501 words

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

**Body**

After narrowly winning a no-confidence vote on Monday, Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces a long list of threats to his leadership.

LONDON -- Prime Minister Boris Johnson tried to lift himself off the mat on Tuesday after a stinging rebuke by his Conservative Party. But with a fresh electoral challenge looming and Britain's economy in a downward spiral, there are few easy ways for Mr. Johnson to reverse his fading fortunes.

Mr. Johnson's too-close-for-comfort victory in a no-confidence vote on Monday evening left him badly damaged, with plenty of openings for would-be coup plotters. A pair of Parliamentary elections on June 23 could trigger another move against him if, as expected, the Conservatives lose at least one of the seats.

Even if Mr. Johnson clings to power, he faces a hard slog, with surging food and fuel prices, and predictions that Britain could slip into a recession. With more than 40 percent of his lawmakers having turned on him, pushing contentious legislation through the Parliament will be no easy feat.

Ever the happy warrior, an upbeat Mr. Johnson told cabinet ministers on Tuesday that it was time to put internal divisions over him aside and ''get on with talking about the issues I think the people in this country want to talk about.''

It was a characteristically brash response from a politician whose entire career has been a thumb in eye of the oddsmakers. And he was in a comparatively safe space, speaking to a cabinet unlikely to rebel against him. But the mutiny in Mr. Johnson's party, less than three years after he had led it to a landslide election victory, suggested he was not completely immune to the laws of political gravity.

A parade of scandals, most egregiously the lockdown-breaking parties at Downing Street during the pandemic, has left many Conservatives exhausted, disenchanted and fearful of latching their futures to an increasingly unpopular figure.

Unlike former President Donald J. Trump, to whom he is often compared, Mr. Johnson no longer has a mystical hold over his party. Many Tories openly label their leader a liability. Some call into question the populist tactics that made him successful in past elections.

They worry, for example, that the Conservatives no longer have a message that appeals to both their traditional voters in the prosperous south of England and the ***working-class***, former Labour Party voters in the industrial north -- known colloquially as the ''red wall'' -- whom Mr. Johnson famously converted to Tory ranks in the 2019 general election with his promise to ''get Brexit done.''

''There is a big schism between being the party of voters in the 'red wall,' who want a big state, and the party of affluent households in the south, who want a smaller state,'' said Tony Travers, a professor of politics at the London School of Economics. ''There are no policies that can square this circle.''

So far, Mr. Johnson's government has adopted a mix of higher taxes and state aid for families suffering from the cost-of-living squeeze, through a windfall tax on energy companies, an idea stolen from the opposition Labour Party. These policies have alarmed low-tax, pro-business Tories but have yet to improve the party's poll ratings, which trail those of Labour.

The scale of the electoral task faced by Mr. Johnson should become clearer in two weeks when voters go to the polls in two districts to replace Conservative lawmakers who resigned from Parliament in disgrace.

In Wakefield, a ''red wall'' district in the north of England that the Conservatives won in 2019, the omens are poor. The party's former lawmaker, Imran Ahmad Khan, quit after being convicted of sexually assaulting a teenager. A Labour victory would be a sign both that it is starting to win back its heartlands under its leader, Keir Starmer, and that Mr. Johnson's talismanic appeal has waned.

On the same day, the Conservatives will be defending a normally rock-solid seat in one of their traditional strongholds, Tiverton and Honiton, in the southwest of England, where the lawmaker, Neil Parish, quit after admitting to having watched pornography on his cellphone while in Parliament.

Here, the smaller, centrist Liberal Democratic Party is the prime challenger. If it performs well, that will send shock waves through the Conservative ranks, signaling to many of its lawmakers in the south that even in areas once considered safe, seats could be lost when the next general election comes.

Mr. Johnson also faces acute difficulties in Scotland, where he has never been popular and has now been disowned by four of the six Scottish Conservative members of the Westminster Parliament -- including their leader, Douglas Ross -- who voted against the prime minister on Monday.

One of the arguments that sustain Mr. Johnson is that no rival Conservative leader can appeal to such a cross-section of voters. But how Tories would campaign for the re-election of a prime minister they have declared unfit for office is an open question. And further evidence that he has become a vote loser would be damaging.

Among the post-mortems on Monday, the most unforgiving may have come from William Hague, a former Conservative leader who has been relatively restrained in his criticism of Mr. Johnson. He bluntly told the prime minister to resign.

''Votes have been cast that show a greater level of rejection than any Tory leader has ever endured and survived,'' Mr. Hague wrote in The Times of London. ''Deep inside, he should recognize that, and turn his mind to getting out in a way that spares party and country such agonies and uncertainties.''

Nothing in Mr. Johnson's manner suggests that he plans to do that. Later this week, he is expected to make a series of policy announcements that are calculated to turn the page on the recent upheaval and attempt to reset his government. There is, inevitably, talk of another cabinet reshuffle.

The government is also likely to roll out legislation to overhaul the post-Brexit trade rules that govern Northern Ireland, hoping to cut back border checks on goods shipped from mainland Britain to the North.

That would please hard-core Brexiteers in the party, some of whom voted against Mr. Johnson on Monday. But other Tories argue that it would be a breach of international law. And it would antagonize the European Union at a time when Britain can ill afford further turmoil.

Mr. Johnson faces more turmoil of his own: A Parliamentary committee is looking into whether he misled lawmakers about the scandal over Downing Street parties, while the government's handling of the pandemic will be the subject of a public inquiry.

Given the odds that Mr. Johnson's political position will deteriorate even further in coming months, some rebels in his Conservative Party might wonder whether they acted prematurely in forcing a vote now rather than waiting.

That reflects the inchoate nature of this rebellion, according to analysts. It was less a carefully orchestrated coup attempt than an organic movement of fed-up Tory lawmakers. That same lack of coordination could handicap future efforts to dislodge Mr. Johnson, whose position, some argue, is firmer than it looks.

A cabinet rebellion of the type that ousted Margaret Thatcher in 1990 after she survived a leadership challenge seems unlikely, given that his team is stocked with pro-Brexit loyalists. Only Rishi Sunak, the chancellor of the Exchequer, might be tempted to quit if Mr. Johnson demotes him in a reshuffle.

''Many of these people would never get a job in a successor government,'' Mr. Travers said, ''so they'll cling to Boris Johnson like a lifeboat.''

The easiest way to remove Mr. Johnson would be for the 1922 Committee, which represents Conservative backbenchers, to amend a rule that prevents another no-confidence vote for 12 months. But were senior party figures to try this, Mr. Johnson might threaten to call a snap general election, preferring his chances of winning a contest among voters to one among his querulous lawmakers.

Some analysts said there was a path for Mr. Johnson, albeit a narrow one, which would necessitate cutting taxes, overhauling the public sector and helping ''red wall'' voters cope with the cost-of-living crisis. In such a scenario, the party would have to tolerate the loss of some of its traditional seats in the south.

It would also require Mr. Johnson to draw once more on his penchant for confounding the skeptics, not by jumping opportunistically from one issue to another but by putting his head down and soldiering on. The goal would be to survive the fallout from the looming district elections and make it to his party conference in the fall, and then beyond.

''If Johnson can get to the end of the year, he can get to the general election,'' said Matthew Goodwin, a professor of politics at the University of Kent. ''It's not going to be easy at all, but you will either see a very ugly forced exit, or we all underestimated him -- again -- and he carries on.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/world/europe/boris-johnson-no-confidence.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/world/europe/boris-johnson-no-confidence.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Prime Minister Boris Johnson meeting with his cabinet Tuesday in London. He narrowly survived a no-confidence vote on Monday. (POOL PHOTO BY LEON NEAL)

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2022

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[***‘A Black Eye’: Why Political Polling Missed the Mark. Again.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:618R-4NW1-JBG3-61M1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2020 Thursday 19:27 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 4621 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** As politics becomes a high-stakes spectator sport, pollsters are reviewing their latest failures. But is part of the problem the public’s overly high expectations of precision?

**Body**

Senator Susan Collins [*did not lead*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) in a single publicly released poll during the final four months of her re-election campaign in Maine. But Ms. Collins, a Republican, won the election comfortably.

Senator Thom Tillis, a North Carolina Republican, trailed [*in almost every poll*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) conducted in his race. He won, too.

And most polls underestimated President Trump’s strength, in Iowa, Florida, Michigan, Texas, Wisconsin and elsewhere. Instead of winning a landslide, as the polls suggested, Joseph R. Biden Jr. beat Mr. Trump by less than two percentage points in the states that decided the election.

For the second straight presidential election, the polling industry missed the mark. The miss was not as blatant as in 2016, when polls suggested Mr. Trump would lose, nor was the miss as large as it appeared it might be on election night. Once all the votes are counted, [*the polls*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) will have correctly pointed to the winner of the presidential campaign in [*48 states*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) — all but Florida and North Carolina — and correctly signaled that Mr. Biden would win.

But this year’s problems are still alarming, both to people inside the industry and to the millions of Americans who follow presidential polls with a passion once reserved for stock prices, sports scores and lottery numbers. The misses are especially vexing because pollsters spent much of the last four years trying to fix the central problem of 2016 — the underestimation of the Republican vote in multiple states — and they failed.

“This was a bad year for polling,” David Shor, a data scientist who advises Democratic campaigns, said. Douglas Rivers, the chief scientist of YouGov, a global polling firm, said, “We’re obviously going to have a black eye on this.”

The problems spanned the public polls that voters see and the private polls that campaigns use. Internal polls, conducted for both Democratic and Republican candidates, tended to make Republican candidates look weaker than they were.

In response, polling firms are asking whether they need to accelerate their shift to new research methods, such as surveying people by text message. And media organizations including The New York Times, which financially support and promote polls, are re-evaluating how they portray polls in future coverage. Some editors believe the best approach may be to give them less prominent coverage, despite intense interest from readers and despite the dominant role polls play in shaping campaign strategies.

This year’s misleading polls had real-world effects, for both political parties. The Trump campaign [*pulled back*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) from campaigning in Michigan and Wisconsin, reducing visits and advertising, and lost both only narrowly. In Arizona, a Republican strategist who worked on Senator Martha McSally’s re-election campaign said that public polling showing her far behind “probably cost us $4 or $5 million” in donations. Ms. McSally lost to Mark Kelly by less than three percentage points.

Mr. Biden spent valuable time visiting Iowa and Ohio in the campaign’s final days, only to lose both soundly. Democrats also [*poured money*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) into races that may never have been winnable, like the South Carolina Senate race, while paying less attention to some of their House incumbents who party leaders [*wrongly thought were safe*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/). The party ended up losing seats.

“District-level polling has rarely led us — or the parties and groups investing in House races — so astray,” David Wasserman of the Cook Political Report, a nonpartisan publication that analyzes races, [*wrote last week*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/).

The full explanation for the misses will not be knowable for months, until the election results are finalized, detailed poll data is released by survey firms, and public voter files — showing exactly who voted — are also released. Once this information is available, some of the immediate postelection criticism of polls may end up looking even worse than the polls themselves, academic researchers caution.

But the available facts already point to some likely conclusions:

* People’s decreasing willingness to respond to polls — thanks partly to caller ID — has reduced average polling response to only 6 percent in recent years, [*according to the Pew Research Center*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/), from above 50 percent in many polls during the 1980s. At today’s level, pollsters cannot easily construct a sample of respondents who resemble the population.

1. Some types of voters seem less willing to respond to polls than others, perhaps because they are less trusting of institutions, and these voters seem to lean Republican.
2. The polling industry tried to fix this problem after 2016, by ensuring that polling samples included enough white ***working-class*** voters in 2020. But that is not enough if response rates also vary within groups — for instance, if the white or Hispanic ***working-class*** voters who respond to polls have a different political profile than those who do not respond.
3. This year’s polls may have suffered from pandemic-related problems that will not repeat in the future, including a potential turnout decline among Democratic voters who feared contracting the coronavirus at a polling place.
4. A [*much-hyped theory*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) that Trump supporters lie to pollsters appears to be [*wrong or insignificant*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/). Polls did not underestimate his support more in liberal areas, where supporting Mr. Trump can be less socially acceptable, than in conservative areas.
5. In what may be the most complex pattern, polls underestimated the support of multiple Senate Republican candidates even more than Mr. Trump. This means the polls missed a disproportionate number of Americans who voted for both Mr. Biden and a Republican Senate candidate — and that the problems do not simply involve Mr. Trump’s base.

Defenders of the polling industry point out that the final national error may not be very different from the historical average — and that polls can never be perfect, given the difficulty of capturing the mood of a large, diverse country. National polling averages showed Mr. Biden with a lead of [*about eight percentage points*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/). Once all the votes are counted, he appears likely to win the popular vote by [*about four or five percentage points*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/).

“The problem is,” Patrick Murray, the director of polling at Monmouth University said, “even if the polls end up being significantly closer to the final results when it’s counted, most people remember how they felt the morning after.”

Regardless, there are reasons for concern: Polling now seems to suffer from some systemic problems, which create a misleading picture of the country’s politics.

This problem has sprung up at the same time that a deeply polarized country has become more intensely interested in politics than it once was. The share of eligible voters who turned out this year may have reached the highest level [*since 1900*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/). Book sales about politics have soared, as have ratings for television news and subscriptions to publications that cover politics. Many people crave polls, which can have an addictive quality, especially during an election that both parties described as an existential battle for America’s future.

Politics has become a high-stakes spectator sport at the same time that the country’s ability to understand it has weakened.

History as a Preview

Pollsters have been grappling with some of the same challenges since the creation of the industry in the early 20th century.

One of the first polls to receive widespread attention came from The Literary Digest, a magazine, and it was published days before the 1916 presidential election. The magazine asked readers in 3,000 communities [*to mail in sample ballots*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) and then reported that President Woodrow Wilson was in a stronger position than his Republican opponent, Charles Evans Hughes.

Wilson won the election, and The Literary Digest poll became a national phenomenon, correctly pointing to the winners from 1920 through 1932. In 1936, though, the poll showed that Alf Landon, the Republican nominee, [*would easily defeat Franklin D. Roosevelt*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/). Instead, Roosevelt won in a landslide, and the error changed the industry.

Although Literary Digest’s sample of 2.4 million respondents was enormous, it was not representative. The magazine’s circulation skewed toward affluent Americans, who were more hostile to Roosevelt and the New Deal than most voters. A less prominent pollster that year, George Gallup, had surveyed many fewer people — about 50,000 — but he had been careful to ensure they matched the country’s demographic mix. Mr. Gallup [*correctly predicted*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) a Roosevelt win.

Mr. Gallup’s methods shaped the industry, which today consists of dozens of organizations, with a wide range in quality. Typically, a poll surveys hundreds or a few thousand people and then extrapolates their answers to represent the broader population. If a poll cannot reach enough people in a certain demographic group — say, white Catholics or older Black men — it counts those it does reach in the group more heavily.

Still, the Gallup methods were not perfect, for some of the same reasons that polls have struggled recently. Within some demographic groups, Gallup turned out to be interviewing more Republican voters than Democratic ones, and it overestimated the Republican vote share in 1936, 1940 and 1944.

In retrospect, [*a front-page article in The New York Times*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) on the Sunday before the 1936 election is a telling case study. Written by Arthur Krock, the newspaper’s Washington bureau chief, the article asked more than 200 experts to forecast the result. The article’s headline read: “Experts Predict Roosevelt Victory With Probably 406 Electoral Votes.” In the House and Senate, Republicans would likely make gains, the experts said.

That forecast was roughly consistent with the Gallup poll — and it ended up being badly off. Roosevelt won 523 electoral votes, and Democrats made big gains in Congress. But neither the Gallup error nor the misleading Times survey attracted much attention, because they had still forecast a Roosevelt victory.

“This was merely due to luck,” Dennis DeTurck, a mathematician at the University of Pennsylvania, [*has pointed out*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/). “The spread between the candidates was large enough to cover the error.”

In 1948, the pollsters’ luck ran out. They continued to overestimate the Republican vote share, reporting throughout the campaign that President Harry Truman trailed his Republican opponent, Thomas Dewey. This time, the election was close enough that the polls pointed to the wrong winner, contributing to perhaps the most famous error in modern journalism, The Chicago Tribune’s banner headline “Dewey Defeats Truman.”

That error led to a new overhaul of polling. Pollsters redoubled their efforts to build samples that were representative of the country. They were not perfect: Presidential polls in the 1950s and 60s missed by about four percentage points on average, similar to this year’s miss, [*according to the website FiveThirtyEight*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/).

“Polling has always been challenging,” Nate Silver, FiveThirtyEight’s editor in chief, said.

But polls still tended to point correctly to the winner of the presidential race in those years, partly because Americans were so willing to respond to polls.

People tended to answer their telephone when it rang. They also tended to trust major institutions, like the government, the media and higher education. And they did not have a constant source of entertainment in their pocket — a smartphone — that an extended telephone survey kept them from using, as Mr. Shor, the data scientist, said.

“Decades ago, most people would be happy to answer the door to a stranger or answer the phone to a stranger,” Courtney Kennedy, the director of survey research at Pew, said, “and those days are long gone.”

A Shock in 2016

When response rates began falling in the 1980s and 1990s, many people in the polling industry worried that they were facing a crisis: How could they accurately measure Americans’ opinions if many refused to respond to surveys?

But no crisis materialized. If anything, surveys became somewhat more accurate, as pollsters refined their methods. Once researchers analyzed the data, they landed on an explanation for why low response rates were manageable: “Whether somebody was going to participate in a survey was not really related the things surveys tended to measure,” Ms. Kennedy, of Pew, said.

Some groups, like college graduates and politically engaged people, were more willing to respond to polls. But the differences did not break down along partisan lines. Similar numbers of Democratic and Republican voters were declining to answer questions, which allowed the polls to be accurate.

Then came the election of 2016.

Nearly every poll showed Hillary Clinton to be [*leading*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) Mr. Trump in Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The leads were big enough that her campaign paid relatively little attention to those states. But she lost all three narrowly, giving Mr. Trump a stunning victory.

Afterward, pollsters dug into their data, comparing it to precinct-by-precinct election results and to voter files, which show who voted but not how they voted. In early 2017, the leading industry group, the American Association of Public Opinion Research, or AAPOR, released its conclusions.

One factor was largely unsolvable: Late-deciding voters, accurately identified as undecided in polls, broke strongly for Mr. Trump. Many [*may have been swayed*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) by James Comey, the F.B.I. director, who nine days before the election sent a letter to Congress announcing that he was again looking into Mrs. Clinton’s use of a private email server as secretary of state.

A second factor was more damning for pollsters. Many had not ensured that their samples included [*enough people without college degrees*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/), especially among white voters.

In the late 20th century and early 2000s, missing some of these voters had not been a big problem, because white college graduates and white non-graduates voted similarly. In 2016, these voters shifted to Mr. Trump, and the polls had failed to capture it.

[*The report by AAPOR*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) offered an optimistic conclusion. The national polls had been close to correct, overestimating Mrs. Clinton’s vote share by only about one percentage point. That was well within the range of historical polling errors. And there were obvious steps the industry could take to improve in the future, by including more ***working-class*** voters or weighting the ones who responded more heavily.

Perhaps most important, the polling association argued, the 2016 experience did not suggest a systematic problem in which polls favored one party. In some years, like 2012, polls slightly underestimated the Democratic share, and in other years, like 2016, they slightly underestimated the Republican share. The report said the direction of those misses was “essentially random.”

The midterm elections of the following year, 2018, initially seemed to support this conclusion. The polls correctly suggested that Democrats would sweep to victory in the House, while Republicans would retain the Senate. State polls were off by an average of about four percentage points, which was historically normal.

The underlying details contained some reasons for concern, though. While polls in some liberal states, like California and Massachusetts, had underestimated the Democrats’ vote share in 2018, polls in several swing states and conservative states, including Florida, Georgia, Michigan and Pennsylvania, [*again underestimated*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) the Republican share.

For the second time since Mr. Trump’s entry in politics, the polls had somehow failed to [*reach enough Republican voters*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) in the swing states that decide modern presidential elections. A third election — his re-election campaign — was looming in 2020, and it was one that millions of Americans, both his supporters and critics, would be following passionately.

Missing Republican Voters

By the final weeks of this year’s campaign, the polls seemed to be telling a clear story: Mr. Biden had led Mr. Trump by a significant margin for the entire race, and the lead had widened since the summer. Some combination of the coronavirus, Mr. Trump’s reaction to police brutality and his erratic behavior at the first debate had put Mr. Biden within reach of the most lopsided presidential win since Ronald Reagan’s in 1984.

In the campaign’s final 10 days, [*a Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) showed Mr. Biden up by 10 percentage points nationwide, as did [*a YouGov poll*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/). [*Fox News*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) put the lead at eight points, and [*CNN*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) at 12. Other polls also showed the lead to be at least eight points.

In Wisconsin, which Mr. Trump had won narrowly in 2016, [*a YouGov poll*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) found Mr. Biden up by nine percentage points. A [*New York Times/Siena College poll*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) showed the lead was 11 points, while [*Morning Consult*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) said 13 points. A [*Washington Post/ABC News poll*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) reported the lead was 17 points. In congressional races, the Cook Political Report [*called*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) the Democrats clear favorites to retake the Senate and gain seats in the House.

That, of course, did not happen. Mr. Biden won Wisconsin by less than one percentage point, while Republicans fared much better in congressional races than polls had suggested.

Even Republican-aligned firms struggled. [*The Trafalgar Group*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/), for example, was closer than other pollsters in some states. But Trafalgar fared worse than the competition in other states, suggesting that Mr. Trump was ahead in Arizona, Michigan and Pennsylvania. Because polling challenges evidently varied by region, reporting more Republican-friendly results everywhere did not solve the problem.

Since Election Day, some campaign operatives have claimed that their private polls were more accurate than the public ones. They have offered no proof, however, and the behavior of campaigns, including both Mr. Biden’s and Mr. Trump’s, suggests private polls were also inaccurate.

What went wrong? There are almost certainly multiple causes, pollsters and political scientists say. One possibility is that the pandemic may have led to an unexpected falloff in Election Day voting among Democrats, given that the party emphasized mail voting. Another is that Democratic voters, energized by the Trump presidency and bored during the pandemic, became [*newly excited to respond to polls*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/).

But the most likely explanation remains [*an unwillingness among some Republican voters*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) to answer surveys. This problem may have become [*more acute*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) during Mr. Trump’s presidency, because he frequently told his supporters not to trust the media.

“I think when all the votes are counted, what we are going to see is a far smaller polling error, potentially even minimal, in many of the states where the presidential was competitive,” Jefrey Pollock, a Democratic pollster and president of the Global Strategy Group, said. But he acknowledged that some polls were off and added, “As professionals, we have to question whether a segment of the electorate has opted out of talking to us.”

B.J. Martino, a partner at the Tarrance Group, which works for Republicans, said, “If there is an underlying issue, it’s not getting those folks on the phone to begin with.” Paul Maslin, a Democratic pollster, said: “They don’t trust the news media. They don’t trust elites. They don’t trust scientists. They don’t trust academics. They don’t trust experts.”

These voters do not fit any one demographic group, which is part of why they are so difficult to reach. Instead, they appear to be a distinct group of voters within some groups. Imagine if, say, the independent, Hispanic, middle-aged, ***working-class*** women who were willing to answer a survey also happened to lean more Democratic than the same demographic profile of voters who were unwilling. And then imagine that the pattern holds only in certain states.

Even if pollsters constructed samples with the right mix of groups — by race, gender, age, income, education, religion and party registration — they might not capture the electorate’s mood. Those demographic factors, Mr. Shor said, “are not enough to predict partisanship anymore.”

In some ways, the problem is new. It is a reflection of modern technology, political polarization and more. In other ways, though, the problem has existed since the 1930s, when polls also undercounted segments of the ***working-class*** vote.

One difference is that those undercounted voters leaned Democratic at the time, which led polls to understate the strength of Roosevelt and Truman. The partisan effect has since flipped, with the white ***working class*** now backing Republicans, but the underlying dynamic has remained the same.

Pollsters managed to fix the problem after their “Dewey Defeats Truman” reckoning. The question is how they can do it again now, when survey response rates have fallen well below 10 percent.

The Media’s Polling Problem

Perhaps the one pollster who has emerged from the last few years with the best reputation is J. Ann Selzer, who runs a firm in West Des Moines, Iowa, and who conducts polls with The Des Moines Register.

This year, while other polls were showing a tossup in both Iowa’s Senate and presidential races, Selzer &amp; Co. [*reported*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) on the campaign’s final weekend that Mr. Trump held a seven-point lead and Senator Joni Ernst, the Republican incumbent, held a four-point lead.

They both went on to win by somewhat more, which suggests that Ms. Selzer is not immune from the current problems. But in both 2016 and 2020, her final polls correctly showed that Iowa had changed from a tossup state to a largely Republican one.

One of her methods, she said in an interview, is keeping her surveys short, because there are differences between voters who are willing to talk at length to a pollster and those who are not. Most of her surveys last less than 15 minutes. In her final survey before an election, she tries to keep the interviews under eight minutes.

“There’s a self-selection in people’s willingness to talk to polls,” she said. She recalled conducting a 45-minute-long survey for a private client years ago about Transcendental Meditation. “Our finding was that about half the people we talked to had an experience with Transcendental Meditation,” she said. “Do you think that’s true?”

The polling industry group, AAPOR, had announced months before the election that it would conduct [*a post-mortem analysis*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) for 2020. This analysis — and others, done by individual pollsters — will probably shape the specific measure that pollsters take.

Regardless, there is unlikely to be any single step that fixes the polls’ recent anti-Republican lean. Instead, pollsters are likely to try a mix of many small measures, like Ms. Selzer’s short interviews.

One option is to create new screening questions about whether respondents trust other people and major institutions — and then weight less trustful respondents more heavily in a poll’s final results. Pew, in recent years, has asked questions about whether people spend time volunteering, as one measure of trust.

Another is to expand the use of text messages and other nonverbal communication, like Facebook messages, in surveying people. “We’re going to see more diversity in polling methodologies,” said Kevin Collins, the co-founder of Survey160, which collects data through text messaging.

Some pollsters also wonder whether the problems may recede when Mr. Trump is not on the ballot. But he seems unlikely to be the only cause of errant polling, given how badly many congressional surveys missed the mark this year. In Arizona, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, North Carolina and South Carolina, the final publicly released Senate polls fell short by more on average than the final presidential polls.

A separate set of changes may involve how the media present polling and whether publications spend as much money on it in the future. “The media that sponsor polls should demand better results because their reputations are on the line,” James A. Baker III, the former secretary of state, [*wrote in The Wall Street Journal this week*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/).

Among other questions, editors are grappling with the best way to convey the inherent uncertainty in polls.

Mr. Silver, then an independent blogger, created [*a breakthrough in 2008*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) when he began writing about every available poll, focusing on the swing states and talking about the probability of one candidate beating another. Before that, most publications had focused on national polls and largely ignored those done by competing publications.

The New York Times published Mr. Silver’s blog, FiveThirtyEight, from 2010 through 2013, and it is now part of ABC News. Other publications have since taken a similar approach, creating their own probabilistic models.

Mr. Silver and others have tried to emphasize the uncertainty in polls, by giving both candidates in a race a percentage that reflects their likelihood of winning. But many people seem to struggle to make sense of these probabilities in a one-time event like an election. They see that a candidate has a 71 percent chance of winning, [*as FiveThirtyEight gave Mrs. Clinton in 2016*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/), and incorrectly think it is akin to a guarantee.

This year, FiveThirtyEight used [*a dot to portray each percentage-point possibility*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/), stressing that either candidate could win.

The Times, which in 2016 had given Mrs. Clinton an 85 percent chance of winning, did not create a probabilistic model this year. It instead published [*a table*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/maine/) that included both polling averages and a column showing the likely result if each state’s polls were as wrong as they had been in 2016. That column looks better in hindsight than the polling averages.

Virtually nobody thinks polling is going away. It is too important in a democracy, Mr. Collins, of Survey160, said. It guides campaign strategies and politicians’ policy choices. And there is no alternative method of election analysis with anywhere near as good a track record as polling’s imperfect record.

The only short-term solution, some people believe, is for pollsters and the media to emphasize — and for Americans to recognize — that polling can be misleading. Even an aggregate picture, from dozens of polls, can be meaningfully off, especially in an intensely divided political era.

“There’s something in U.S. culture that has developed a fetish with quantitative forecasting,” Dahlia Scheindlin, a Tel Aviv-based pollster who has worked in 15 countries, said.

If nothing else, the polling of the last four years may have given Americans a better understanding that they should not take polls literally. “The narrative around polling has to change,” Cornell Belcher, a Democratic pollster, said, “because it’s misinforming and it’s setting polling up to fail.”

Reporting was contributed by Thomas Kaplan, Annie Karni, Giovanni Russonello and Matina Stevis-Gridneff.

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PHOTOS: Models showed that Hillary Clinton had a high probability of winning the 2016 election, which led some to incorrectly assume she was guaranteed victory. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Polling made Chicago Tribune editors confident enough in Thomas Dewey’s challenge to President Harry Truman that they called the race a little too soon. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BYRON ROLLINS/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A16); Jaime Harrison, a Democratic challenger in South Carolina, polled well but lost to Senator Lindsey Graham. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAMERON POLLACK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Senator Thom Tillis, Republican of North Carolina, trailed in almost every poll but won his bid for re-election. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Senator Susan Collins, Republican of Maine, did not lead in public polls toward the end but won comfortably. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); While most polls correctly predicted an electoral loss for President Trump, they also underestimated his strength. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROLINE YANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** November 30, 2020

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[***The Rise of the Far-Right Latina***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VT-VH81-DXY4-X4V0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 6, 2022 Wednesday 12:05 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1717 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Medina

**Highlight:** Representative Mayra Flores is one of three Republican Latinas vying to transform South Texas politics by shunning moderates and often embracing the extreme.

**Body**

Representative Mayra Flores is one of three Republican Latinas vying to transform South Texas politics by shunning moderates and often embracing the extreme.

WASHINGTON — For years, Texas Republicans tried to win the Hispanic vote using a Bush-era brand of compassionate conservatism. The idea was that a moderate’s touch and a softer rhetoric on immigration were key to making inroads with Hispanic voters, particularly in Democratic strongholds along the southern border.

Such was the Texas of old. The Trump age has given rise to a new brand of Texas Republicans, one of whom is already walking the halls of Congress: the far-right Latina.

Representative Mayra Flores became only the second Republican to represent the Rio Grande Valley after she won a special election last month and flipped the congressional seat from blue to red. She also became the first Latina Republican ever sent by Texas to Congress. Her abbreviated term lasts only through the end of the year, and she is seen as a long shot to win re-election to a full one.

But what is most striking is that Ms. Flores won by shunning moderates, embracing the far right and wearing her support for Donald J. Trump on her sleeve — more Marjorie Taylor Greene than Kay Bailey Hutchison.

Her campaign slogan — “God, family, country” — was meant to appeal to what she calls the “traditional values” of her majority-Hispanic district in the border city of Brownsville. She called for President Biden’s impeachment. She tweeted QAnon hashtags. And she called the Democratic Party the “greatest threat America faces.”

In an interview in her still-barren office the day after her swearing-in ceremony, Ms. Flores was asked whether she considered Mr. Biden the legitimately elected president.

“He’s the worst president of the United States,” she said.

When asked three more times whether Mr. Biden had been legitimately elected, she repeated the same nonanswer.

Two other Latina Republicans, Monica De La Cruz in McAllen and Cassy Garcia in Laredo, are also on the ballot in congressional races along the Mexican border. All three — G.O.P. officials have taken to calling them a “triple threat” — share right-wing views on immigration, the 2020 election and abortion, among other issues.

They share the same advisers, have held campaign rallies and fund-raisers together and have knocked on doors side by side. They accuse the Democratic Party of taking Hispanic voters for granted and view themselves, as do their supporters, as the embodiment of the American dream: Ms. Flores often speaks of working alongside her parents as a teenager in the cotton fields of the Texas Panhandle.

Ms. Flores, Ms. De La Cruz and Ms. Garcia grew up in the Rio Grande Valley, a ***working-class*** four-county region at the southernmost tip of Texas where Hispanics make up 93 percent of the population. All three are bilingual; Ms. Flores was born in Tamaulipas, Mexico, and the other two in South Texas. Only Ms. De La Cruz has been endorsed by Mr. Trump, yet they all remain outspoken advocates for him, his movement and his tough talk on restricting immigration and building the border wall.

The Rio Grande Valley has long been a politically liberal yet culturally conservative place. Church pews are packed on Sundays, American flags wave from their poles on front lawns and law enforcement is revered. Ms. Flores’s husband is a Border Patrol agent, a note she often emphasized on the campaign trail.

In 2020, the Valley’s conservative culture started to exert a greater influence on its politics. Mr. Trump flipped rural Zapata County and narrowed the Democratic margin of victory in the four Valley counties and in other border towns.

“Growing up down there, you always have closeted Republicans,” said Ms. Garcia, a former aide to Senator Ted Cruz of Texas. “Now, the desire to embrace Republicans is really spreading. They feel a genuine sense of belonging.”

Other pro-Trump Latinas are running for House seats in Virginia, Florida and New Mexico, among other places.

Republican leaders and strategists say Ms. Flores’s win and the candidacies of other right-wing Hispanic women are proof that Latino voters are increasingly shifting to the right. More than 100 Republican House candidates are Hispanic, a record number, according to the National Republican Congressional Committee.

Democrats view the situation much differently. Some Democratic leaders dismiss Ms. Flores’s victory as a fluke — the product of a low-turnout special election in which [*28,990 people cast ballots*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/06/14/us/elections/results-texas-us-house-district-34-special-election.html) — and a fleeting one.

Ms. Flores, who was elected to serve the last six months of a retiring Democratic congressman’s term, is running in November for a full term. She faces a popular Democratic incumbent who is switching districts, Representative Vicente Gonzalez.

Democratic leaders are optimistic that Mr. Gonzalez will defeat Ms. Flores, and that Ms. Garcia will lose her race against Representative Henry Cuellar, the conservative Democrat who narrowly beat a progressive challenger in a primary runoff.

Ms. De La Cruz, however, is running in the most competitive House race in Texas and will face Michelle Vallejo, a progressive Democrat.

Representative Ruben Gallego, an Arizona Democrat who heads the campaign arm of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, dismissed Ms. Flores’s win as a “public relations coup” for Republicans.

“It does not mean she represents mainstream Hispanic voters,” Mr. Gallego said.

Mr. Gonzalez, the Democratic congressman, nearly lost to Ms. De La Cruz two years ago when she challenged him in Texas’ 15th Congressional District. [*He won by 6,588 votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-texas-house-district-15.html). Now, he is challenging Ms. Flores in the 34th District.

“This was a profound message to the party,” he said of Ms. Flores’s victory. “It’s really woken up the Democratic base. I’ve never had so many people volunteer for free in all my years.”

As she moved into her congressional office across from the Capitol, Ms. Flores, an evangelical Christian, eyed the bare walls. She planned to put up a large photo of the SpaceX launch site in her district as well as images of Jesus.

She had campaigned with the support of evangelical churches; her pastor carried out a “Make America Godly Again” outreach effort and traveled to Washington for her swearing-in. “I do believe that pastors should be getting involved in politics and in guiding their congressmen,” Ms. Flores said. “Our pastors know our people better than we do.”

Ms. Flores wasted no time displaying a combative style with Democrats. Minutes after her swearing-in, Speaker Nancy Pelosi posed with Ms. Flores and her family for a photo. What happened next is a matter of debate. To Democrats, it looked as if Ms. Pelosi had brushed her arm against Ms. Flores’s 8-year-old daughter as the two stood side by side. To Republicans, it looked as if Ms. Pelosi had shoved her aside.

“No child should be pushed to the side for a photo op. PERIOD!!” Ms. Flores later [*wrote on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/MayraFlores2022/status/1541252448966287361?s=20&amp;t=o3WAkx2J2PNTFeuhIdzwMg).

To hear Ms. Flores tell it, her switch to the G.O.P. was inevitable.

Early on, she said, she had voted Democratic, primarily because everyone she knew did the same. The first time she cast a ballot for a Republican for president, she said, was for Mitt Romney in 2012.

After attending a Republican event for the spouses of Border Patrol agents, Ms. Flores began to volunteer for the Hidalgo County Republican Party in McAllen. By 2020, she was organizing pro-Trump caravans through the Rio Grande Valley.

She was also posting tweets using the hashtag #QAnon.

When asked about QAnon, Ms. Flores denied ever having supported the conspiracy theory, which claims that a group of Satan-worshiping elites who run a child sex ring is trying to control the government and the media. Hashtags have long been considered social media shorthand for expressing support for a cause or an idea, but Ms. Flores insisted her intention was to express opposition to QAnon.

“It’s just to reach more people so more people can see like, hey, this needs to stop,” she said of using the QAnon hashtag. “This is only hurting our country.”

Ms. Flores deleted the tweets about QAnon, but she did not refrain from expressing other right-wing views. After the 2020 election, she insisted on Twitter that Mr. Trump had won, writing in one post, “[*Ganamos y lo vamos a demostrar*](https://twitter.com/MayraFlores2022/status/1333255899960500227?s=20&amp;t=Ce9wwXFItHKc52UGXrwUmg)!” or “We won, and we will prove it!” Following the Jan. 6, 2021, assault on the Capitol, she retweeted a post falsely calling it a “setup” by antifa. She has called Mr. Biden “president in name only” and has demanded his impeachment. And as her own oath of office coincided with the hearings by the House committee investigating the Jan. 6 attack, Ms. Flores largely dismissed the proceedings.

“Honestly, my district doesn’t care about that,” she said of the hearings. “My district is struggling to pay their bills. That’s what we’re supposed to be focusing on.”

Like Ms. Flores, Ms. De La Cruz describes herself as a former Democrat who “walked away” from the party. She said she cast her first vote in a Republican primary for Mr. Trump in 2016.

“I believe that the president was bringing to light the terrible things that we were doing to our country,” Ms. De La Cruz said.

After she narrowly lost her challenge to Mr. Gonzalez in 2020, Ms. De La Cruz [*suggested, without evidence,*](https://twitter.com/monica4congress/status/1326365875780395009?s=20&amp;t=WULM-alkB9-eCzQqfRPJFA) that both she and Mr. Trump had been victims of voter fraud in the district.

Ms. Garcia, by contrast, said she has been a Republican her whole life. Raised conservative, she went to church three times a week and entered politics soon after college, working as the outreach director for Mr. Cruz in McAllen.

As a candidate, she has focused on religious liberty, school choice and abortion bans — issues on which she said the region’s Hispanic voters were increasingly like-minded.

“The red wave is here,” Ms. Garcia said.

PHOTOS: Representative Mayra Flores of Texas with Kevin McCarthy, the House minority leader. She is the first Republican Latina the state has ever sent to Congress. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SHURAN HUANG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Monica De La Cruz, who is in one of Texas’ most competitive House races, has been endorsed by Donald J. Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VERÓNICA G. CÁRDENAS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); “The desire to embrace Republicans is really spreading,” said Cassy Garcia, who is also vying for a House seat. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTIAN K. LEE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 7, 2022

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[***The Shrinking of the Middle-Class Neighborhood***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65VT-VH81-DXY4-X4TP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 6, 2022 Wednesday 11:23 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1681 words

**Byline:** Sophie Kasakove and Robert Gebeloff

**Highlight:** Americans are increasingly living in areas that are either much richer or much poorer than the regional norm.

**Body**

NASHVILLE — When Ashley Broadnax thinks of the East Nashville neighborhood she grew up in during the ’90s, the images that rush in have a modest, middle-class tinge.

After school, she and other neighborhood children bought snacks at the corner store and threw balls on the street as their parents returned home, some in uniform from blue-collar work, others from jobs as teachers or office workers. Neighbors chatted on porches and lawns of unassuming single-story homes. There were some poor families and a few wealthy ones, but more than a third of her neighbors made between $40,000 and $75,000 in today’s dollars — enough to live comfortably.

But by 2020, the income distribution had tilted so that half the families made $100,000 or more, census data shows. All across the neighborhood, the modest houses of Ms. Broadnax’s youth have been replaced by high-end homes known informally as “tall skinnies” that tower over the older homes that remain.

So when it was Ms. Broadnax’s turn to pay the rent, using her own middle-income salary as an educator, the cost was out of reach.

Like many other Americans, Nashville residents are increasingly being buffeted by economic tides that push them into neighborhoods that are either much richer or much poorer than the regional norm, a New York Times analysis has found. A smaller share of families are living in middle-class neighborhoods, places where incomes are typically within 25 percent of the regional median.

In Nashville, the share of families living in middle-class neighborhoods dropped by 15 percentage points between 1990 and 2020. But the portion of families in wealthy ones jumped by 11 points, and the segment living in poor neighborhoods grew by four points.

In some ways, the pattern reflects how wealthy Americans are choosing to live near other wealthy people, and how poorer Americans are struggling to get by.

But the pattern also indicates a broader trend of income inequality in the economy, as the population of families making more than $100,000 has grown much faster than other groups, even after adjusting for inflation, and the number of families earning less than $40,000 has increased at twice the rate of families in the middle.

Ms. Broadnax has become part of a great chase nationally for affordable housing. High rents in the city initially sent her to the more affordable Antioch neighborhood in 2011. But home prices nearly doubled there since 2018, so buying a home meant moving farther out to a suburban community called La Vergne.

“The same people that’s working in their city can’t afford to live in their city,” Ms. Broadnax said about Nashville.

Nationally, only half of American families living in metropolitan areas can say that their neighborhood income level is within 25 percent of the regional median. A generation ago, 62 percent of families lived in these middle-income neighborhoods.

“People are getting pushed out, and that is breaking up some historically sort of ***working-class*** neighborhoods,” said Marybeth Shinn, a Vanderbilt University professor who studies homelessness and social exclusion. “You gradually convert a neighborhood from a pretty modest kind of neighborhood that a lot of people could live in to one where only people that have a little more means are able to live in.”

That evolution has mixed consequences for people seeing their neighborhoods change.

When Jim Polk bought his home in East Nashville in 1979, the community left some amenities to be desired. The park near his house was run-down, and the neighborhood had few sidewalks or streetlights.

As the firefighters, nurses and local government employees in the neighborhood were replaced by tech workers, engineers and lawyers, Mr. Polk mourned the loss of their old, familiar neighborhood where his four daughters had learned to accept people of diverse backgrounds.

“So many families have moved out over time,” said Mr. Polk, who worked for decades as a community education coordinator for the city public schools. “It didn’t remind them of the place they used to live, and it was so expensive to stay.”

But Mr. Polk and his wife were able to keep up with the property tax increases on their city pensions, and they could not ignore the improvements to the neighborhood: New sidewalks and streetlights were installed, and the long-neglected park was cleaned up. When his church was destroyed by a tornado in 2020, his new neighbors had the resources to help the congregation buy a new building.

Even more significant has been the rapid price appreciation of homes in the neighborhood. Mr. Polk bought his home for $36,000. A home just across the street sold for more than $1.5 million in February, according to Zillow.

“There have been improvements in services available to the people living in the neighborhood,” he said. “But who gets to participate?”

Experts say the changes in housing patterns represent a form of economic segregation, as Americans are less likely to live in neighborhoods with people from other socioeconomic classes. Economic segregation exacerbates the problems often associated with income inequality. There are what researchers call “neighborhood effects,” with studies finding that poor children have [*better odds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/04/upshot/an-atlas-of-upward-mobility-shows-paths-out-of-poverty.html) of climbing the socioeconomic ladder if they grow up outside of concentrated poverty.

And wealthy neighborhoods tend to command a disproportionate share of resources, such as better schools, more parks and greater access to health professionals.

This economic segregation not only “concentrates low-income families in high poverty neighborhoods, but it concentrates affluent families in affluent neighborhoods, where they can engage in a kind of opportunity hoarding,” said Sean F. Reardon, a sociologist at Stanford University. He and another sociologist, Kendra Bischoff of Cornell University, have [*written*](https://cepa.stanford.edu/content/continuing-increase-income-segregation-2007-2012) several [*papers*](https://www.russellsage.org/sites/all/files/logan/logan_diversity_chapter7.pdf) on economic segregation.

Consider Durham, N.C.

Since 1990, it has seen a surge of wealth and investment pouring into the city’s downtown. At the same time, the percentage of families living in lower-income neighborhoods has doubled.

Turquoise LeJeune Parker, an elementary school technology instructor, said the split reality of rich and poor neighborhoods did her low-income students no good. Describing what she saw as the prevailing mind-set of people flocking to prosperous parts of town, she said, “We won’t push for resources for our schools, we won’t push for any of that because ‘I’ve got what I need on my side of the city, so I’m good.’”

To some degree, economic segregation has gone hand in hand with the hollowing out of the middle class in general.

At the same time, local governments across the country have done little to maintain or expand affordable housing, instead investing in attracting highly paid workers, which drives up prices and displaces lower-income residents.

And exclusionary zoning laws often prevent denser, lower-cost housing from being built in high-end enclaves — Tennessee has even [*barred cities from putting zoning laws into place*](https://wapp.capitol.tn.gov/apps/BillInfo/Default.aspx?BillNumber=SB0363&amp;ga=110) that would protect affordability. Property taxes on many homes have spiked, pushing longtime residents to sell to investors.

But whatever the cause, similar trends can be seen across the country.

The Boston metropolitan area saw middle-class neighborhoods shift in both directions. In the 1990s and 2000s, many fell behind economically. In the past decade, because of [*widespread gentrification in the city*](https://www.wgbh.org/news/local-news/2022/04/08/watch-basic-black-on-the-affordable-housing-crisis), many modest neighborhoods have been transformed into much wealthier ones.

A generation ago, Seattle’s tech industry was starting to boom, but the area also was a major manufacturing hub, and seven out of 10 families lived in middle-class neighborhoods. Today, only five out of 10 do. Nearly a third live in wealthy enclaves.

In the Midwest, the share of families living in middle-class neighborhoods has fallen by 13 percentage points in Columbus, Ohio, since 1990, by 12 in Chicago, and by nine in Indianapolis.

And in Orlando, nearly 70 percent of area residents lived in “average” neighborhoods back in 1990, according to census data. In 2020, the same was true for just 46 percent.

That leaves a lot of people feeling like they are on the outside looking in.

Michael Street is a union electrician who moved from Nashville to Goodlettsville about 25 minutes away. He said he spent his days driving around Nashville, working on houses that have all been rehabbed, rebuilt or rendered unrecognizable in neighborhoods he can no longer afford.

“Either you’re poor, or you’re rich,” he said. “Middle class is kind of phasing out. Either you have a lot of money, or you’re just barely getting by.”

Methodology

To measure the growing level of economic segregation in the United States, The New York Times used census data to compare the median family income of every census tract with the median for the surrounding metropolitan area for the years 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2020. The analysis counted how many families lived in middle-class tracts, where the median family income was within 25 percent of the regional median, and how many lived in tracts where the income level was 25 percent or more above or below the regional median. All figures were inflation-adjusted to 2020 values.

Source data and maps were from socialexplorer.com and nhgis.org.

PHOTOS: “So many families have moved out over time” from East Nashville, said Jim Polk, who bought his home there in 1979 for $36,000; a home across the street sold for more than $1.5 million in February, according to Zillow. Right, construction near his home. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WHITTEN SABBATINI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12); New housing and upgrades to existing residences are making the Tennessee neighborhood East Nashville unaffordable for many longtime residents. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SEPTEMBER DAWN BOTTOMS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A12-A13); Ashley Broadnax at her family’s new home in La Vergne, Tenn., right, a suburb 20 miles southeast of Nashville that has become popular as a more affordable alternative. Like many who grew up in East Nashville, Ms. Broadnax can no longer afford its housing. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY WHITTEN SABBATINI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** July 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***With Dim Prospects for Holding Power, Boris Johnson Soldiers On***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MP-9081-JBG3-600C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 7, 2022 Tuesday 23:55 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1512 words

**Byline:** Mark Landler and Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** After narrowly winning a no-confidence vote on Monday, Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces a long list of threats to his leadership.

**Body**

After narrowly winning a no-confidence vote on Monday, Prime Minister Boris Johnson faces a long list of threats to his leadership.

LONDON — Prime Minister Boris Johnson tried to lift himself off the mat on Tuesday after a stinging rebuke by his Conservative Party. But with a fresh electoral challenge looming and Britain’s economy in a downward spiral, there are few easy ways for Mr. Johnson to reverse his fading fortunes.

Mr. Johnson’s too-close-for-comfort victory in a no-confidence vote on Monday evening left him badly damaged, with plenty of openings for would-be coup plotters. A pair of Parliamentary elections on June 23 could trigger another move against him if, as expected, the Conservatives lose at least one of the seats.

Even if Mr. Johnson clings to power, he faces a hard slog, with surging food and fuel prices, and predictions that Britain could slip into a recession. With more than 40 percent of his lawmakers having turned on him, pushing contentious legislation through the Parliament will be no easy feat.

Ever the happy warrior, an upbeat Mr. Johnson told cabinet ministers on Tuesday that it was time to put internal divisions over him aside and “get on with talking about the issues I think the people in this country want to talk about.”

It was a characteristically brash response from a politician whose entire career has been a thumb in eye of the oddsmakers. And he was in a comparatively safe space, speaking to a cabinet unlikely to rebel against him. But the mutiny in Mr. Johnson’s party, less than three years after he had led it to a landslide election victory, suggested he was not completely immune to the laws of political gravity.

A parade of scandals, most egregiously the lockdown-breaking parties at Downing Street during the pandemic, has left many Conservatives exhausted, disenchanted and fearful of latching their futures to an increasingly unpopular figure.

Unlike former President Donald J. Trump, to whom he is often compared, Mr. Johnson no longer has a mystical hold over his party. Many Tories openly label their leader a liability. Some call into question the populist tactics that made him successful in past elections.

They worry, for example, that the Conservatives no longer have a message that appeals to both their traditional voters in the prosperous south of England and the ***working-class***, former Labour Party voters in the industrial north — known colloquially as the “red wall” — whom Mr. Johnson famously converted to Tory ranks in the 2019 general election with his promise to “get Brexit done.”

“There is a big schism between being the party of voters in the ‘red wall,’ who want a big state, and the party of affluent households in the south, who want a smaller state,” said Tony Travers, a professor of politics at the London School of Economics. “There are no policies that can square this circle.”

So far, Mr. Johnson’s government has adopted a mix of higher taxes and state aid for families suffering from the cost-of-living squeeze, through a windfall tax on energy companies, an idea stolen from the opposition Labour Party. These policies have alarmed low-tax, pro-business Tories but have yet to improve the party’s poll ratings, which trail those of Labour.

The scale of the electoral task faced by Mr. Johnson should become clearer in two weeks when voters go to the polls in two districts to replace Conservative lawmakers who resigned from Parliament in disgrace.

In Wakefield, a “red wall” district in the north of England that the Conservatives won in 2019, the omens are poor. The party’s former lawmaker, Imran Ahmad Khan, quit after being convicted of sexually assaulting a teenager. A Labour victory would be a sign both that it is starting to win back its heartlands under its leader, Keir Starmer, and that Mr. Johnson’s talismanic appeal has waned.

On the same day, the Conservatives will be defending a normally rock-solid seat in one of their traditional strongholds, Tiverton and Honiton, in the southwest of England, where the lawmaker, Neil Parish, quit after admitting to having watched pornography on his cellphone while in Parliament.

Here, the smaller, centrist Liberal Democratic Party is the prime challenger. If it performs well, that will send shock waves through the Conservative ranks, signaling to many of its lawmakers in the south that even in areas once considered safe, seats could be lost when the next general election comes.

Mr. Johnson also faces acute difficulties in Scotland, where he has never been popular and has now been disowned by four of the six Scottish Conservative members of the Westminster Parliament — including their leader, Douglas Ross — who voted against the prime minister on Monday.

One of the arguments that sustain Mr. Johnson is that no rival Conservative leader can appeal to such a cross-section of voters. But how Tories would campaign for the re-election of a prime minister they have declared unfit for office is an open question. And further evidence that he has become a vote loser would be damaging.

Among the post-mortems on Monday, the most unforgiving may have come from William Hague, a former Conservative leader who has been relatively restrained in his criticism of Mr. Johnson. He bluntly told the prime minister to resign.

“Votes have been cast that show a greater level of rejection than any Tory leader has ever endured and survived,” Mr. Hague wrote in The Times of London. “Deep inside, he should recognize that, and turn his mind to getting out in a way that spares party and country such agonies and uncertainties.”

Nothing in Mr. Johnson’s manner suggests that he plans to do that. Later this week, he is expected to make a series of policy announcements that are calculated to turn the page on the recent upheaval and attempt to reset his government. There is, inevitably, talk of another cabinet reshuffle.

The government is also likely to roll out legislation to overhaul the post-Brexit trade rules that govern Northern Ireland, hoping to cut back border checks on goods shipped from mainland Britain to the North.

That would please hard-core Brexiteers in the party, some of whom voted against Mr. Johnson on Monday. But other Tories argue that it would be a breach of international law. And it would antagonize the European Union at a time when Britain can ill afford further turmoil.

Mr. Johnson faces more turmoil of his own: A Parliamentary committee is looking into whether he misled lawmakers about the scandal over Downing Street parties, while the government’s handling of the pandemic will be the subject of a public inquiry.

Given the odds that Mr. Johnson’s political position will deteriorate even further in coming months, some rebels in his Conservative Party might wonder whether they acted prematurely in forcing a vote now rather than waiting.

That reflects the inchoate nature of this rebellion, according to analysts. It was less a carefully orchestrated coup attempt than an organic movement of fed-up Tory lawmakers. That same lack of coordination could handicap future efforts to dislodge Mr. Johnson, whose position, some argue, is firmer than it looks.

A cabinet rebellion of the type that ousted Margaret Thatcher in 1990 after she survived a leadership challenge seems unlikely, given that his team is stocked with pro-Brexit loyalists. Only Rishi Sunak, the chancellor of the Exchequer, might be tempted to quit if Mr. Johnson demotes him in a reshuffle.

“Many of these people would never get a job in a successor government,” Mr. Travers said, “so they’ll cling to Boris Johnson like a lifeboat.”

The easiest way to remove Mr. Johnson would be for the 1922 Committee, which represents Conservative backbenchers, to amend a rule that prevents another no-confidence vote for 12 months. But were senior party figures to try this, Mr. Johnson might threaten to call a snap general election, preferring his chances of winning a contest among voters to one among his querulous lawmakers.

Some analysts said there was a path for Mr. Johnson, albeit a narrow one, which would necessitate cutting taxes, overhauling the public sector and helping “red wall” voters cope with the cost-of-living crisis. In such a scenario, the party would have to tolerate the loss of some of its traditional seats in the south.

It would also require Mr. Johnson to draw once more on his penchant for confounding the skeptics, not by jumping opportunistically from one issue to another but by putting his head down and soldiering on. The goal would be to survive the fallout from the looming district elections and make it to his party conference in the fall, and then beyond.

“If Johnson can get to the end of the year, he can get to the general election,” said Matthew Goodwin, a professor of politics at the University of Kent. “It’s not going to be easy at all, but you will either see a very ugly forced exit, or we all underestimated him — again — and he carries on.”

PHOTO: Prime Minister Boris Johnson meeting with his cabinet Tuesday in London. He narrowly survived a no-confidence vote on Monday. (POOL PHOTO BY LEON NEAL)

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Evils Lurking Beneath a City’s Centuries-Old Canals; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:628T-G7J1-DXY4-X2FN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 24, 2021 Wednesday 14:15 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 626 words

**Byline:** Marilyn Stasio

**Highlight:** In Donna Leon’s 30th Commissario Guido Brunetti mystery, “Transient Desires,” the setting — Venice — is the most important character of all.

**Body**

TRANSIENT DESIRES

By Donna Leon

The city of Venice is such a beguiling presence in Donna Leon’s mysteries, it can eclipse the serious crimes that drive her modern-day plots. Over the course of 30 novels featuring her compassionate police detective, Commissario Guido Brunetti, the American-born author has seized on fundamental Venetian plagues like government corruption, illegal immigration and badly behaved tourists. Which is not to overlook such scourges as bureaucratic inertia, rampant nepotism and rising seas.

In “Transient Desires,” Brunetti raises a judgmental eyebrow at the follies of youth, who tend to get rowdy on warm Saturday nights in Campo Santa Margherita. Two young local men pick up a couple of American girls there and — after an accident in the laguna — abandon them on a dock outside the hospital.

Marcello Vio and his best friend, Filiberto Duso, claim that the romantic midnight boat tour came to an unhappy end when they plowed into an underwater pylon. “Water came over the sides and prow and soaked us,” Filiberto remembers. “The boat just stopped, the way you can walk into a wall when there’s caigo,” or dense fog. Now Marcello is in deep trouble for damaging the powerful motorboat he borrowed from his uncle, who uses it in his clandestine smuggling operation, and both men have been identified by security tapes from the hospital. But why did they dump the badly injured Americans and flee into the night? As Brunetti teases out the connections between the accident and Marcello’s uncle, dramatic scenes play out in the dark and on the water with combat troops from the Guardia Costiera, who snake through the canals where traffickers in small boats with whisper-soft engines can access the mainland. Slipping untaxed goods like cigarettes into the city is an old smuggling tradition, to be sure, but in a new twist, some shipments contain human cargo.

The action in “Transient Desires” takes place largely on the water and focuses on the many manual jobs — and those lucky enough to work at them — that keep this ancient city running. Reflecting on the current state of “the country of Dante, Michelangelo, Leonardo, Galileo and Columbus,” Brunetti notes that 2,000 men — most of them college graduates — recently applied for three open jobs as garbage collectors. In the course of his investigation, the commissario interviews one of the garbagemen, or spazzini, from whom he gleans a damning piece of evidence. In order to do so, Brunetti is forced to speak the local vernacular, Veneziano, “almost choking on the thickness” of it.

Leon has a lot to say in this book about prejudices, many of which declare themselves through accents. Veneziano may be protectively incomprehensible to outsiders, but as Brunetti ponders a Neapolitan colleague and the way that city’s inflections of “amiability, flattery, joviality, deceit” have charmed centuries of would-be invaders, he realizes, “It was too easy to read history as you pleased, to see what you chose to see in the actions of people and cultures long gone.” Still, he reveals his own biases once again when the case leads him to the ***working-class*** district of Giudecca. “For me, going to the Giudecca is like going on an Arctic expedition,” he admits.

Needless to say, by venturing outside the comfort zone of his own prejudices, this deeply simpatico detective learns a lot about his city, his countrymen and himself. And so do we.

Marilyn Stasio, who wrote the Crime column for decades, continues to review mysteries and true crime for the Book Review.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Isip Xin FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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* [*‘Eyes Open. Hit First. Move Fast. Stop When He’s Dead.’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/24/books/review/crime-fiction-thomas-perry-eddies-boy.html)

1. [*By the Book: Donna Leon*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/24/books/review/crime-fiction-thomas-perry-eddies-boy.html)
2. [*‘Everybody Loved Blake, Except His Wives. Sometimes, We Hated Him.’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/24/books/review/crime-fiction-thomas-perry-eddies-boy.html)

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Emmys 2021 Snubs and Surprises: ‘Emily in Paris’? Mais Oui***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634H-S731-DXY4-X50W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 13, 2021 Tuesday 23:33 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 761 words

**Byline:** Mike Hale

**Highlight:** A nomination for a lightweight Netflix comedy and the omission of Ethan Hawke’s John Brown were among the few shockers.

**Body**

A nomination for a lightweight Netflix comedy and the omission of Ethan Hawke’s John Brown were among the few shockers.

[Follow our live coverage of the [*Emmys 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/09/19/arts/emmys) and [*winners lis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/19/arts/television/emmy-winners-list.html)t.]

The field for the Primetime [*Emmy Awards*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/19/arts/television/2021-emmys.html) was looking a little more open than usual this year. The Covid-19 pandemic pushed back new seasons of a number of 2020’s most nominated shows: “Insecure,” “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” “Ozark,” “Succession” and “Westworld” are all out of contention. And “Schitt’s Creek,” which Hoovered up nine awards last year, is no longer around.

That additional space did not lead to a lot of surprises in the [*nominations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/17/arts/television/emmys-nominees-list-2021.html) that were announced Tuesday morning, however. Category after category went largely or entirely as predicted. In the four major categories for outstanding programs, there was only one real upset, but it was a shocker …

Surprise: ‘Emily in Paris’

[*Darren Star’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/arts/television/darren-star-emily-in-paris.html) candy-colored, cliche-friendly romance about an American ingenue in the City of Light [*was not celebrated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/02/style/Emily-in-Paris.html?.?mc=aud_dev&amp;ad-keywords=auddevgate&amp;gclid=CjwKCAjw87SHBhBiEiwAukSeUUWuhXx1hh45Ft8ZGaUdwFw7fgF-8caYURyre667Dgt39C1CxuEO6xoCsKAQAvD_BwE&amp;gclsrc=aw.ds) upon its release, but Netflix got the last laugh with a totally unexpected nomination for outstanding comedy. Along with a slightly surprising comedy nomination for “Cobra Kai,” it gave Netflix a combined six nods in the outstanding comedy, drama and limited series categories, none of which it has ever won.

Snub: ‘Girls5Eva’

The likely victim of Netflix’s success in the comedy category with “Emily in Paris” was “Girls5Eva,” Peacock’s great hope for Emmys glory, which didn’t break through despite [*its cast and its overall likability*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/05/arts/television/review-girls5eva-rutherford-falls.html). Also left out was its star Renée Elise Goldsberry, a favorite for an acting nomination.

Snub: Ethan Hawke

Probably the most bewildering omission was the lack of recognition for Hawke’s commanding performance in “The Good Lord Bird,” Showtime’s [*limited-series adaptation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/01/arts/television/good-lord-bird-review.html?searchResultPosition=1) of James McBride’s novel about the abolitionist John Brown. Apparently Hawke couldn’t overcome the series’s failure to generate much buzz.

Surprise: Aidy Bryant

The third season of the Hulu comedy “Shrill” did not cause much of a stir either, but that didn’t stop Bryant from nabbing a lead-actress nomination, her first for “Shrill” after three for acting and writing on “Saturday Night Live.” She jumped ahead of Goldsberry and Maya Erskine of Hulu’s “Pen15.”

Snub: ‘Full Frontal With Samantha Bee’

Bee’s late-night show on TBS failed to garner a nomination for the first time in five years. That left the variety talk series category an all-boys club, with Stephen Colbert, Jimmy Kimmel, John Oliver and Trevor Noah grabbing their expected slots, and Conan O’Brien making it in [*for his final season*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/arts/television/conan-obrien-late-night-rudy-giuliani.html).

Snub: Sarah Paulson

Paulson, an Emmy favorite with seven nominations (and one victory) in the last decade, was expected to score another for her portrayal of the title character in “Ratched,” Ryan Murphy’s “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” prequel for Netflix. But apparently she couldn’t overcome the show’s [*toxic reviews.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/16/arts/television/review-ratched-ryan-murphy.html?searchResultPosition=2) Making it into the drama-actress field instead was Jurnee Smollett, in perhaps the only slightly surprising nomination among the 18 that HBO’s “Lovecraft Country” pulled in.

Snub: Nicole Kidman

Kidman was considered a marginal candidate for a lead actress nod for HBO’s “The Undoing,” but it doesn’t feel fair that she was left out while her co-star, Hugh Grant, was nominated for lead actor in a limited series or movie.

Surprise: ‘The Boys’

OK, it wasn’t really a surprise — Amazon’s dark superhero tale drew a lot of attention and critical respect in its second season. But it’s not a show you would have seen on the list a few years ago, and its presence in the drama-series category with “Lovecraft Country” and “The Mandalorian” solidifies the growing acceptance of science-fiction and fantasy shows. (If you include “The Handmaid’s Tale,” we’re talking about half the category.) In past years, its place might have gone to “[*In Treatment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/arts/television/in-treatment-uzo-aduba.html),” “[*Perry Mason*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/18/arts/television/review-perry-mason-hbo.html)” or “[*The Mosquito Coast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/29/arts/television/review-mosquito-coast.html).”

Snub: ‘Shameless’

Again, not really a snub — no one was actually expecting a comedy-series nomination for Showtime’s long-running ***working-class*** dramedy — but there was a lot of sentimental hoping-against-hope for a miracle in the show’s 11th and final season. The star, William H. Macy, pulled down his sixth lead-actor nomination for the role (of a total 10 lead-actor nods in various categories), so there’s still a chance the show can go out with a big win.

PHOTO: Ethan Hawke played John Brown in the Showtime limited series “The Good Lord Bird.” He and the series were praised by critics but did not receive any major Emmy nominations. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN LYNCH/SHOWTIME)

**Load-Date:** September 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***On Philosophy, Biden Cabinet Leans Centrist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61JS-YB81-DXY4-X0SK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 20, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1968 words

**Byline:** By Michael D. Shear and Michael Crowley

**Body**

Still a work in progress, the president-elect's personnel choices are more pragmatic and familiar than ideological. It's what he campaigned on, but the left had hoped for more.

WASHINGTON -- His economic and environment teams are a little left of center. His foreign policy picks fall squarely in the Democratic Party's mainstream. His top White House aides are Washington veterans.

Taken together, the picture that emerges from President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s initial wave of personnel choices is a familiar, pragmatic and largely centrist one.

That fits with the implicit deal that the former vice president and longtime senator offered Democrats during the 2020 primaries -- that he was neither as progressive as Senators Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, nor a product of Wall Street like Michael Bloomberg, the Republican-turned-Democrat who failed in his last-minute attempt to offer a moderate alternative to Mr. Biden.

Still a work in progress, Mr. Biden's cabinet is designed to be an extension of his own ideology, rooted in long-held Democratic Party principles but with a greater focus on the plight of ***working-class*** Americans, a new sense of urgency about climate change and a deeper empathy about the issues of racial justice that he has said persuaded him to run for the presidency a third time.

His nominees are a reflection of the image that his campaign conveyed and that powered his defeat of President Trump. They are diverse in ways that appeal to liberals, young voters and people of color. And they are moderate like the swing voters who helped him win in states like Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

''That's him,'' said Bill Daley, who served as White House chief of staff for President Barack Obama. ''That's his whole campaign.''

For his cabinet, Mr. Obama assembled outsize personalities like Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Robert M. Gates, the defense secretary who was a holdover from the George W. Bush administration.

Mr. Biden's cabinet so far has no one likely to draw the same kind of high-octane attention. His choices have decades of quiet, behind-the-scenes policymaking experience, matching Mr. Biden's pledge to return basic competence to the government after four years of Mr. Trump's chaotic administration.

His nominees and choice of top White House aides make only a nod to the progressive movement in the Democratic Party that helped Mr. Biden win the election. That has left some of the party's liberals frustrated by what they say is the creation of a new administration dominated by old thinking, unprepared to confront the post-Trumpian world of deeper racial and economic inequities and more entrenched Republican resistance.

There is no one yet in Mr. Biden's cabinet carrying the torch for the policies that he campaigned against during the primaries: free college for everyone, a costly Green New Deal, an anti-Wall Street agenda, universal health care and steep increases in the minimum wage.

The danger, said Faiz Shakir, who managed Mr. Sanders's 2020 presidential campaign, is that Mr. Biden does not pay sufficient attention to the struggle of ***working-class*** people, whose fortunes have declined under the economic policies of presidents from both parties. He said a return to the Democratic status quo, before Mr. Trump's presidency, was not enough.

''One of the concerns is that you want to pierce the bubble of how our Democratic elites have thought about politics and policymaking and urge them to go bolder,'' Mr. Shakir said. ''And now we're relying on a lot of people's instincts who've been honed, quite frankly, during a different era of politics.''

Varshini Prakash, the executive director and a founder of the Sunrise Movement, a liberal group focused on climate change, praised Mr. Biden's environmental picks as a welcome ''departure from the leave-it-to-the-markets way of thinking that defined the early 2000s.''

But she said she hoped Mr. Biden would do more to promote younger people whose experience is not defined by previous generations.

''It is still an older, whiter, male-er group in general,'' she said. ''We are never going to develop the leadership we need for decades to come if we keep appointing people who are in their 60s and 70s who have served in multiple administrations already.''

It can be difficult to divine the precise policy direction of an administration from the selection of a dozen cabinet members. Whatever the views of the individual secretaries, their mandates once in office will now be defined by the new president's promises and policies.

Xavier Becerra, Mr. Biden's pick to lead the Department of Health and Human Services, for example, has previously embraced ''Medicare for All'' proposals. Now he will be called on to support the president-elect's plan for improving Obamacare.

But Mr. Biden has already signaled a more populist bent than Mr. Obama did. He talks about strengthening unions and creating ***working-class*** jobs with significant spending increases to build new roads, bridges and highways and repair the old ones.

On Saturday, he said he would make climate change a focus of the economic recovery from the coronavirus, calling for the construction of 1.5 million energy-efficient homes and 500,000 new electric-vehicle charging stations, and for the creation of a ''civilian climate corps'' to carry out projects.

His economic advisers believe in helping marginalized workers, expanding labor rights, addressing income inequality and bringing an end to gender and racial discrimination in the workplace.

And like previous presidents, Mr. Biden has already signaled that he wants to firmly control policymaking from inside the White House, installing close confidants and people with years of experience who will work down the hall from the Oval Office.

The fingerprints of Ron Klain, the incoming White House chief of staff and a longtime aide to Mr. Biden, are already evident in the selection of White House advisers with the kind of stature and experience to face off with the cabinet secretaries during debates over complex and difficult issues.

Susan Rice, who was Mr. Obama's national security adviser, will oversee domestic policy for Mr. Biden, who chose her not for her substantive expertise, but because of her ability to wrangle competing interests in a sprawling and often unruly government bureaucracy.

Ray LaHood, a Republican who served as transportation secretary for Mr. Obama, said that dynamic was also evident in Mr. Biden's decision to put John Kerry, the former secretary of state, and Gina McCarthy, who ran the Environmental Protection Agency, in charge of climate policy in the White House.

''Every big major legislative or other issue was run out of the White House,'' Mr. LaHood said, recalling the Obama White House. And, he predicted, it will be the same in the Biden administration.

Some important pieces of the cabinet puzzle have yet to fall into place.

Mr. Biden has not chosen an attorney general to oversee the Justice Department, which will be at the center of the president-elect's promise to expand voting rights, overhaul law enforcement and enforce racial justice in the nation's court system.

Nominees for the Labor, Education and Commerce Departments also have yet to be announced, leaving it unclear exactly how Mr. Biden intends to carry out his vision for more investment in schools, safer and more prosperous jobs, and an improved economic environment for business.

But some themes are emerging.

One of Mr. Biden's most urgent challenges as president will be to quickly turn around an economy wracked by the coronavirus pandemic, with millions of people out of work and businesses struggling to survive.

To do that, the president-elect will lean on an economic team that tilts to the left of their predecessors in the Obama administration.

Cecilia Rouse, his pick to lead the Council of Economic Advisers, is expected to focus on the forces that hold people back in the economy and the challenges that workers face, especially in the so-called gig economy.

Janet Yellen, his choice to be Treasury secretary, is a labor economist who has long championed efforts to raise wages. Heather Boushey, named to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, is a proponent of a higher minimum wage and has fought for providing up to 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave to workers.

There is not a deficit hawk among Mr. Biden's nominees, but neither are there members of the progressive left championed by Mr. Sanders or Ms. Warren. Any member of Mr. Biden's team might have worked for Hillary Clinton, had she won the presidency four years ago.

On foreign policy, Mr. Biden has turned to a group of people with whom he has worked closely, a largely nonideological group who appear willing to execute his vision rather than pursue agendas of their own.

''It's like his Senate staff,'' said Leon E. Panetta, a former Clinton White House chief of staff and C.I.A. director and defense secretary in the Obama administration. ''I don't think you can say that they come with a set of ideological ideals. They come ready to serve the president, and people need to understand that Joe Biden to a large extent is going to call the shots here.''

Mr. Biden's nominee for secretary of state, Antony J. Blinken, first worked for Mr. Biden as a Senate committee staff member in the 1990s and more than anyone else is an extension of his brain on foreign policy. In public remarks of his own, Mr. Blinken has generally reflected Mr. Biden's views, including a belief in the value of American global leadership, alliances and military strength.

Mr. Biden's choices for director of national intelligence, national security adviser and defense secretary are all seen as skillful managers and bureaucratic operators; none are associated with strong political views or distinct policy agendas.

''It's a solid, sensible, centrist foreign policy team that's likely to work well together and be well aligned to the president's priorities,'' said Kori Schake, the director of foreign and defense policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

Early in his presidency, as he weighed his Afghanistan strategy, Mr. Obama felt pressure for a substantial troop increase from Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Gates. Mr. Biden is unlikely to face such tensions within his own team.

Mr. Biden has said that addressing the threat from climate change is one of his top four priorities, along with confronting the Covid-19 pandemic, helping the economy to recover and moving toward racial justice in the United States. He is likely to provide another broad overview of his goals in his Inaugural Address and offer more detail in his first address to Congress shortly after taking office.

But achieving the kind of sweeping change he has promised will be more difficult if Democrats fail to win two Senate runoffs in Georgia early next month. Republicans only have to win one of the two races to maintain control of the Senate and the power to block much of Mr. Biden's agenda.

And even if Democrats win, the party's margins in both the Senate and the House will be razor thin, making it far less likely that Congress will embrace bold and costly policy proposals. Tom Ridge, a former Republican governor in Pennsylvania who served as secretary of Homeland Security for President George W. Bush, said many of the solutions will come from the departments led by Mr. Biden's cabinet.

''I don't know of a modern president who, on the date of being sworn in, was confronted with the range of challenges that he and this administration confront the moment he takes office,'' Mr. Ridge said. ''These are tough, challenging problems. At this point in time, it's good to have experienced hands.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/19/us/politics/biden-cabinet.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/19/us/politics/biden-cabinet.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s cabinet choices have decades of policymaking experience. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Soldiers returning from Afghanistan. Mr. Biden is unlikely to face internal clashes on troop levels. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES)

A food bank in Massachusetts. Mr. Biden has the urgent challenge of turning around the economy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CODY O'LOUGHLIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A24)

**Load-Date:** December 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Some Snubs and Surprises for an Unusual Year***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634N-Y8T1-DXY4-X05K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 730 words

**Byline:** By Mike Hale

**Body**

A nomination for a lightweight Netflix comedy and the omission of Ethan Hawke's John Brown were among the few shockers.

The field for the Primetime Emmy Awards was looking a little more open than usual this year. The Covid-19 pandemic pushed back new seasons of a number of 2020's most nominated shows: ''Insecure,'' ''The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,'' ''Ozark,'' ''Succession'' and ''Westworld'' are all out of contention. And ''Schitt's Creek,'' which Hoovered up nine awards last year, is no longer around.

That additional space did not lead to a lot of surprises in the nominations that were announced Tuesday morning, however. Category after category went largely or entirely as predicted. In the four major categories for outstanding programs, there was only one real upset, but it was a shocker ...

Surprise: 'Emily in Paris'

Darren Star's candy-colored, cliche-friendly romance about an American ingenue in the City of Light was not celebrated upon its release, but Netflix got the last laugh with a totally unexpected nomination for outstanding comedy. Along with a slightly surprising comedy nomination for ''Cobra Kai,'' it gave Netflix a combined six nods in the outstanding comedy, drama and limited series categories, none of which it has ever won.

Snub: 'Girls5Eva'

The likely victim of Netflix's success in the comedy category with ''Emily in Paris'' was ''Girls5Eva,'' Peacock's great hope for Emmys glory, which didn't break through despite its cast and its overall likability. Also left out was its star Renée Elise Goldsberry, a favorite for an acting nomination.

Snub: Ethan Hawke

Probably the most bewildering omission was the lack of recognition for Hawke's commanding performance in ''The Good Lord Bird,'' Showtime's limited-series adaptation of James McBride's novel about the abolitionist John Brown. Apparently Hawke couldn't overcome the series's failure to generate much buzz.

Surprise: Aidy Bryant

The third season of the Hulu comedy ''Shrill'' did not cause much of a stir either, but that didn't stop Bryant from nabbing a lead-actress nomination, her first for ''Shrill'' after three for acting and writing on ''Saturday Night Live.'' She jumped ahead of Goldsberry and Maya Erskine of Hulu's ''Pen15.''

Snub: 'Full Frontal With Samantha Bee'

Bee's late-night show on TBS failed to garner a nomination for the first time in five years. That left the variety talk series category an all-boys club, with Stephen Colbert, Jimmy Kimmel, John Oliver and Trevor Noah grabbing their expected slots, and Conan O'Brien making it in for his final season.

Snub: Sarah Paulson

Paulson, an Emmy favorite with seven nominations (and one victory) in the last decade, was expected to score another for her portrayal of the title character in ''Ratched,'' Ryan Murphy's ''One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'' prequel for Netflix. But apparently she couldn't overcome the show's toxic reviews. Making it into the drama-actress field instead was Jurnee Smollett, in perhaps the only slightly surprising nomination among the 18 that HBO's ''Lovecraft Country'' pulled in.

Snub: Nicole Kidman

Kidman was considered a marginal candidate for a lead actress nod for HBO's ''The Undoing,'' but it doesn't feel fair that she was left out while her co-star, Hugh Grant, was nominated for lead actor in a limited series or movie.

Surprise: 'The Boys'

OK, it wasn't really a surprise -- Amazon's dark superhero tale drew a lot of attention and critical respect in its second season. But it's not a show you would have seen on the list a few years ago, and its presence in the drama-series category with ''Lovecraft Country'' and ''The Mandalorian'' solidifies the growing acceptance of science-fiction and fantasy shows. (If you include ''The Handmaid's Tale,'' we're talking about half the category.) In past years, its place might have gone to ''In Treatment,'' ''Perry Mason'' or ''The Mosquito Coast.''

Snub: 'Shameless'

Again, not really a snub -- no one was actually expecting a comedy-series nomination for Showtime's long-running ***working-class*** dramedy -- but there was a lot of sentimental hoping-against-hope for a miracle in the show's 11th and final season. The star, William H. Macy, pulled down his sixth lead-actor nomination for the role (of a total 10 lead-actor nods in various categories), so there's still a chance the show can go out with a big win.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/arts/television/emmys-2021-snubs-surprises-emily-in-paris.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/arts/television/emmys-2021-snubs-surprises-emily-in-paris.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Ethan Hawke played John Brown in the Showtime limited series ''The Good Lord Bird.'' He and the series were praised by critics but did not receive any major Emmy nominations. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN LYNCH/SHOWTIME)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Dueling Legacies Of Labor Day's Birth***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60SJ-XB01-JBG3-600G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 7, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1109 words

**Byline:** By Jenny Gross

**Body**

Descendants of two men with similar last names claim their great-grandfather was the true father of the holiday.

TOTOWA, N.J. -- For nearly 50 years, Bill Collins, a retired history teacher, spent Labor Day not at a beach or a barbecue, but at a cemetery. He and a dozen or more relatives would gather around the tombstone of his great-grandfather to celebrate his founding of the national workers' holiday.

JoAnn Richardson, a retired banker, also celebrates the founding of Labor Day. Ms. Richardson shows friends her family photos and yellowed newspaper clippings applauding her great-grandfather for proposing the holiday.

Mr. Collins and Ms. Richardson, who are not related, are honoring different men with similar names: Matthew Maguire and Peter J. McGuire.

At least as far back as 1894, there has been a debate over which man is the true father of Labor Day.

Maguire, a machinist, and McGuire, a carpenter, shared a few similarities beyond their last names. Both were respected union leaders with Irish parents, both fought for the betterment of the ***working class***, and both attended the first Labor Day parade in New York City in 1882.

The Department of Labor credits McGuire, who founded the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and was a co-founder of the organization that later became the American Federation of Labor, as the true father of Labor Day.

But over the years, evidence has emerged suggesting that credit should go to Maguire, the secretary of the Central Labor Union, which organized the first Labor Day parade.

Now, researchers from MyHeritage, a genealogy site based in Israel, say they have uncovered additional evidence that Maguire deserves credit, after gathering records from descendants of McGuire and Maguire. A key piece of evidence, they say, is an interment card from 1917, held at the Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Totowa, N.J., where Maguire is buried, that includes a handwritten message: ''This man founded Labor Day.'' (A spokeswoman for the cemetery said she did not know who wrote those words or when.)

Ms. Richardson, a great-granddaughter of McGuire, said she did not think there was any truth to claims that someone else was the actual father of Labor Day.

''I would fall right off my chair,'' said Ms. Richardson, 76, who lives in Florida. ''There's no way I would believe it after all these years.''

In 1956, when she was 12, she was a guest of honor at a White House ceremony in which President Dwight D. Eisenhower unveiled a stamp dedicated to McGuire and the labor movement.

Since McGuire's death in 1906, union officials and politicians have made an annual pilgrimage to Pennsauken, N.J., to visit his gravestone and a statue in his honor. Inscribed into both are the words ''Father of Labor Day.''

On Friday, in an event that was smaller than usual because of the coronavirus pandemic, about 20 officials, including Representative Donald Norcross of New Jersey, visited McGuire's grave to honor him and the workers he championed. Mr. Norcross said he had visited the grave for nearly 60 years, since he was a small child.

Referring to Labor Day, Mr. Norcross, a Democrat, said McGuire ''was the person who led the charge to actually get this done.''

Unlike McGuire's grave, Maguire's is modest and makes no mention of Labor Day.

Mr. Collins, 75, who also lives in Florida, said his family never had any doubt that Maguire, not McGuire, deserved the credit. Mr. Collins's uncle, also named Matthew Maguire, started the Maguire Association in the early 1970s to promote Maguire as the true founder.

''As far as I'm concerned, he's the father of Labor Day,'' Mr. Collins said.

The first Labor Day parade was held in New York City in 1882, when thousands of workers, including Maguire and McGuire, rode in carriages or marched in a procession uptown. They carried banners calling for, among other reforms, ''Eight Hours for a Legal Day's Work,'' according to a New York Times account of the parade.

As the economy recovered from the depression of the 1870s, there was a growing sense among American workers that capitalism had become corrupted by business leaders who had amassed too much power, said Edward T. O'Donnell, a history professor at the College of the Holy Cross whose research focuses on the Gilded Age. The parade was both a celebration of the contributions the ***working class*** had made in the United States and a protest against inequality.

The New York parade grew in size each year, and states and municipalities adopted legislation to recognize Labor Day. In 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed a bill into law declaring Labor Day a federal holiday.

Within days, a New Jersey newspaper, The Morning Call, published an editorial titled ''Honor to Whom Honor Is Due,'' arguing that Cleveland should have given credit to Maguire, the ''undisputed author of Labor Day as a holiday.''

The mix-up may be explained by Maguire's reservedness and his focus on seeking justice for workers, rather than on his legacy, Mr. Collins said, citing his mother's description of his great-grandfather. McGuire, on the other hand, seemed to have no problem taking credit.

''It really has to do with the different personalities of the two men -- one an extrovert, one an introvert, one self-serving and the other not,'' Mr. Collins said.

At the center of the debate is a Central Labor Union meeting that took place in May 1882. In an 1897 article in The Carpenter, a monthly union publication, McGuire wrote that he first proposed the holiday at that meeting. The parade's grand marshal, William McCabe, later recalled, in an 1897 article in The Cleveland Recorder, that Maguire, not McGuire, proposed the idea at that meeting.

Still, over time, McGuire became accepted as the founder. Maguire, who ran for vice president on the Socialist Labor Party ticket in 1896, may have been pushed aside because his political beliefs were deemed too radical to be associated with Labor Day, Mr. Collins said.

Michael Kazin, a history professor and labor historian at Georgetown University, said that he did not know who had the original idea, but that it took more than one person to persuade the federal government to adopt a new national holiday.

''It caught on locally, gradually, more than in one fell swoop,'' he said.

Mr. Collins said he was not bothered that, for 126 years, Maguire, his great-grandfather, had been overshadowed.

''Both of them were working for the same goal: an eight-hour workday for workers and a holiday to celebrate the laboring-class people,'' Mr. Collins said. ''In the long run, it really doesn't matter. We have Labor Day.''

Sheelagh McNeill contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/05/us/labor-day-founder.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/05/us/labor-day-founder.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Bill Collins believes his great-grandfather is the true father of Labor Day. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHELAN M. EBENHACK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Descendants of Peter J. McGuire, top, and Matthew Maguire are clashing over who founded Labor Day. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA BILL COLLINS

JOANN RICHARDSON)

**Load-Date:** September 7, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Treasure America Scavenges From the Poor; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66BN-YFM1-DXY4-X52R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 9, 2022 Friday 16:27 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2015 words

**Byline:** Vanessa Veselka

**Highlight:** The world’s blood banks are filled with “donations” collected in the United States.

**Body**

I first sold plasma in 2009 after years of avoiding it. It was a temporary solution to a continuous state of financial instability.

I was 40 years old and failing to find steady restaurant work in Portland, Ore., where I live, because I couldn’t compete with the flexible hours of childless applicants. After the 2008 crash, the number of server jobs plummeted, and college graduates flooded the market. For me, it was a knockout blow.

I ended up on food stamps with a 7-year-old, working two part-time minimum-wage jobs, in crisis whenever a roommate left and dependent on a CareCredit card at 27 percent A.P.R. for my health care. I can’t remember the specific instigation for selling plasma, whether it was an empty tank of heating oil or a broken alternator, but one morning when my daughter was at her dad’s, I went out early to see what I could make.

Plasma donation centers tend to occupy the same real-estate market as tanning and nail salons, dialysis clinics, Goodwill stores, fast-food chains and carwashes, which means they are often found in medium-crime neighborhoods subdivided by arterial roadways or freeway exchanges. The intake process for first-time donors can take the better part of a day. I arrived only a few minutes after opening, but the place was packed. A large man from a private security company stood in the corner with his arms crossed, gossiping about recent arrests and car crashes. I took a number and sat down.

The people around me seemed to be regulars who were trying to squeeze a donation in before work. I know because I heard them lying on their phones to their employers about why they were going to be late as the morning wore on. More women came in after nine, presumably because their children were now at school. There were men in the building trades with mud on their Carhartts, young Russian-speaking women in scrubs, one tweaker and a freshly shaved guy in a crisp white shirt trying to make deals on the phone who I thought worked for either a church or a cleaning supplies company.

After a few hours in the waiting room, I was called into the back office where I answered a range of questions, from “Have you ever been paid for sex?” to “Have you ever had a blood transfusion in the Falkland Islands?” The screener asked me to spread my hands so she could see my fingernails. “Wonderful, they’re all there!” she said, and stained one of my nails with a yellow dye.

The dye, which was semipermanent and visible only under a black light, was a tracking method used to make sure that people weren’t donating in multiple places simultaneously. Desperate people sometimes filed off an entire fingernail to get around it, so the screener had to check.

The screener then pulled out a paper with the pay scale on it. As a new client, I would get $40 for my first “donation” and $60 for my second. After that I would make no more than $25 a visit. Each time, I would spend one to two hours in a waiting room, then roughly 90 minutes in a bed while the company siphoned off roughly as much plasma as federal regulations allowed.

Plasma is a physical manifestation of the body’s ability to bounce back. Albumin, immunoglobulins and fibrinogen, some of the key components of plasma, perform essential functions, including transporting hormones, enzymes and vitamins; defending the body from infections; and controlling bleeding. Plasma therapies have many uses, among them helping high-risk patients weather illnesses like avian flu and Covid-19.

The problem is that while plasma does many wonders for those who receive treatments derived from it, its removal threatens the health of the people who sell it. Repeated plasma donations can weaken a donor’s immune system and lead to other negative side effects. Very few countries allow payment for plasma, in part out of concern that financially vulnerable people would risk their health for money.

Other developed nations place stricter limits on the number of times one can donate. In Britain, plasma can be given every two weeks; in Germany, it’s up to 60 times a year. The United States allows a person to sell plasma 104 times a year. The word “sell” is, of course, rarely used in the United States. Instead, the term is “donate,” which allows companies to pretend they are not in the business of scavenging the bodies of poor people for biological treasure.

Our system of “donation” is so successful that the United States provides about two-thirds of the plasma available worldwide and accounts for 35 percent to 40 percent of the plasma used in medicine in Europe — so much of which comes out of the veins of America’s poor.

The first time I heard that you could sell plasma was in the mid-1980s. I was 15 and living under a bridge. The people around me called the plasma center the “stab lab.” I was too young to donate but would have signed up in a second if I’d had a fake ID.

Living on the street is very hard, and donating plasma was far from the only way to put your health at risk. I remember an 18-year-old sex worker at a Denny’s showing me what to do if I ever had to perform oral sex for money and a guy refused to wear protection. Out of nowhere, she produced a condom, then popped it between her cheek and gum so fast, I barely caught it, then rolled it down over two of her fingers with her mouth. “In case you ever need to know,” she said.

There were also worse things to sell than plasma. The 1984 National Organ Transplant Act, which made it illegal to pay for organs, had just gone into effect, but I remember meeting a man who had sold one of his kidneys. In a moment of bravado, he hoisted his shirt to show everyone the scar. Soon, the conversation died away as his shame became palpable. The math had not penciled out. His plan to get ahead had failed. He looked sick and was back in temporary housing.

In my mind, a 1980s “stab lab” looked like a shooting gallery, an image inspired by Martin Scorsese’s “Mean Streets” and promotional stills from “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest.” My own experience in 2009 turned out to be more like a long day at the D.M.V.

Paperwork completed, I was taken to a room with maybe 30 beds, which were filled with people hooked to apheresis machines, staring up at an episode of “Law &amp; Order” that was playing on TVs suspended from the ceiling. The bottles they were filling were bigger than I thought they would be. I’d also never seen plasma before and had assumed it would be red, but it was yellowish amber, a shade or two lighter than Lipton iced tea.

The phlebotomist punctured a vein in my arm with a 17-gauge needle and had me pump my fist until the blood started to flow up the line and into the machine where it would be separated into red and white blood cells, platelets and plasma. The plasma would go into the bottle, and the rest, along with complimentary saline solution, would flow back into me. She tinkered with the rate of draw so that it wouldn’t be too overwhelming for a first-time donor, and said that if I saw a bubble, I should call out right away.

My bottle took at least an hour to fill. I know because I was halfway into a second “Law and Order” episode before my machine stopped. When the phlebotomist was unhooking me, I asked how much they were going to make off my plasma. She shook her head and told me I did not want to know because it would only make me mad.

I sold plasma twice a week for a little over a month. After donating, I usually wanted to sleep. Sometimes I just felt mildly under the weather.

I was told that to make the most money quick, you had to hit all of the major plasma centers in the area in succession. That way you could rack up the incentive bonuses before you were a regular everywhere and permanently relegated to roughly $25 a donation. I also learned that if you drank a gallon of water in the afternoon the day before, the hydration would make donating faster.

I stopped doing it because $25 wasn’t worth it and, as a night shift worker, I didn’t need to feel more exhausted than I already was. But the strange thing about plasma, like many less than desirable ways to make money, is that once you know it’s an option, you can’t quite forget that it’s there. Economic precarity makes it hard to walk away from quick money.

Recently, I saw a flier saying I could make $825 a month selling plasma. Most of my life, I’ve lived under the delusion that there wasn’t a problem of mine that $400 to $800 wouldn’t fix. I don’t believe that anymore, but I am also not beyond a world where a hole like that wouldn’t have a real effect. I decided to go see how plasma donation had changed in the decade since I’d done it.

If my 2009 donation experience was like a trip to the D.M.V., my 2022 experience was more like shopping at a small Target. There were check-in kiosks in cheery colors and organized lines for regular donors, rewards programs, phlebotomists with preferred pronouns on name tags, and pictures of people helping each other hanging on the wall.

The clientele, however, was the same: poor people in need of cash. During the pandemic, the number of donations went down, forcing compensation to rise, particularly for people with Covid antibodies. Some donors [*reportedly*](https://www.businessinsider.com/plasma-donating-industry-vulnerable-health-2021-3)began intentionally exposing themselves to Covid to earn more money.

During intake, my information popped up in the database along with a photo of me from 2009. Although this was a different location, I had apparently returned to the same company. I asked the screener if I could still get the higher new donor rate. He gave me a “you and me against the Man” smile and promised to make it happen.

I was examined for tracks, had my liver palpated and pulled down my eyelids so they could check me for jaundice. I answered dozens of screening questions, including the one about visiting the Falkland Islands. Employees weighed me, pricked my finger, and ran my hematocrit level to make sure I could donate. Instead of staining my nail yellow, they took my fingerprint, which, they told me, could be shared with the government at its request. I downloaded the company’s app, and I was given the debit card I’d need to get my money, along with a warning that A.T.M. fees apply.

Afterward, standing in the parking lot surrounded by 20-year-old cars and dented minivans, holding a new debit card with notifications of coupons coming up on my new app, with a laundromat on one side of me and a liquor store on the other, I could not help thinking that I had found my way into an exceptional American experience. It’s one to which I no longer fully belong, but neither am I separate from it.

I have no problem with people being paid for plasma. I just think that companies should take less of the plasma and that donors should be paid more. I have always found poor and ***working-class*** people to be deeply altruistic. They know what it is to work sick, be dependent on a car you can’t afford to fix and need help from family, friends and sometimes strangers. Such experiences lead to empathy, and like all people, they want to be a part of something bigger, something with a purpose.

I was paid $100 for my recent donation. The next donation will pay me $125 plus $10 from a coupon I was given, but only if I go back within 45 days. If I go back later, I lose the new donor benefits and will make only $40 to $60 like the other regulars. Once or twice a week it goes through my head that I should just do the eight donations at the higher rate and then quit, and if not that, at least do the next one. I could get an oil change or maybe knock a little more off the balance transfer before the interest hits. After all, that $135 is just sitting there, cash on the table.

Vanessa Veselka is a former labor organizer and the author of the novels “The Great Offshore Grounds” and “Zazen.”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Antoine Cossé FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 10, 2022

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[***5 Takeaways From Ohio’s Primary Elections***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CC-MTJ1-DXY4-X4VY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 4, 2022 Wednesday 22:21 EST

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**Section:** US; elections

**Length:** 1361 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Weisman and Maggie Haberman

**Highlight:** Donald Trump showed his enduring grip over Republican primaries for Senate, and establishment Democrats won a House rematch against a progressive challenger.

**Body**

Donald Trump showed his enduring grip over Republican primaries for Senate, and establishment Democrats won a House rematch against a progressive challenger.

It was an early night in Ohio.

Despite questions about turnout amid bad weather, the results of the state’s primary elections on Tuesday didn’t produce many surprises.

In the night’s biggest race, J.D. Vance, the “Hillbilly Elegy” author who remade himself as a die-hard supporter of Donald J. Trump, [*won the closely watched Republican Senate primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/us/politics/vance-wins-trump-senate-primary-ohio.html) after his struggling campaign was lifted by a crucial endorsement from the former president last month.

Here are a few key takeaways from one of the first major primary nights of the 2022 midterm cycle:

It was a good night for Donald Trump, and not just because of Vance.

Mr. Vance’s victory over a crowded field, in which he consolidated support the day of the vote, was unequivocally good news for Mr. Trump. The former president’s [*endorsement on April 15*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/15/us/politics/ohio-jd-vance-trump-endorsement.html) came when Mr. Vance had been all but left for dead. Instead, with help from Mr. Trump and allies including Donald Trump Jr., Mr. Vance turned his campaign around.

“If Trump supports Vance, then we know he will be good,” said Kurt Oster, 59, a voter in Eaton, Ohio.

Trailing Mr. Vance by a relatively wide margin were Josh Mandel, a former Ohio treasurer who had run as a hard-right Trump loyalist — and, like Mr. Vance, faced criticism for contorting himself in doing so — and Matt Dolan, a state senator who sought more moderate voters. Mr. Dolan had seemed to gain ground during early voting, and other campaigns had closely monitored his apparent rise.

But the fact that Mr. Vance and Mr. Mandel received more than 50 percent of the vote combined running as pro-Trump candidates spoke to the former president’s enduring grip over certain races — particularly Senate primary elections, in which voters are sending people to fight for them in Washington as opposed to run their states.

In the general election, Mr. Vance, who improved as a campaigner over the course of the primary, will face Representative Tim Ryan, a moderate Democrat who also claims to understand the concerns of Ohio’s white ***working class***. Part of Mr. Trump’s rationale in endorsing Mr. Vance was his belief that Mr. Ryan would be a strong candidate, and that Mr. Vance was best positioned to take him on, according to a Republican briefed on the endorsement.

It’s not clear how much Mr. Vance’s message will change for the general election in a state that has become increasingly hostile for Democrats. Mr. Ryan, who is trying to win back blue-collar workers for his party, has signaled that he will try to paint Mr. Vance, a Yale Law School graduate and venture capitalist, as a creature of the cocktail party circuit and Silicon Valley. But he [*faces an uphill battle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/us/politics/tim-ryan-ohio-voters.html) in Ohio.

For governor, Republican voters in Ohio preferred a familiar face.

The night did not completely belong to Mr. Trump and Trumpism.

Gov. Mike DeWine easily won the Republican nomination for another term despite angering many in the Trump wing of the party for what they saw as his heavy hand in controlling the pandemic. Last month, Mr. DeWine said that he could not attend a Trump rally in his state because he was [*committed to celebrating*](https://www.cincinnati.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/04/14/ohio-governors-race-dewine-might-skip-trump-rally/7318416001/) Ulysses S. Grant’s 200th birthday.

His main opponent, Jim Renacci, sought out Mr. Trump’s endorsement but did not secure it, in large part because [*he was never a serious threat*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/29/us/politics/republican-governor-election-trump.html). Mr. Renacci’s “Ohio First” campaign was clearly an echo of Mr. Trump’s presidential bids, yet he never gained traction.

A Trump ally rose, as a Republican who backed impeachment departs.

One of Mr. Trump’s other victories in Ohio was that of Max Miller, a young former aide who worked for him in the White House.

With Mr. Trump’s encouragement, Mr. Miller ran for Congress in a state where his family has deep ties, initially as an attempt to take out a House Republican who had voted to impeach Mr. Trump after the Capitol riot. That congressman, Anthony Gonzalez, dropped out. But when the seats were redrawn during [*redistricting*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/07/us/politics/redistricting-maps-explained.html), Mr. Miller ran in a different district, and [*won his primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/03/us/elections/results-ohio-us-house-district-7.html) on Tuesday night.

Despite some ugly headlines — Mr. Miller was accused of domestic violence by an ex-girlfriend, Stephanie Grisham, one of Mr. Trump’s press secretaries, an allegation that he denied before suing for defamation — he is expected to carry the safely conservative district easily in November.

And if he does win, another House member whose candidacy began as a vengeance play will owe his political rise to the former president.

It’s better to be the only Trump acolyte than the only establishment Republican in a race.

Splitting the pro-Trump vote didn’t save Mr. Dolan’s candidacy in the Senate primary, but splitting the establishment Republican vote handed a pro-Trump candidate a surprising victory in Northwest Ohio’s Ninth Congressional District.

J.R. Majewski, a burly businessman who [*painted his vast back lawn into one huge Trump sign*](https://jrmajewski4congress.com/2021/09/16/j-r-majewski-sends-an-s-o-s-to-president-donald-j-trump/) in 2020, [*earned the right*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/03/us/elections/results-ohio-us-house-district-9.html) to challenge [*Representative Marcy Kaptur*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/28/us/politics/labor-unions-ohio-democrats.html), a Democrat who has served in Congress for decades. Her district was redrawn by the state’s Republican-controlled Legislature to try to thwart her bid for a 21st term.

The new boundaries attracted two G.O.P. state lawmakers, State Senator Theresa Gavarone and State Representative Craig Riedel, to enter the primary. Then, almost as an afterthought, came Mr. Majewski, who ran ads showing him [*carrying an assault-style rifle*](https://youtu.be/xZkgK4YrSyw), posted a “[*Let’s Go Brandon” rap*](https://youtu.be/9_KIvzIfJLQ) on his website and earned a somewhat incoherent acknowledgment from Mr. Trump at an Ohio rally.

The battle between Ms. Gavarone and Mr. Riedel, however, appeared to let Mr. Majewski squeeze through — though Ms. Kaptur may get the last laugh.

Ohio Democrats showed little appetite for adding a new ‘squad’ member.

Last August, Shontel Brown, a little-known chairwoman of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party, seemingly came from nowhere to [*win a House special election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/us/elections/shontel-brown-ohio-house.html) in Cleveland against Nina Turner, a former co-chair of Senator Bernie Sanders’s presidential campaign and a hero of the activist left.

In Washington, the Democratic establishment had dearly wanted to keep Ms. Turner away from the House. She had made something of a career of bashing centrist Democrats, and planned to be a brash voice in the expanding “squad” of progressive members of Congress. Ms. Brown was seen by many on the left as the establishment’s creation.

Ms. Turner surprised no one when she challenged Ms. Brown to a rematch in this year’s Democratic primary.

Her pitch was that this year would be different. Crossover Republicans from the Cleveland suburbs who had helped Ms. Brown in the special election would not be available this time, because they would be voting in the Republican primary. A redrawn district, still overwhelmingly Democratic, was more concentrated in and around Cleveland, Ms. Turner’s home base.

But Ms. Brown ran this year not as an unknown but as an incumbent, who could point to her vote for the bipartisan infrastructure law. The Congressional Progressive Caucus endorsed her, blunting any boost Ms. Turner might have received from Mr. Sanders’s endorsement and late support from Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York.

And in a disheartening blow for Ms. Turner and the activist left, Ms. Brown [*easily won the rematch*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/03/us/elections/results-ohio-us-house-district-11.html).

Kevin Williams contributed reporting from Eaton, Ohio.

Kevin Williams contributed reporting from Eaton, Ohio.

PHOTOS: Supporters of J.D. Vance celebrating his Republican Senate primary victory. Mr. Vance turned his campaign around with help from Donald J. Trump and allies. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Josh Mandel conceding on Tuesday night in Cleveland. He ran for the Senate as a Trump loyalist, and he and Mr. Vance got over 50 percent of the vote. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIAN KAISER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Left, Gov. Mike DeWine and his wife, Fran, after voting on Tuesday in Cedarville, Ohio. He easily won the Republican nomination for another term. Representative Shontel Brown, right, won a rematch against Nina Turner. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY PAUL VERNON/ASSOCIATED PRESS; JOHN KUNTZ/CLEVELAND.COM, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

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[***Biden Cabinet Leans Centrist, Leaving Some Liberals Frustrated***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61JK-R341-DXY4-X2GX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 19, 2020 Saturday 12:42 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 2024 words

**Byline:** Michael D. Shear and Michael Crowley

**Highlight:** Still a work in progress, the president-elect’s personnel choices are more pragmatic and familiar than ideological. It’s what he campaigned on, but the left had hoped for more.

**Body**

Still a work in progress, the president-elect’s personnel choices are more pragmatic and familiar than ideological. It’s what he campaigned on, but the left had hoped for more.

WASHINGTON — His economic and environment teams are a little left of center. His foreign policy picks fall squarely in the Democratic Party’s mainstream. His top White House aides are Washington veterans.

Taken together, the picture that emerges from [*President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden)’s initial wave of personnel choices is a familiar, pragmatic and largely centrist one.

That fits with the implicit deal that the former vice president and longtime senator offered Democrats during the 2020 primaries — that he was neither as progressive as Senators Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, nor a product of Wall Street like Michael Bloomberg, the Republican-turned-Democrat who failed in his last-minute attempt to offer a moderate alternative to [*Mr. Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden).

Still a work in progress, Mr. Biden’s cabinet is designed to be an extension of his own ideology, rooted in long-held Democratic Party principles but with a greater focus on the plight of ***working-class*** Americans, a new sense of urgency about climate change and a deeper empathy about the issues of racial justice that he has said persuaded him to run for the presidency a third time.

His nominees are a reflection of the image that his campaign conveyed and that powered his defeat of President Trump. They are diverse in ways that appeal to liberals, young voters and people of color. And they are moderate like the swing voters who helped him win in states like Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan.

“That’s him,” said Bill Daley, who served as White House chief of staff for President Barack Obama. “That’s his whole campaign.”

For his cabinet, Mr. Obama assembled outsize personalities like Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Robert M. Gates, the defense secretary who was a holdover from the George W. Bush administration.

Mr. Biden’s cabinet so far has no one likely to draw the same kind of high-octane attention. His choices have decades of quiet, behind-the-scenes policymaking experience, matching Mr. Biden’s pledge to return basic competence to the government after four years of Mr. Trump’s chaotic administration.

His nominees and choice of top White House aides make only a nod to the progressive movement in the Democratic Party that helped Mr. Biden win the election. That has left some of the party’s liberals frustrated by what they say is the creation of a new administration dominated by old thinking, unprepared to confront the post-Trumpian world of deeper racial and economic inequities and more entrenched Republican resistance.

There is no one yet in Mr. Biden’s cabinet carrying the torch for the policies that he campaigned against during the primaries: free college for everyone, a costly Green New Deal, an anti-Wall Street agenda, universal health care and steep increases in the minimum wage.

The danger, said Faiz Shakir, who managed Mr. Sanders’s 2020 presidential campaign, is that Mr. Biden does not pay sufficient attention to the struggle of ***working-class*** people, whose fortunes have declined under the economic policies of presidents from both parties. He said a return to the Democratic status quo, before Mr. Trump’s presidency, was not enough.

“One of the concerns is that you want to pierce the bubble of how our Democratic elites have thought about politics and policymaking and urge them to go bolder,” Mr. Shakir said. “And now we’re relying on a lot of people’s instincts who’ve been honed, quite frankly, during a different era of politics.”

Varshini Prakash, the executive director and a founder of the Sunrise Movement, a liberal group focused on climate change, praised Mr. Biden’s environmental picks as a welcome “departure from the leave-it-to-the-markets way of thinking that defined the early 2000s.”

But she said she hoped Mr. Biden would do more to promote younger people whose experience is not defined by previous generations.

“It is still an older, whiter, male-er group in general,” she said. “We are never going to develop the leadership we need for decades to come if we keep appointing people who are in their 60s and 70s who have served in multiple administrations already.”

It can be difficult to divine the precise policy direction of an administration from the selection of a dozen cabinet members. Whatever the views of the individual secretaries, their mandates once in office will now be defined by the new president’s promises and policies.

Xavier Becerra, Mr. Biden’s pick to lead the Department of Health and Human Services, for example, has previously embraced “Medicare for All” proposals. Now he will be called on to support the president-elect’s plan for improving Obamacare.

But Mr. Biden has already signaled a more populist bent than Mr. Obama did. He talks about strengthening unions and creating ***working-class*** jobs with significant spending increases to build new roads, bridges and highways and repair the old ones.

On Saturday, he said he would [*make climate change a focus of the economic recovery*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) from the coronavirus, calling for the construction of 1.5 million energy-efficient homes and 500,000 new electric-vehicle charging stations, and for the creation of a “civilian climate corps” to carry out projects.

His economic advisers believe in helping marginalized workers, expanding labor rights, addressing income inequality and bringing an end to gender and racial discrimination in the workplace.

And like previous presidents, Mr. Biden has already signaled that he wants to firmly control policymaking from inside the White House, installing close confidants and people with years of experience who will work down the hall from the Oval Office.

The fingerprints of [*Ron Klain*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden), the incoming White House chief of staff and a longtime aide to Mr. Biden, are already evident in the selection of White House advisers with the kind of stature and experience to face off with the cabinet secretaries during debates over complex and difficult issues.

[*Susan Rice*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden), who was Mr. Obama’s national security adviser, will oversee domestic policy for Mr. Biden, who chose her not for her substantive expertise, but because of her ability to wrangle competing interests in a sprawling and often unruly government bureaucracy.

Ray LaHood, a Republican who served as transportation secretary for Mr. Obama, said that dynamic was also evident in Mr. Biden’s decision to put John Kerry, the former secretary of state, and Gina McCarthy, who ran the Environmental Protection Agency, [*in charge of climate policy*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) in the White House.

“Every big major legislative or other issue was run out of the White House,” Mr. LaHood said, recalling the Obama White House. And, he predicted, it will be the same in the Biden administration.

Some important pieces of the cabinet puzzle have yet to fall into place.

Mr. Biden has not chosen an [*attorney general*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) to oversee the Justice Department, which will be at the center of the president-elect’s promise to expand voting rights, overhaul law enforcement and enforce racial justice in the nation’s court system.

Nominees for the Labor, Education and Commerce Departments also have yet to be announced, leaving it unclear exactly how Mr. Biden intends to carry out his vision for more investment in schools, safer and more prosperous jobs, and an improved economic environment for business.

But some themes are emerging.

One of Mr. Biden’s most urgent challenges as president will be to quickly turn around an economy wracked by the [*coronavirus pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden), with millions of people out of work and businesses struggling to survive.

To do that, the president-elect will lean on an economic team that tilts to the left of their predecessors in the Obama administration.

[*Cecilia Rouse*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden), his pick to lead the Council of Economic Advisers, is expected to focus on the forces that hold people back in the economy and the challenges that workers face, especially in the so-called gig economy.

[*Janet Yellen*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden), his choice to be Treasury secretary, is a labor economist who has long championed efforts to raise wages. Heather Boushey, named to be a member of the Council of Economic Advisers, is a proponent of a higher minimum wage and has fought for providing up to 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave to workers.

There is not a deficit hawk among Mr. Biden’s nominees, but neither are there members of the progressive left championed by Mr. Sanders or Ms. Warren. Any member of Mr. Biden’s team might have worked for Hillary Clinton, had she won the presidency four years ago.

On foreign policy, Mr. Biden has turned to a group of people with whom he has worked closely, a largely nonideological group who appear willing to execute his vision rather than pursue agendas of their own.

“It’s like his Senate staff,” said Leon E. Panetta, a former Clinton White House chief of staff and [*C.I.A. director*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden) and defense secretary in the Obama administration. “I don’t think you can say that they come with a set of ideological ideals. They come ready to serve the president, and people need to understand that Joe Biden to a large extent is going to call the shots here.”

Mr. Biden’s nominee for secretary of state, [*Antony J. Blinken*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/joe-biden), first worked for Mr. Biden as a Senate committee staff member in the 1990s and more than anyone else is an extension of his brain on foreign policy. In public remarks of his own, Mr. Blinken has generally reflected Mr. Biden’s views, including a belief in the value of American global leadership, alliances and military strength.

Mr. Biden’s choices for director of national intelligence, national security adviser and defense secretary are all seen as skillful managers and bureaucratic operators; none are associated with strong political views or distinct policy agendas.

“It’s a solid, sensible, centrist foreign policy team that’s likely to work well together and be well aligned to the president’s priorities,” said Kori Schake, the director of foreign and defense policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute.

Early in his presidency, as he weighed his Afghanistan strategy, Mr. Obama felt pressure for a substantial troop increase from Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Gates. Mr. Biden is unlikely to face such tensions within his own team.

Mr. Biden has said that addressing the threat from climate change is one of his top four priorities, along with confronting the Covid-19 pandemic, helping the economy to recover and moving toward racial justice in the United States. He is likely to provide another broad overview of his goals in his Inaugural Address and offer more detail in his first address to Congress shortly after taking office.

But achieving the kind of sweeping change he has promised will be more difficult if Democrats fail to win two Senate runoffs in Georgia early next month. Republicans only have to win one of the two races to maintain control of the Senate and the power to block much of Mr. Biden’s agenda.

And even if Democrats win, the party’s margins in both the Senate and the House will be razor thin, making it far less likely that Congress will embrace bold and costly policy proposals. Tom Ridge, a former Republican governor in Pennsylvania who served as secretary of Homeland Security for President George W. Bush, said many of the solutions will come from the departments led by Mr. Biden’s cabinet.

“I don’t know of a modern president who, on the date of being sworn in, was confronted with the range of challenges that he and this administration confront the moment he takes office,” Mr. Ridge said. “These are tough, challenging problems. At this point in time, it’s good to have experienced hands.”

PHOTOS: President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s cabinet choices have decades of policymaking experience. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HILARY SWIFT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Soldiers returning from Afghanistan. Mr. Biden is unlikely to face internal clashes on troop levels. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES); A food bank in Massachusetts. Mr. Biden has the urgent challenge of turning around the economy. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CODY O’LOUGHLIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A24)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2021

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[***‘The Most Dangerous Person in the World Is Randi Weingarten’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:683Y-6XB1-DXY4-X1KX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 28, 2023 Friday 17:56 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 7956 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Mahler

**Highlight:** School closures and culture wars turned classrooms into battlegrounds — and made the head of one of the country’s largest teachers’ unions a lightning rod for criticism.

**Body**

When the former secretary of state and C.I.A. director Mike Pompeo, a man who had dealt firsthand with autocrats like Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping, described Randi Weingarten as “the most dangerous person in the world” last November, it seemed as though he couldn’t possibly be serious.

Weingarten is 65 and just over five feet tall. She is Jewish and openly gay — she’s married to a rabbi — and lives in Upper Manhattan. She is the longtime president of the American Federation of Teachers, which is not even the country’s biggest union of public-school educators. (The A.F.T. has 1.7 million members; the National Education Association has three million.) The A.F.T. did give in excess of $26 million to Democratic candidates and causes in the 2022 election cycle, but the Carpenters and Joiners union gave more than twice as much.

Pompeo, whose remarks appeared in a widely quoted interview with the online news site Semafor, had nevertheless put his finger on something: The pandemic and the ongoing culture wars over race and gender had shifted America’s educational landscape, and with it the political landscape. “It’s not a close call,” [*Pompeo elaborated.*](https://www.semafor.com/article/11/21/2022/mike-pompeo-2024-trump) “If you ask, ‘Who’s the most likely to take this republic down?’ It would be the teachers’ unions, and the filth that they’re teaching our kids, and the fact that they don’t know math and reading or writing.”

Other Republicans quickly piled on. Pompeo had set the bar high, and they needed to invoke equally hot rhetoric and florid imagery to ensure headlines of their own. “Big labor unions have taken over public education,” Senator Tim Scott of South Carolina told Fox News in late January. “That’s bad for parents, bad for kids, bad for America.” Senator Marco Rubio of Florida mounted his attack in The American Conservative magazine: “Our schools are a cesspool of Marxist indoctrination. Dangerous academic constructs like critical race theory and radical gender theory are being forced on elementary school children.” Gov. Ron DeSantis, who had already garnered national attention with his book bans, Florida’s “Stop WOKE Act” and its so-called Don’t Say Gay legislation, unveiled a new proposal designed to rein in “overreaching teachers’ unions,” which a column on the Fox website enthusiastically embraced as “a blueprint to dominate union bosses.” [*Donald Trump, declaring that public schools*](https://nypost.com/2023/01/31/trump-says-public-education-taken-over-by-pink-haired-communists-plans-to-give-power-back-to-parents/) “have been taken over by the radical left maniacs” and “pink-haired communists,” released his own plan to Save American Education. It was clear that Weingarten had come to stand for something much larger than herself.

The last few years have been historically convulsive ones for education in America. Some 1.3 million children left the public schools during the pandemic. The results from the most recent [*National Assessment of Educational Progress*](https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/) — known as the nation’s report card — revealed the largest average score decline in reading since 1990 and the first average score decline in math since 1969. Schools have reported major increases in rates of student depression, anxiety and trauma. School districts around the country are experiencing severe teacher shortages. Last fall, a Gallup poll found that the percentage of [*adults who are satisfied with the nation’s public schools had fallen*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/1612/education.aspx) to 42 percent, a 20-year low.

This crisis has political consequences. The pandemic closures and classroom culture wars have fueled the revival of the dormant school-choice movement, with Republican-led states around the country passing an array of far-reaching [*school-voucher bills*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/universal-school-vouches-education-culture-wars/). These bills come in different forms but share a common goal: to enable parents to move their children out of America’s government-run education system en masse. All of the prospective Republican presidential candidates for 2024 have committed to building on this growing movement, whose roots can be traced back more than 50 years, to the battle over desegregation. The same pandemic closures that demonstrated how central public schools are to the communities they serve also became the inciting event for an unprecedented effort to dismantle them.

The public-education system may not be very popular right now, but both Democrats and Republicans tend to like their local schools and their children’s teachers. The unions that represent those teachers, however, are more polarizing. One reason for this is that they are actively involved in partisan politics, and, more specifically, are closely aligned with the Democrats, a reality powerfully driven home during the pandemic. A study by Brown University’s Annenberg Institute found that Democratic districts, with correspondingly [*strong teachers’ unions, returned to in-person learning*](https://www.edworkingpapers.com/ai20-304) more slowly and gradually than Republican districts with weaker unions. In some ways, Randi Weingarten and the A.F.T. — the union “boss” and “big labor” — are a logical, even inevitable target for the G.O.P.

A frequent knock on the A.F.T. is that it puts teachers before students, a framing neatly encapsulated by a quote attributed to the union’s former president Al Shanker: “When schoolchildren start paying union dues, that’s when I’ll start representing the interests of schoolchildren.” Shanker’s biographer, Richard Kahlenberg, found no record of Shanker’s ever saying this and doesn’t think he ever did, but that hasn’t stopped the union’s critics from citing it. Weingarten has a rebuttal: Good working conditions for teachers make good learning conditions for students. But Weingarten does in fact represent teachers, not students. Often, such as when it comes to issues like classroom size or school budgets, their interests align. Sometimes they don’t.

For a period during the pandemic, the two groups’ apparent interests diverged, and a series of fault lines started opening across the country, separating not only Republicans from Democrats but also parents from teachers, centrist Democrats from progressives and urban Black parents from suburban white parents, and even dividing the teachers’ union itself. These fault lines widened as the reopening debates merged into fights over how schools should deal with the teaching of the country’s racial history as well as sexuality and gender identity.

What became increasingly clear to me over the last several months, as I spoke to dozens of politicians, political consultants, union leaders, parent activists and education scholars about the convulsions in American education, is that it’s no longer possible to separate education from politics, and that public schools are more vulnerable than they’ve ever been. How did Randi Weingarten wind up at the center of the 2024 Republican primary? The only way to answer that question is to re-examine America’s education wars and the competing political agendas that are driving them. “Oh, goodness, no! Not at all!” Pompeo answered when I asked if he was, perhaps, being hyperbolic in his remarks about Weingarten. “It’s not just about Ms. Weingarten, but she has been the most visible face of the destruction of American education.”

In the chaotic early months of the pandemic, teachers were celebrated as essential workers, heroically continuing to serve America’s children from their homes, often with limited resources and inadequate technology. But during the summer of 2020, things started to shift. There was already early research showing that students were suffering academically from remote learning. Schools across Europe had begun reopening without any major outbreaks, and many of America’s private and parochial schools were making plans to resume in-person learning at the start of the new school year. A lot of public-school parents wanted their children to be back in the classroom, too. But many teachers seemed resistant to the idea.

Because of the decentralized structure of America’s public-education system, which has some 14,000 different school districts, the federal government could not order schools to reopen for in-person learning, but in July 2020, President [*Trump threatened to withhold federal funds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/08/us/politics/trump-schools-reopening.html) from those that didn’t. His education secretary, Betsy DeVos, echoed his sentiments, demanding that the nation’s schools be “fully operational” by the fall without providing a specific plan for doing so.

Many members of the A.F.T. remained worried about putting themselves, their families and their communities at risk. The A.F.T. had issued its [*own reopening plan*](https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/media/2020/covid19_reopen-america-schools.pdf) in late April, calling for adequate personal protective equipment, a temporary suspension of formal teacher performance evaluations, a limit on student testing, a cancellation of student-loan debt and a $750 billion federal aid package to help schools prepare to reopen safely and facilitate “a real recovery for all our communities.” Weingarten did not believe the Trump administration was giving schools what teachers needed to return to work safely. She publicly denounced Trump and DeVos’s call to reopen as “reckless,” “callous” and “cruel,” and the A.F.T. passed a resolution supporting local strikes if schools were forced to reopen in areas where a variety of safety conditions hadn’t been met. As if to underscore the point, some [*teachers took to the streets in protest with mock coffins.*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/26/us/nyc-teachers-protest-covid/index.html)

Florida became a test case. Even as the state’s Covid death rate was surging in July, its Department of Education issued an emergency order requiring schools to fully reopen in August. The state’s largest teachers’ union, the Florida Education Association, affiliated with both the A.F.T. and the N.E.A., sued DeSantis and his education commissioner, Richard Corcoran, among others, to block the reopenings, arguing that the order violated the state’s Constitution, which guarantees Florida residents the right to “safe” and “secure” public schools. At a virtual news conference announcing the lawsuit, Weingarten accused DeSantis of being in “intense denial.” After some Florida schools started reopening, an A.F.T. political action committee produced a [*TV ad attacking Trump,*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svnqsKd8Y4I) citing claims that schools were becoming superspreader sites and that children were being used as “guinea pigs.”

As the lawsuit was working its way through the legal system — the union won in the lower court but lost on appeal — Florida was holding its biannual school-board elections, and the prospective return to in-person learning became the defining issue in many races. In Brevard County, Tina Descovich, the incumbent, was in favor of an immediate return to the classroom and opposed mask mandates. She was challenged by a public-school speech-language pathologist, Jennifer Jenkins, who called for a more cautious approach, including a mask mandate for all but the youngest children.

Jenkins easily won the late-August election, but Descovich was just getting started. She called Tiffany Justice, a fellow school-board member in nearby Indian River County, to suggest that they create their own parents’ rights group, Moms for Liberty. “We’ve got to do something here,” Justice recalled Descovich’s telling her. “We have to help these parents because they’re trying to step up and speak out, and the schools are just slamming them at every turn.”

Other parents across the political spectrum started organizing, too. Many public schools hadn’t fully reopened for the start of the new school year, and they were frustrated. They wrote op-eds, held rallies or met via Zoom with school-board members and other elected officials, often finding themselves at odds with local teachers’ unions and union-backed school-board members. The first fault lines had started to open.

By the fall of 2020, the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer and the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement had prompted a national reckoning over race, as well as an ensuing backlash. The politics of the pandemic had begun to merge with the culture wars, and both were playing out most vividly in the American classroom. An esoteric academic term — critical race theory, or C.R.T. — had improbably become the rallying cry for a conservative campaign focused on the teaching of the nation’s racial history. President Trump, running for re-election, eagerly took up the cause, blaming “decades of left-wing indoctrination in our schools” for the Black Lives Matter protests and urging America’s parents to fight back against efforts to teach their children “hateful lies about this country.”

The [*A.F.T. championed the new movement for racial equity,*](https://www.aft.org/news/aft-expands-anti-racism-efforts-calls-separating-police-and-schools) committing publicly to the fight to end “systemic racism in America.” Some of the A.F.T.’s locals went further. The Chicago Teachers Union took to the streets to demand that the city’s board of education cancel a $33 million contract between Chicago’s public schools and its Police Department for the safety officers who staff the city’s public schools. United Teachers Los Angeles helped lead a successful fight to press its school district to slash its police budget by $25 million and use the money instead to hire more counselors, psychologists and social workers.

That October, Weingarten embarked on a cross-country bus tour to get out the vote for Joe Biden. His Democratic predecessor, Barack Obama, had not always been in sync with the A.F.T.; the union opposed elements of Obama’s Race to the Top program, which sent money to states that reformed their public-education systems by, among other things, weakening teacher tenure, introducing data-driven accountability measures and adding more nonunionized charter schools. Biden, by contrast, vowed to focus on neighborhood public schools rather than charters and criticized the standardized-testing regimes and teacher evaluations that were a hallmark of Race to the Top. Weingarten’s name was even floated as a candidate for secretary of education. She didn’t get the job, but she and the head of the N.E.A., Becky Pringle, were invited to the White House on the day after Biden’s inauguration. The teachers’ unions finally had a true ally in the Oval Office. The first lady, Jill Biden, taught at a public community college herself. ([*“I sleep with an N.E.A. member every night,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oc6AsoHHk8) President Biden would later quip.) The new administration gave teachers preferential access to the Covid vaccine, behind some other essential workers but ahead of the general population. Biden had pledged to quickly reopen America’s schools, and the A.F.T. was communicating with top officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention about its guidelines for doing so, suggesting that the agency add a provision allowing for its recommendations to be revisited if a highly contagious Covid variant emerged. But the anger that had been unleashed by the pandemic closures and the culture wars had not abated.

Justice and Descovich, the former Florida school-board members, incorporated Moms for Liberty in early 2021 with a far more ambitious and political agenda than simply advocating a return to maskless, in-person classes. As the group’s mission statement explained, it was “dedicated to fighting for the survival of America by unifying, educating and empowering parents to defend their parental rights at all levels of government.” The group built its brand with bumper magnets and T-shirts emblazoned with the motto “We Do NOT Co-Parent With the Government.” It was embraced by the right-wing media and then by donors eager to turn it into a national movement, while nurturing its grass-roots image, mirroring the model created by the Tea Party, the quasi-populist uprising fueled by conservative billionaires and Fox News. The former Fox host Megyn Kelly headlined a fund-raising event in Florida, speaking about, as Justice recalled, “the woke ideology” coming out of America’s classrooms. Moms for Liberty soon expanded beyond Florida. That summer, a chapter in Tennessee presented an 11-page [*letter of complaint to the state’s Department of Education,*](https://www.williamsonherald.com/moms-for-liberty-complaint/pdf_e44766ae-51ed-11ec-b49a-e31af5310c00.html) objecting to a curriculum that it said “focuses repeatedly and daily on very dark and divisive slivers of American history” and works to “sow feelings of resentment, shame of one’s skin color and/or fear.” After several Republican states passed laws limiting the teaching of race-related subjects and banning C.R.T., Weingarten gave a speech citing a historian who had compared their efforts to the censorship of the Soviet regime. A clip of the speech spent days in heavy rotation on Fox News, and it inspired an editorial in The Wall Street Journal: [*“The Teachers Unions Go Woke.”*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-teachers-unions-go-woke-11625697757)

It was not Glenn Youngkin’s plan to turn Virginia’s 2021 governor’s race into a referendum on America’s battles over education. Initially, he was just hoping to prevent his opponent, Terry McAuliffe, from owning an issue that historically favored Democrats. “We couldn’t afford to let them take the fight to us,” Jeff Roe, one of Youngkin’s chief strategists, told me.

By almost every measure, Youngkin, a former private-equity executive with no political experience, was the underdog. McAuliffe, a Democratic stalwart dating back to the Clinton presidency, served as Virginia’s governor between 2014 and 2018. (A state law barring governors from serving consecutive terms prevented him from running for re-election.)

Biden had beaten Trump by 10 points in Virginia, and McAuliffe led in the early polls. But Virginia’s schools had been among the last on the East Coast to fully reopen, and the lingering bitterness from these pandemic closures had formed a politically combustible mix with the rising culture wars. Amid the national racial reckoning of 2020, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Fairfax County — one of the top public high schools in the nation — had jettisoned its admissions exam, prompting a lawsuit by 17 families, many of them Asian American, who viewed the change as a form of discrimination against their children.

Some of the most bitter fights were unfolding in suburban Loudoun County, where a proposal to allow transgender children to choose which bathrooms and pronouns they wished to use had sparked an angry backlash among conservative parents. The tensions were later exacerbated by news of a sexual assault in a high school girls’ bathroom perpetrated by a boy who was wearing a skirt at the time. Loudoun’s increasingly [*contentious school-board meetings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/14/us/loudoun-county-school-board-va.html) became spectator events, attracting the sustained attention of right-wing media outlets like Fox News and The New York Post.

Youngkin held “Save Our Schools” rallies and pledged to ban C.R.T. from the state’s schools. But his campaign’s internal education polls revealed a wide range of voter priorities across the state. The race and gender issues that resonated with his base — Trump voters — weren’t going to be enough to win. He microtargeted other education voters with different ads; it was a scattershot approach, though, at least until a gubernatorial debate in late September.

During his tenure as governor, McAuliffe had vetoed a bill — prompted by a mother who objected to her high school senior son’s reading Toni Morrison’s “Beloved” in an A.P. English class — that would have enabled parents to prevent their children from studying material they deemed sexually explicit. When Youngkin criticized that decision on the debate stage, [*McAuliffe shot back*](https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4979586/user-clip-terry-mcauliffe-i-parents-telling-schools-teach), “I don’t think parents should be telling schools what they should teach.”

Recognizing that they had just been handed a political gift, Youngkin’s staff cobbled together a digital and TV ad that very night, hoping to take advantage of the apparent gaffe before McAuliffe tried to clarify it. “I was sure he was going to walk it back on ‘Morning Joe,’” Roe told me. Instead, McAuliffe stood by his comment, saying that states and local school boards should have authority over what’s taught in schools.

Youngkin unified his diffuse education campaign under a new phrase, [*“Parents Matter,”*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/10/22/virginia-governor-youngkin-education-gop-516625) printing up T-shirts and bumper stickers and holding Parents Matter rallies in suburban and exurban counties that supported Biden in 2020. McAuliffe’s quote became the centerpiece of a rolling series of ads accusing him of going “on the attack against parents.” A longtime critic of organized labor, Youngkin also sought to drive a wedge between teachers and their unions, promising to devote at least $100 million to raise teacher salaries while at the same time saying that McAuliffe would bow to his special-interest allies rather than doing what’s best for children.

A vast majority of Virginia’s teachers belong to the N.E.A., which tends to cover more rural areas, not the A.F.T., whose members are generally concentrated in big cities. But Weingarten was friendly with McAuliffe from the Clinton days and was supporting his candidacy on Twitter and cable news, and the A.F.T. was helping him develop his education platform. Weingarten told me that she called McAuliffe after the debate to tell him that he was wrong — that parents should have a role in their children’s education. “Terry made a very bad mistake, which Youngkin capitalized on,” she said. (Through a spokesman, McAuliffe said that he talked to Weingarten regularly during the campaign but has no recollection of her criticizing his remark.)

By the fall of 2021, America’s public schools were fully open, but mask mandates were still being hotly contested. Weingarten had been working to try to rebuild trust between some families and their schools. In late September, just a couple of days after the McAuliffe debate, she held a virtual town hall on mask mandates with Open Schools USA, an anti-masking right-wing parents’ rights group that was rallying families to pull their children out of public schools, in an effort to foster open dialogue with the union’s critics.

Under Weingarten, who was elected president of the A.F.T. in 2008, the national union has gone all in on electoral politics, significantly increasing its political spending in the belief that the best way to serve its rank and file is by electing Democrats. The A.F.T. gave more than $1 million to McAuliffe, and Weingarten even knocked on doors for him in Alexandria. But Youngkin had the momentum in the final weeks of the race. His candidacy received another boost in October when Attorney General Merrick Garland ordered the F.B.I. to help address the rising threats of violence toward some school-board members. The order stemmed from a letter written to the Biden administration by the National School Boards Association, asking that federal law enforcement address threats against public school officials that “could be the equivalent to a form of domestic terrorism.” But Republican lawmakers and the right-wing media seized on the language in the letter to [*falsely accuse Garland of labeling parents*](https://www.factcheck.org/2022/04/attorney-general-never-called-concerned-parents-domestic-terrorists/) “domestic terrorists.” Youngkin quickly exploited the opportunity, releasing an ad claiming that the F.B.I. was trying to “silence parents.”

On the night before the election, Weingarten headed down to Virginia to warm up the crowd at McAuliffe’s closing rally in Fairfax County. She was eager to be on hand for the final push, and her staff asked for her to be given a speaking role at the rally. Because she had been such a generous and loyal supporter of McAuliffe’s, the campaign didn’t want to say no, even though some Democrats worried that they could be handing Youngkin another gift.

Politically speaking, Weingarten played perfectly into Youngkin’s Parents Matter campaign. That spring, a right-wing watchdog group, Americans for Public Trust, had gotten hold of email communications between top officials at the A.F.T. and the C.D.C. about the agency’s school-reopening guidelines through the Freedom of Information Act and had passed them on to The New York Post. The tabloid, which had been gleefully attacking Weingarten for years — dubbing her Whine-garten — trumpeted the story: [*“Powerful Teachers Union Influenced C.D.C. on School Reopenings, Documents Show.”*](https://nypost.com/2021/05/01/teachers-union-collaborated-with-cdc-on-school-reopening-emails/) The rest of the right-wing media and numerous Republican officials instantly jumped on the narrative. Senator Susan Collins of Maine grilled the C.D.C.’s director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, at a committee hearing over what she called the C.D.C.’s “secret negotiations” with the teachers’ union. Weingarten told me that the C.D.C. had solicited the A.F.T.’s input and that the union hadn’t suggested anything that the agency wasn’t already considering incorporating into its guidelines. But the appearance of a partisan union leader who had privately discussed the future of the nation’s schools with a government agency could be counterproductive in Virginia’s charged political climate.

Youngkin’s staff was giddy at the prospect. “I wanted to send them a gift basket,” Kristin Davison, another senior Youngkin strategist, told me. “It was almost as good as when Stacey Abrams came.” Republican elected officials around the country took potshots at their emerging villain. “The union boss responsible for shutting down schools is the final surrogate for Terry McAuliffe’s failing campaign,” Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas wrote on Twitter. “Virginians should vote accordingly!”

Youngkin won narrowly, motivating the G.O.P. base and making critical inroads in Loudoun, which had voted overwhelmingly for Biden. “For a closer for a campaign, you would think you would bring in a showstopper,” Betsy DeVos gloated on Fox News on election night. “I guess, in this case, he did bring in a showstopper in Randi Weingarten, because she definitely stopped the show for kids across the country.”

To Republicans, Weingarten may be too progressive, but to some members of her own union, she is not progressive enough. As the pandemic dragged on, she found herself caught between the wishes of the Democratic establishment she did not want to alienate and the left-leaning rank and file she represented. In Chicago, this tension came down, in early 2022, to the most elemental question for unions: whether or not to strike.

At the time, the new Omicron variant was surging, and Illinois was experiencing a record number of Covid cases and hospitalizations. The A.F.T.’s left-wing local, the Chicago Teachers Union, was concerned about sending its 25,000 members back to the classroom after winter break. The union was hearing similar worries from the Black families whose children make up a large percentage of the 320,000 students in Chicago’s public schools. Many white suburban and exurban parents had been desperate to see their children return to the classroom and were now committed to keeping them there; but many urban Black parents — who tended to live in smaller homes with more family members, had generally lower vaccination rates and had lost more loved ones to the pandemic — had been and remained wary, especially with a new variant spiking.

The union demanded mandatory testing for all teachers and students or a temporary return to remote learning. Mayor Lori Lightfoot, a Democrat, balked. President Biden and other prominent Democrats had been unambiguous about their desire for the [*nation’s schools to remain open.*](https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/12/biden-omicron-schools-tests.html) And the recent governor’s election in Virginia had underscored the political danger of introducing more disruptions to in-person learning, especially with the 2022 midterms just around the corner. For Weingarten and the national union, a strike in the country’s third-largest school system would obviously be politically costly.

The insurgent group that leads the C.T.U. first came together in 2008, when the bipartisan education-reform movement was sweeping across the country, dividing the Democratic Party. Centrist billionaires and centrist Democrats joined forces to lead the effort to introduce more testing, accountability and free-market competition to the public schools. But the more progressive wing of the party viewed these measures as an attack on the very institution of public education, unleashing the forces of capitalism on what is supposed to be a public good.

In Chicago, the reform efforts were led by Arne Duncan, the chief executive of the city’s public-school district and President Obama’s future education secretary. “Neoliberal education reform hit Chicago like a ton of bricks,” Jesse Sharkey, a high school history teacher, told me. Sharkey was a leader of this insurgency and would go on to become president of the C.T.U. from 2018 to 2022. “You’d flip on the TV or pick up a newspaper, and you couldn’t avoid hearing our so-called leaders trashing our schools, talking about their culture of failure,” he says. “It was an environment that was downright hostile to public education.”

Sharkey and his fellow insurgents didn’t believe the national union was fighting aggressively enough against these Democratic reformers. Tapping into Chicago’s long history of community-based organizing, they built their own grass-roots movement within the union called the Caucus of Rank-and-File Educators, or CORE. Led by Karen Lewis, a chemistry teacher and union activist, CORE challenged the C.T.U.’s incumbent leadership in 2010 and won control of the Chicago union. Two years later, after the city’s new Democratic mayor, President Obama’s former chief of staff Rahm Emanuel, embarked on an ambitious program to close public schools and replace them with charters, the C.T.U. called [*Chicago’s first teachers’ strike*](https://jacobin.com/2022/09/chicago-teachers-union-core-strike-10-year-anniversary) in 25 years. While the C.T.U. was voting on the strike authorization, Weingarten arrived in Chicago to appear on a panel with Emanuel at a conference hosted by the Clinton Global Initiative. It was a stunning turn of events that spoke to the tension between the A.F.T. and its left wing. For the political health of the union, Weingarten felt she needed to preserve her relationships with the country’s most powerful Democratic leaders, many of whom, like Emanuel, were centrist reformers.

As the 2012 strike wore on, Emanuel tried to turn the city against the teachers, accusing them of using [*Chicago’s children as “pawns,”*](https://www.today.com/video/rahm-emanuel-students-being-used-as-pawns-44514883755) and unsuccessfully sought a court order to force them to return to work. After seven days, the city backed down; the union won major concessions, including a 16 percent raise over four years and the right for teachers who were laid off as part of Emanuel’s ongoing school closures to be given priority for positions at other schools. The strike instantly became a galvanizing event for the union’s more progressive members. Not only does CORE still control the C.T.U., but like-minded left-wing slates have since taken control of A.F.T. locals in several other cities, too, including Los Angeles and Baltimore.

These insurgent caucuses are unified by what they call “social justice unionism.” They see public schools’ ongoing struggles to educate their students as inseparable from the larger societal and economic issues facing their ***working-class*** members and the poor communities whose children dominate their classrooms. “We are trying to promote a brand of unionism that goes all out in its fight for educational justice and is brave about taking on conflicts,” Sharkey says. “In some ways, we’re less careful about who we piss off nationally.”

There is a natural tension between these insurgent movements and the more establishment-oriented national union. In 2015, some rank-and-file members protested the A.F.T.’s decision to issue an early endorsement of Hillary Clinton, to whom Weingarten is close, who was running against the pro-labor Bernie Sanders. But the tension is about more than just politics; it also goes to the heart of the A.F.T.’s identity. To these caucuses, the union’s power comes from the collective strength of its members — from the bottom up — which can conflict with the top-down leadership style of Weingarten, who has cultivated a distinct public profile, sometimes characterized by her own tendency toward political hyperbole. An impulsive user of Twitter, she has been known to send out the occasional overheated message. During the pandemic, when DeSantis supporters were selling “Don’t Fauci My Florida” merchandise, including beer koozies, on the G.O.P.’s WinRed website, she wrote: “Disgusting. Millions of Floridians are going to [*die from Ron DeSantis’ ignorance.*](https://nypost.com/2021/07/15/weingarten-walks-back-claim-desantis-would-cause-floridians-to-die/)” She later apologized for the tweet.

Two days after returning from winter break in January 2022, with their demands still unmet, the C.T.U. called a strike. “The union isn’t stupid,” Sharkey, who was president at the time, told me. “We knew people were sick of the pandemic.” But, he went on, “for better or for worse we’re a union that strikes. We didn’t think it would be an easy or strategically wise thing, but there was a principle around it. It was something we had to do.”

The union already had a contentious relationship with Lightfoot, dating back to an 11-day strike over wages and class sizes in 2019 that ended with the city making major concessions. This time, though, the mayor had public opinion on her side, and she leveraged it in a flurry of media interviews, accusing the C.T.U. of holding Chicago’s children “hostage.” Lightfoot had long seen the A.F.T.’s local as a “political movement” whose ambitions extended well beyond protecting the rights of its workers. “I think, ultimately, they’d like to take over [*not only Chicago Public Schools,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/14/us/chicago-mayor-lori-lightfoot-on-what-she-learned-from-battling-the-teachers-union.html) but take over running the city government,” she told The Times in 2021.

The 2022 strike quickly became a political nightmare for national Democrats: A Democratic mayor was at war with a Democratic union, shutting down Chicago’s schools at a moment when children were finally back in the classroom and the country was just beginning to confront the learning loss and emotional trauma caused by the pandemic. Splinter groups of teachers in Northern California were also planning sickouts in the face of the Omicron surge. The Chicago strike put Weingarten in a difficult position. Publicly, she supported the C.T.U., while also saying that children needed to be in the classroom. Behind the scenes, she was calling and texting Sharkey constantly, offering to do anything she could — even arrange a call with people at the White House — to help press Lightfoot and end the strike. After a few days, under intensifying public pressure, the C.T.U.’s members voted to return to work. They had lost this battle, but they already had their sights on a bigger one: the city’s upcoming mayoral election.

In late October, just before the 2022 midterms, the results from the first full National Assessment of Educational Progress since the start of the pandemic were released, revealing that 40 percent of the country’s eighth-grade public-school students were not proficient in math, and 32 percent were not proficient in reading. The strikingly low scores instantly became a G.O.P. talking point: The culprit wasn’t the pandemic, schools or teachers but the unions and Democratic politicians beholden to them. “We cannot let the nation forget how teachers’ unions tried to hold our children’s futures for ransom,” said Representative Virginia Foxx of North Carolina, then the ranking Republican on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. “These union bosses, and the politicians who enabled them, must be held accountable.” Republicans up and down the ballot accused their Democratic opponents of carrying water for the teachers’ unions. A week before the election, Fox News ran a segment headlined “Have the Teachers Unions Sold Out Your Kids to the Democrats?”

Christopher Rufo, the right-wing activist who manufactured the obsession with C.R.T. two years earlier, was now on Fox News railing against another crisis — the [*“academic queer theory”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/24/us/politics/christopher-rufo-crt-lgbtq-florida.html) that he charged was being “mainlined” into America’s public schools — while Republican candidates condemned the “grooming” of children to identify as different genders in the nation’s classrooms. Many Republican candidates pledged their allegiance to a “Parents’ Bill of Rights,” requiring schools to provide information on reading lists, curriculums and whether a family’s child used another name or pronoun in school.

The A.F.T. spent in excess of $20 million in the 2022 midterms, more than it ever had in an off-year election, and Weingarten campaigned tirelessly with high-profile Democrats around the country, her arrival on the stump invariably inspiring glee among local Republican leaders. When she appeared in Michigan with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, one G.O.P. pundit, Kaylee McGhee White, described her on Fox Business Network as “the kiss of death.” Whitmer won easily, as did many other Democrats whose opponents had railed against drag-queen shows for children or L.G.B.T.Q.-themed books in school libraries. But Republican candidates who campaigned on another education issue — school choice — fared much better.

As a political matter, all the education battles that had erupted since the start of the pandemic — over school closures, over how the country’s racial history should be taught, over what sort of role parents ought to have in the classroom — were really about the same thing: whether America’s children should continue to be educated in government-run public schools. Did the pandemic and the culture wars reveal the indispensability of these schools to their communities and to the broader fabric of the nation, or did they only underscore their inherent limitations — in effect, making the case for school choice?

It was the University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman who first proposed the modern concept of school vouchers in a paper in 1955. Friedman was a champion of free markets, and his idea was to leverage the transformative power of capitalism to prod schools to compete for families’ dollars. But vouchers served another purpose too. The Supreme Court had just ruled on Brown v. Board of Education, and many white Americans were worried about the looming prospect of being forced to send their children to desegregated schools. [*Friedman saw an opening for his proposal*](https://econpapers.repec.org/paper/thkwpaper/inetwp161.htm), writing, “Under such a system, there can develop exclusively white schools, exclusively colored schools and mixed schools.”

Thirty years later, with Friedman serving as an economic adviser, President Reagan tried repeatedly to introduce federal school-voucher legislation. One of his most vocal opponents was Al Shanker, then the A.F.T.’s president, who argued that choice might be the point of “shopping malls,” but it was not the point of education, nor was it the reason taxpayers were expected to fund the nation’s public schools: “We do so not to satisfy the individual wants of parents and students but because of the public interest in producing an educated citizenry capable of exercising the rights of liberty and being productive members of society.”

Even Congress, where Republicans held the Senate majority, considered Reagan’s voucher proposals too radical. But the concept endured. In the 1990s, vouchers were championed by Christian conservatives like Paul Weyrich, a founder of the Heritage Foundation and mentor to Justice Clarence Thomas. Weyrich believed that the nation’s public schools had become “morally decadent institutions” and argued that the only answer was for Christians to educate their children themselves, ideally with government money. Over the years, some states experimented with limited voucher programs, typically designed to target discrete populations like children with special needs. But the pandemic created an opening for voucher advocates to think more ambitiously and move more aggressively. In fact, this had been the plan almost from the very beginning. Two months into the school closures, in the spring of 2020, Cardinal Timothy Dolan, the Catholic archbishop of New York, asked DeVos — then the education secretary and a longtime supporter of school choice — in an interview on SiriusXM radio if she intended to “utilize this particular crisis to ensure that justice is finally done to our kids and the parents who choose to send them to faith-based schools.” [*DeVos answered unequivocally*](https://www.chalkbeat.org/2020/5/20/21265527/devos-using-coronavirus-to-boost-private-schools-says-yes-absolutely): “Yes, absolutely.”

In 2021, at least 18 states created new school-choice programs or expanded existing ones, and more followed suit in 2022. Some of these new programs represent a significant departure from those of the past. Known collectively as universal voucher programs, they are available to everyone and can be applied toward any kind of school. The goal is not merely to disrupt public education but to defund and dismantle it. For years, the country’s lower courts largely agreed that spending taxpayer money on religious schools was unconstitutional. But last summer, the Supreme Court created a new precedent, ruling that it was in fact [*unconstitutional for voucher programs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/21/us/politics/supreme-court-maine-religious-schools.html) — in this case, one in rural Maine — to exclude religious schools.

DeVos, now back in the private sector, is one of the leading funders of this new national voucher campaign, primarily through an organization that she helped found called the American Federation for Children. The group and its affiliates spent $9 million on school-choice campaigns in 2022, at least $2.5 million of which came directly from DeVos and her husband. They spent much of this money in the primaries, turning support for school choice into a litmus test and targeting Republican incumbents opposed to it. Three-quarters of the candidates they supported won. “There wasn’t a red wave or a blue wave in the midterms, but there was a school-choice wave,” Corey DeAngelis, a senior fellow at the American Federation for Children, wrote to me in an email. Echoing Weyrich’s sentiments about the moral decadence of American public education, DeAngelis quoted Voddie Baucham, a Christian home-schooling advocate: “We cannot continue to send our children to Caesar for their education and be surprised when they come home as Romans.”

DeAngelis identified Weingarten as a useful political foil long before Mike Pompeo. He has been trolling her relentlessly on Twitter since 2021, ostentatiously thanking her for starting “the school choice revolution.” In March, at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference in suburban Washington, he posed with a life-size cardboard cutout of her clutching an award labeled “Threat to America’s Children,” his left thumb raised in approval.

Lori Lightfoot, the mayor of Chicago, was right about the local teachers’ union’s political ambitions. In February, Brandon Johnson, a former middle-school teacher and paid union organizer, challenged her in the city’s mayoral election. It was a long shot — one early poll put his support at 3 percent — but for the C.T.U., the Johnson campaign was a natural progression. To pursue their broader agenda, which reaches beyond education into areas like housing and policing, they needed the kind of power that can come only from winning partisan political elections. And they had both a powerful grass-roots movement and a source of campaign funds, in the form of members’ dues, that could be leveraged to support Johnson’s candidacy.

Johnson’s campaign was underwritten largely by the teachers’ unions. Though the A.F.T. and the C.T.U. had their differences in the past, they have become more closely aligned in recent years. While there are still some divisions within the Democratic Party over education policy, the bipartisan education-reform movement that once posed such a formidable existential threat to the A.F.T. is a shadow of its former self. The threat to the A.F.T. is now partisan, which means that Weingarten is no longer facing as much pressure from centrist Democrats. Backed by the financial and organizational muscle of the national and local teachers’ unions, Johnson knocked Lightfoot out of the two-person runoff, making her the first incumbent mayor in Chicago to be unseated after a single term in 40 years.

By now, Pompeo, Tim Scott, Marco Rubio, Ron DeSantis, Donald Trump and the rest of the Republican Party were busy elevating education to a central plank in its 2024 platform and in the process transforming Weingarten into the new Hillary — a G.O.P. stand-in for everything that was wrong with America. The Republican-led House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Pandemic was continuing to build its case that Weingarten and the A.F.T. exerted undue influence over the C.D.C.’s school-reopening guidelines, summoning [*Weingarten to appear in Washington*](https://oversight.house.gov/hearing/the-consequences-of-school-closures-part-2-the-president-of-the-american-federation-of-teachers-ms-randi-weingarten/) on April 26 at a hearing titled “The Consequences of School Closures.”

But Weingarten was building her own case. Public education was now itself a hyperpartisan issue, and she addressed it in hyperpartisan terms in a [*fiery speech at the National Press Club.*](https://www.aft.org/press-release/aft-president-randi-weingarten-delivers-major-national-address-defense-public) Calling out by name some of the people who had demonized her since the pandemic, including Betsy DeVos, she described the ongoing effort to defund public schools as nothing less than a threat to “cornerstones of community, of our democracy, our economy and our nation.” She pointed to studies that have shown that vouchers don’t improve student achievement, characterizing them as a back door into private and parochial schools that are not subject to the same federal civil rights laws as public institutions and can therefore promote discrimination. “Our public schools shouldn’t be pawns for politicians’ ambitions!” she thundered, moving toward her emotional conclusion. “They shouldn’t be defunded or destroyed by ideologues.”

Like the Virginia’s governor’s race one and a half years earlier, Chicago’s mayoral runoff became, at least in part, a referendum on education. The effects of the pandemic on Chicago’s public schools have been profound. More than 33,000 [*students have left the school system*](https://chicago.chalkbeat.org/2022/9/28/23377565/chicago-school-enrollment-miami-dade-third-largest) since the fall of 2020, and the recent National Assessment of Educational Progress scores showed steep declines in math and a widening achievement gap between white and Black students.

Brandon Johnson’s opponent, Paul Vallas, ran Chicago’s public schools in the late 1990s. Chicago has no Republican Party to speak of, but Vallas, a vocal proponent of charter schools and vouchers, was the conservative candidate. In 2009, he said he was “more of a Republican than a Democrat.” He was supported by the local business community and endorsed by the city’s police union. A group affiliated with the American Federation for Children spent $60,285 on a pro-Vallas digital media effort. But Arne Duncan and a number of other centrist Democrats endorsed Vallas, too.

On the eve of the April runoff election, Weingarten headed to Chicago to speak at a Johnson political rally headlined by Bernie Sanders. Both the A.F.T. and the C.T.U. continued to funnel money into Johnson’s campaign as the election approached, their combined contributions totaling $4.6 million. “All of this stuff is about power,” observed a local community activist, Ja’Mal Green, who had run in the first round of the election but didn’t make the runoff and was now supporting Vallas.

When Johnson narrowly won, it was a stunning upset, not just for the candidate but for the left. Even as the Republicans were ramping up their attacks on Weingarten and on the institution of public education, the teachers’ unions had effectively elected the mayor of America’s third-largest city, who was himself an avowedly progressive union organizer promising to raise taxes on the rich, reform the police and increase funding for the city’s schools. Maybe Pompeo hadn’t been wrong, at least as far as his own party was concerned. It was those who had underestimated the political power of the unions who were mistaken. “They said this would never happen,” [*Johnson said in his victory speech*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0SzhsAPEMdc). “If they didn’t know, now they know!”

Jonathan Mahler is a staff writer for the magazine. He has written about Donald Trump’s legal accountability, the post-pandemic future of New York City and the state of politics in Wisconsin.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHOTOGRAPH BY HANNAH WHITAKER) (MM26-MM27); Randi Weingarten photographed in April. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAL CHELBIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM29) This article appeared in print on page MM26, MM27, MM28, MM29, MM30, MM31, MM46, MM47, MM49.

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2023

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[***Is This Trump’s World Now? Four Opinion Writers on the Dobbs Leak and Vance’s Big Win.; ROUND TABLE***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CF-Y2P1-JBG3-62N5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 4, 2022 Wednesday 10:28 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 4416 words

**Byline:** Lulu Garcia-Navarro, Jane Coaston, Michelle Cottle and Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** And what does it mean for Democrats if it is?

**Body**

During a seismic week in American politics, one clear winner has emerged: former President Donald Trump. The three Supreme Court justices he nominated appear poised to deliver a long-sought victory to the right by overturning Roe v. Wade, after a draft of the anticipated Dobbs decision was leaked Monday evening. The next day, the “Hillbilly Elegy” author J.D. Vance won his race in the Republican Senate primary in Ohio after Mr. Trump’s endorsement resuscitated his sluggish campaign. What do the events of this week mean for both parties as they look ahead to the midterm elections? The Times Opinion writers Jane Coaston, Michelle Cottle and Ross Douthat discuss what this moment means for the U.S. political landscape with the Times Opinion podcast host Lulu Garcia-Navarro.

The following conversation has been edited for clarity.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Before we get to the Ohio race, I think we really need to understand this leaked opinion and how it sets the stage for red states and red races.

I think what’s been stunning to me is how surprised everyone is that this Supreme Court — with five conservative members who seem to have been expressly picked to deliver the end of Roe — seems ready to effectively end abortion access for millions of women.

Obviously the leaked opinion by Justice Samuel Alito, [*published by Politico*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/02/supreme-court-abortion-draft-opinion-00029473), is not a final draft. No official court ruling has come out. But it seems to me that far from ending the debate over abortion, this might supercharge it. What do you think? Do you think it’s going to be the galvanizing issue liberals hope it will be?

Ross Douthat: First, I just want to stress that this is a leak of a draft opinion. Including on abortion, Supreme Court decisions have changed between the initial draft and the final ruling.

However, I agree that it was always quite likely that you would get this kind of ruling from a conservative Supreme Court, and its effects are going to be the return of real abortion politics for the first time in decades. That will have some kind of supercharging effect just inevitably. Because if Roe falls, you immediately have laws on the books in various states that restrict abortion or make it illegal that will create debates within those states.

But I think the reality is because we haven’t had these kinds of debates in so long, they are — even by the standards of our unpredictable politics — really hard to predict. I personally have been surprised, in a way, at how stable Texas politics has been since the Supreme Court allowed Texas effectively to restrict abortion after six weeks.

My general assumption has been that there would be a substantial backlash and a big political opportunity for Democrats. But the evidence from state politics so far doesn’t prove that that’s real. To some extent, we’re just going to have to see what happens without having any recent analogies to tell us what’s likely to take place.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: I want to play this [*tape of Senator Elizabeth Warren*](https://twitter.com/SenWarren/status/1521529779408805890?s=20&amp;t=N4XTBShHzYBBnIZk9qm0kg), speaking about the possible end of Roe at a rally here in Washington:

I am angry because we have reached the combination of what Republicans have been fighting for, angling for, for decades now. And we are going to fight back.

Speaking of opportunities for Democrats, as Ross has pointed out and as Senator Elizabeth Warren there says, this has been decades in the making. But fight back how? Options seem limited right now.

Michelle Cottle: It looks like this is going to wind up being an issue that gets fought in the states for a while. There is legislation floating around Capitol Hill, but what the Democrats have passed in the House of Representatives is not going anywhere. Senators Susan Collins and Lisa Murkowski have a pared-down codification of Roe, but that’s unlikely to go anywhere right now. It’s one of these things that I think at the federal level is just going to flummox people.

Democrats are hoping that this will give them a boost in the midterms come November, but I don’t expect it to have a huge impact this time around. I think it could, though, going forward.

The place where you might see it in November would be in the primaries, where Representative Henry Cuellar, who is a pro-life Democrat on the Texas border, is in a fight with a pro-choice challenger. Could this tilt that race just enough for Cuellar to lose and have a different Democrat going into the generals? I don’t know, but I don’t expect it to have a huge impact on the midterms in November.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: We know from our history in this country and what we see in other places where there isn’t abortion access, that women who don’t have abortion access will resort to illegal abortions, putting their lives at risk.

It strikes me that all of this is happening while we have a Democratic president, a Democratic Senate and a Democratic House. Is there going to be a feeling that Democrats haven’t only fumbled, they’ve also roundly been beaten, and it could lead to a decline in support from their base? It could have the opposite effect of galvanizing them.

Jane Coaston: It’s a complicated issue. A Gallup poll from 2021 found that the poorest Americans, who are most likely to suffer from a lack of access to abortion, are also more likely to believe that abortion is morally wrong.

It’s worth remembering that this has been the carrot waved in front of social conservatives for 50 years. And now you’re hearing from a lot of conservatives that actually nothing will change. A conservative writer, Erick Erickson, said yesterday that this isn’t a big deal because nothing will change. They didn’t call them “Students for a 12-week abortion ban.” They didn’t call it “March for a 15-Week Abortion Ban.”

This is going to be complicated for a lot of people, especially because they will see that there’ll be a clear difference between states like Connecticut and Colorado that have already provided abortion protections and Republican states that attempt to have an abortion ban, whether it will be a Texas-like system in which you are asking people to essentially inform on others, or just a straight-up ban.

Voters have very conflicted views on abortion, but generally, they support people having some access to abortion.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: I’m going to pick up on something you said. It is true that something like 80 percent of Americans think there should be some access to abortion. What that access should look like is unclear. But if Roe is overturned, that means that states will have the right to legislate on abortion access.

Red states already have “trigger” laws in place that will immediately curtail abortion access for their residents if that happens. Some states are going to be doing one thing and other states are going to be doing a different thing. What does that mean for the unity of this country, where some citizens will have some rights and others won’t?

Ross Douthat: I’m sorry to keep pleading agnosticism, but I don’t think we know. If you go back to the period before Roe was decided, in the late ’60s and early ’70s, this was basically the system that we were heading toward.

There had been some liberalization of abortion laws in a number of states. There was a nascent pro-life movement that had pushed back against that and had halted and reversed that trend in other states. At that point, if you were looking at the landscape, you would have said, Well, this is sort of the federalist solution, right? This is the way the American system is set up to negotiate some deeply polarizing social issues.

Now, that was also a landscape in which abortion had not been nationalized by the Supreme Court and had not then become a key driver of polarization between the parties. Back in the 1970s, you had lots of pro-choice Republicans and you had lots of pro-life Democrats, including Joseph Robinette Biden, now the pro-choice president of the United States.

You had a landscape where you could imagine abortion policy being federalized, in the sense of being different from state to state, and also the two political parties not dividing over it.

The fact that now the parties have divided over it so completely makes me suspect that the federalist strategy will be somewhat unstable and you will have constant pressure to have a national abortion policy from both sides, which will then implicate debates over the filibuster and everything else.

The flip side of that is that lots of national Republican politicians have never been enthusiastic about talking about abortion, let alone legislating on it. A lot will depend on what happens in some of the bigger red states like Florida and Texas. Does the pro-life movement consider that an at least temporary victory?

Or is that politically unstable? Is there a big backlash? Democrats have assumed that Texas is supposed to trend blue for a long time. So in theory an overreaching abortion ban in Texas could provoke the kind of backlash that Democrats have been looking for.

Jane Coaston: It’s worth noting here that we don’t know what this will look like. We’ve seen that Senate Republicans passed around a memo on potential talking points and some of them include things like saying, We don’t want to put doctors in jail. We would never take away anyone’s contraception or health care. But you are hearing from other Republicans who are saying, for example, We do want to go after Griswold.

Ross Douthat: Wait a minute. Which Republicans — outside of some traditionalist Catholic blog or something — are saying that they want to pass a law banning contraception?

Jane Coaston: Senator Marsha Blackburn of Tennessee. She brought up Griswold as being constitutionally unsound.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Griswold v. Connecticut, of course, is the case where the Supreme Court ruled that marital privacy protects couples against state restrictions on contraception.

Jane Coaston: My point is that when you have something that you’ve been fighting over for 50 years, there are lots of tangential pieces that people have been arguing about. For instance, telemedicine and access to abortion-causing medications. And there are Catholics who argue that some forms of birth control are themselves abortion-causing medications.

Michelle Cottle: We have no idea how this is going to play out, even with just the abortion restrictions. You were asking about rights and different rights for people in different states. I mean, the reality is there are some states where it’s virtually impossible already to get an abortion — where there’s one abortion clinic for the entire state. If you’re talking about surgical abortions, that has already become a matter of where you live.

An interesting thing that we’re going to watch play out here — and it’s going to get really sticky, really fast — are medication abortions. Are you going to have a black market? How are states going to determine who’s getting what? When there are certain rules in place that allow for medication abortions, which now are upward of 50 percent of abortions. That’s one thing. But if you have states that have just outlawed them, it starts to get really complicated. Who are you going after? How are you going to enforce this? What happens if somebody crosses state lines to get these meds?

We have no idea what the future landscape will look like, much less one step down the road with abortifacients or anything like that.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: What we have seen in other countries that restrict abortion is that women have illegal abortions and get their health put at risk. It’s not that the numbers of abortions necessarily go down. It’s that they may not be as safe.

When you’ve had 50 years of abortion access, as you’ve had in the United States, if you take away those rights, as will happen to women in many red states, that is going to have serious repercussions. I don’t think that this will be the end of it. And I think it’s naïve to think that it will.

Ross Douthat: I have to argue with you very briefly. There is a frequent pro-choice argument along the lines of: “Abortion restrictions don’t reduce abortion rates. They just lead to more illegal abortions.”

We have a lot of evidence from the developed world — from the United States and Western Europe — that that is not true: that rich nations or states that have restrictions on abortions have fewer abortions. The abortion rate is higher in Scandinavia, which has more liberal abortion laws, than it is in Germany, which has more restrictive abortion laws in general.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Rich people will be able to get abortions, sure. But the disadvantaged will not.

Ross Douthat: That’s not what I’m saying. I’m including the poor people within those rich countries.

Jane Coaston: That’s a point worth making, as is the point that abortion rates in the United States have actually been going down. They reached a high, I believe, in the early 1980s.

Ross Douthat: Yes.

Jane Coaston: Each year we keep hitting record lows in the number of abortions.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Because we have sex education and contraception.

Ross Douthat: That’s not what’s driving it.

Jane Coaston: Also, fewer people are having sex in general — yay! [LAUGHS]

Ross Douthat: That’s more of what’s driving it. The reason that the pro-life side supports restrictions on abortion is that there is a lot of evidence that restrictions reduce abortion rates. This is where I completely agree that the question of who is getting prosecuted, what is done with state power, makes a really big difference.

But right now, you have states in the U.S. and countries around the world, including places like Chile, that have had restrictive abortion laws that have very low maternal mortality rates and very good records on women’s health. It is possible to restrict abortion without having the massive maternal mortality nightmare that gets brought up. It just requires public spending and sensible policymaking.

Michelle Cottle: Which has no bearing on this society.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Indeed. If the pandemic showed us anything.

Ross Douthat: Well, this is the United States of America.

Jane Coaston: There have been conversations among social conservatives about a post-Roe environment. All of them seem to recognize that it would require spending choices that Republicans have historically not wanted to make. Expanding access to WIC, for example.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: WIC, the federal nutrition program that supports women, infants and children.

Jane Coaston: Yeah. Expanding access to maternal care, because again, maternal mortality risks, especially around African American women, are very bad in the United States.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: As much as I’ve enjoyed this debate, we have something else to argue about, which is Trump and the Ohio race on Tuesday. Here is the [*victorious J.D. Vance*](https://www.c-span.org/video/?519967-1/jd-vance-wins-ohio-senate-republican-primary) after he won the Republican primary:

Thanks to the president for everything, for endorsing me. And I got to say, a lot of the fake news media out there, and there are some good ones in the back there, there’s some bad ones, too, let’s be honest, but they wanted to write a story that this campaign would be the death of Donald Trump’s “America First” agenda. Ladies and gentlemen, it ain’t the death of the “America First” agenda.

I think this story connects to our first conversation because we were talking about abortion, one of the original culture war issues. And here we have, with Vance victorious, someone who’s embodying Trump and his “America First” agenda.

Michelle, you were just outside Cincinnati with J.D. Vance on the campaign trail, and with Donald Trump Jr. What stood out to you the most about the campaigning you saw?

Michelle Cottle: The Vance clip you played basically captures the whole thing. The minute he got the nod from Trump, this race didn’t have anything to do with J.D. Vance or any of the other candidates. It became a referendum on Trump and Trump’s king-making ability.

I watched Don Jr. appear at these events, and it was all about how Vance was the only Trump-endorsed candidate in this race. It was all about Trump, which is a testament to how far J.D. Vance has bent over to smooch Donald Trump’s backside, which is what a lot of the party has done — in fact, what most of the party has done. But it is still galling to watch.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Jane, you are from Ohio.

Jane Coaston: Cincinnati, stand up!

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: What does what Michelle is saying tell you about not only your home state but the direction of the G.O.P.?

Jane Coaston: I talked to J.D. Vance back in 2016 when he published “Hillbilly Elegy,” and he told me that white ***working-class*** voters were frustrated and hungry for political leadership and that a lot of “political elites” hadn’t picked that up. He has since taken on the mantle of being a jerk. He has taken on talking about cat ladies and arguing about Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, because you have to sound like Trump in order for Trump to see you as being part of him.

There is an idea that this is a part of Ohio, north of Cincinnati, where, in Vance’s view, things used to be better and now they are bad. And that it is the responsibility of someone — Vance or somebody else — to fix it, to make things better. And there is an idea that this was the fault of globalization or NAFTA or big business or something like that. And that the people who were like Vance used to be better. And now they aren’t better, but it’s not their fault.

There are people who wax rhapsodic about ***working-class*** jobs, many of whom have never actually worked. You hear this when people talk about manufacturing jobs. My grandpa worked in a copper mill. It sucked and he died at 48. There’s this idea, this halcyon concept of an Ohio that once was. A Cincinnati that used to be.

Michelle Cottle: This is what the Trump appeal was in general, the idea that these people had been left behind. This is why he played well in Pennsylvania. That is not an unusual concept. The problem with Trumpism is they’ve taken this kind of populist impulse and turned it into: “It’s the immigrants’ fault. It’s the Black people’s fault.” They’re blaming it on somebody else.

Jane Coaston: It’s “the other.”

Michelle Cottle: Yeah, they’re blaming it on China, too. It’s “the other.”

Jane Coaston: It’s me, essentially. I did it. [LAUGHS]

Michelle Cottle: At these rallies you don’t hear about abortion. You hear about how immigrants have turned central Ohio into the child trafficking capital of the world. It’s completely shamelessly, xenophobic.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Ross, you have made no mystery of your distaste for Trump’s style and its impact on the tenor of the G.O.P. What do you make of Vance’s win and what it signals about the post-Trump presidency era of the Republican Party?

Ross Douthat: I should say, just as a preface, that I know J.D. Vance and so I’m trying to offer detached analysis. But the listeners should know that I do in fact know him.

Jane’s narrative is broadly right: There’s a basic continuity in populous worldview between the Vance who was extremely critical of Trump, in ways that I still agree with, and the Vance who won his endorsement.

But there is a difference, too. “Hillbilly Elegy” is more about an internal pathology in white ***working-class*** America than it is about the elite policy mistakes that hollowed out American industry. So there’s been some shift in emphasis, but the basic narrative of elite betrayal of the American heartland — I don’t think that’s something that Vance has flip-flopped on.

Even when he was damning Trump in the past, the argument was always, Trump is tapping into real and legitimate grievances, but he is essentially the political opioid of these communities that have been hit so hard by fentanyl.

That’s the background. Then Vance ran a campaign in which — unlike Josh Mandel, his big rival — he spent less time personally appealing for Trump’s support and more time in the MAGA-extended universe of Steve Bannon’s show, Tucker Carlson’s show, various podcasts and so on that are all extremely right-wing and extremely Trumpy.

Politico had a really good piece about how the [*Trump endorsement*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/03/jd-vance-win-ohio-primary-00029881) came about. Not surprisingly, Trump didn’t respond well to Mandel and others begging for his endorsement, and he seems to have decided to endorse Vance because he watched the debates and thought that Vance looked the best on TV, which, as we know, is the most important thing for anything connected to Trump. That, and he saw Vance play golf and liked his swing. The entire future history of American politics may turn on whether Trump likes a Senate candidate’s golf swing.

Jane Coaston: Ohio’s political winds have shifted significantly. I do think it will be interesting to see how Vance attempts to get at a broader audience, if he even attempts to. That is going to be a bigger audience, and one accustomed to Ohio Republicans like Rob Portman or Steve Chabot, who are definitely more Ohioan. We’re Midwesterners! We tamp down our feelings with lasagna. But that’s not what Vance does. His kind of online anger and online ire — I am curious to see how that plays out when he’s having to make an appeal to, well, not my parents, but people like my parents.

Michelle Cottle: That’s one of the problems we’re looking at with America in a foul mood, though, right? Whether you think it’s because of the pandemic or inflation or whatever, Americans are sour, and when you are sour, you are spoiling for a fight and you are looking for someone to come and tell you: “You are right to be angry. This is not your fault. You have been taken advantage of, and I’m going to fix it for you.” Those are the headwinds that the Democrats are looking at.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: I’m going to wrap this up by asking for predictions, which I know everyone loves to do. This is mine: If politicians like J.D. Vance are elected into office in the fall, on the G.O.P. side, we’re going to have more of the strong culture-war G.O.P. presidential nominees in 2024, probably Trump or Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, who are drawn to these divisive issues. The Democrats have had trouble countering those narratives.

What do you see coming down the line, in terms of our political landscape and what it might portend?

Michelle Cottle: Historical trends made it hard for the Democrats not to lose ground in this midterm. They have not had a break with the pandemic or inflation or anything like that. I think they’re going to have a rough midterm, and then going into 2024, if for some reason Trump does not run, I think DeSantis immediately moves to the head of line and we’re looking at somebody like that from the Republican side. There’s no real indication that the Republicans want to move away from Trumpism in the near future.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Ross? Trump is king?

Ross Douthat: There’s no indication at all. For Republican voters in Ohio, the fundamental choice was between Josh Mandel, who was basically the Trump attitude but with the pre-Trump mix of economic policies — that’s why Mandel was endorsed by the Club for Growth and they poured all this money into defeating Vance — or Vance, who was channeling the Trump attitude, but with policies on trade and immigration and foreign policy that were much more like the shift that Trump brought.

Michelle Cottle: They could have gone with Matt Dolan, who was running and who came in a tight third behind Mandel.

Ross Douthat: Right. But that suggests that it’s not just the Trump attitude. There is a constituency for Trump’s issues in the G.O.P. that remains very powerful.

Fundamentally, the Democrats’ problems are about inflation and the post-Covid recovery turning into an inflationary spiral that has real wages going down, even as people are making more money on paper. That’s the biggest problem.

With the culture war stuff, those battles are a cycle of overreach and backlash. What we’re living through right now, especially with the critical race theory debates and gender in schools debates, is a backlash against the sweeping leftward movement that we saw late in the Trump era, where there was a transformation of elite institutions, particularly in the summer of 2020, along more dramatically progressive lines. The backlash to that was always going to have a certain amount of political running room.

The question is — whether it’s abortion or transgender issues or anything else — where does that backlash end up overreaching in its turn? Or do Republicans have room to have a backlash and still win because Democrats haven’t found a good way to get back to the center themselves?

Lulu Garcia-Navarro: Jane, I’m going to leave the last word to you.

Jane Coaston: I’m so interested in how Republicans are using this moment to respond to cultural trends with politics. At a certain point you just can’t make everything you don’t like illegal. If you do, people will respond poorly because legally, that’s questionable. That’s morally questionable, too.

A politics that’s “I just don’t want anyone to do something I don’t like” is going to make people mad.

I’m not sure what’s going to happen in the midterms, but these trends of overreach speak to an idea. If Republicans have control of the Supreme Court or the House and Senate, will they still be thinking: “Why are people not more like us? Why are people not doing what we want?” And liberals can see that Democrats right now have perceived control and are saying: “Why can’t we do anything? We have nothing!” Both sides screaming at each other, “You have everything and we have nothing.”

That’s a really bad state for our politics to be in, because it means that no one takes any responsibility for anything. That’s what makes me worried.

Lulu Garcia-Navarro is a Times Opinion podcast host. Jane Coaston is the host of “[*The Argument*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/the-argument)” podcast. Michelle Cottle is a member of the editorial board. Ross Douthat is a Times columnist.

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Times Opinion audio produced by Lulu Garcia-Navarro, Alison Bruzek and Phoebe Lett. Fact-checking by Kate Sinclair, Adrian Rivera and Alex Ellerbeck. Original music by Carole Sabouraud. Mixing by Isaac Jones. Audience strategy by Shannon Busta. Our executive producer is Irene Noguchi. Special thanks to James Ryerson, Jenny Casas, Vishakha Darbha and Patrick Healy.

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**Load-Date:** November 28, 2023

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The New York Times

October 20, 2020 Tuesday 04:30 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 515 words

**Byline:** The International Herald Tribune

**Highlight:** A 24-hour walkout backed by the government to show support for Col. Juan D. Peron brought the country to a standstill.

**Body**

A 24-hour walkout backed by the government to show support for Col. Juan D. Peron brought the country to a standstill.

Special to The European Edition

BUENOS AIRES, Oct. 19. — Firmly in control of the Argentine government, Colonel Juan D. Peron received a tribute yesterday from country partisans in the form of a twenty-four-hour strike, the worst in Argentine history, which paralyzed the normal life of almost the entire nation.

All factories, offices, banks, theaters, restaurants, stores and other commercial establishments were closed tight here and in other Argentine cities yesterday and railways, buses and taxis were at a standstill. The strike surpassed those of 1919 and 1936, which were designed to promote the cause of labor and were opposed by the government. In contrast, this strike was political and was supported by the government and the police.

An antigovernment political strike was staged by the democratic opposition on September 19, but this endured only for half a day and was only partially effective.

Fear of Reprisals Cited

The most incredible success of the latest nationwide strike was attributed in labor circles not only to Colonel Peron’s strength but to the total paralysis of transportation, and to fear among the population of violent reaction if any one defied the order to support the strike.

The order was issued by the General Federation of Labor. It instructed all workers to suspend activities for twenty-four hours “to demonstrate the thoughts of the ***working class*** regarding the exceptional moment in which the nation is living.”

The order was supported by Colonel Peron, who spoke from the government building balcony at midnight Wednesday and advised the workers to support the strike by celebrating the “glory” of their reunion at a mass demonstration.

Close in Self-Defense

Most merchants closed their shops in self-defense, aware of what happened Wednesday to those who failed to do so in La Plata and suburbs of the capital. In these areas, armed bands of “Peronistas,” supported by the police, stoned and threatened establishments which refused to join their strike. The government newspaper “Critica” spurred an attack made with gunfire and flaming torches. The attack began at 1:20 a.m. and lasted almost two hours.

Violence also occurred yesterday at the municipal fruit and vegetable market, where Peron supporters attacked those who wanted to continue working. Six were reported killed and forty injured. Peron men paraded through the deserted streets in groups of several hundred, shouting the name of their leader. They announced that Colonel Peron would be President, and they painted his name on sidewalks, streets, buildings and shop windows.

Colonel Peron departed yesterday for a vacation in the territory of Chubut, in southern Argentina, before opening his campaign. He left the government in the hands of President Edelmiro Farrell, whom he publicly embraced twice at a demonstration Wednesday night.

— The New York Herald Tribune, European Edition, October 20, 1945.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY International Herald Tribune FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 20, 2020

**End of Document**



[***When Lennon Went Beatleless***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62H1-1MV1-JBG3-60R5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 22, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 2; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1553 words

**Byline:** By Jon Pareles

**Body**

A new boxed set tracking the making of Lennon's first post-Beatles solo album reveals the construction of primal songs, and the clarity of his vision.

It was raw. Yet it was meticulously thought through.

''Plastic Ono Band,'' released in December 1970, was John Lennon's first solo album after the breakup of the Beatles earlier that year. It was a far cry from the tuneful reassurance of Paul McCartney's one-man-studio-band album ''McCartney'' and the polished abundance of George Harrison's triple album, ''All Things Must Pass,'' both of which were also released that year. In both music and lyrics, ''Plastic Ono Band'' was a stark statement of pain, separation, vulnerability and self-reclamation after the whirlwind that had been Lennon's life as a Beatle. Half a century later, the album retains its power.

Now it has been remixed, massively expanded, anatomized and annotated as ''Plastic Ono Band: The Ultimate Collection'': six CDs, two Blu-ray audio discs and a hardcover book, delving into the music with a recording engineer's attention to details. The compilation was produced by Yoko Ono, Lennon's widow and a producer (with Lennon and Phil Spector) of the original album, and Simon Hilton; there are other configurations for less obsessive fans.

The boxed set revisits the album and the Plastic Ono Band singles that preceded it -- ''Give Peace a Chance,'' ''Cold Turkey'' and ''Instant Karma! (We All Shine On)'' -- by unearthing demos, alternate takes, raw mixes, studio jams and even individual vocal and instrumental tracks. A disc of ''Evolution Mixes'' turns each song into a making-of montage, from demo through studio chatter and stray ideas to a glimpse of the finished version. The revelation of ''The Ultimate Collection'' is that for all the unbridled emotion in the songs, Lennon was still a deliberate craftsman. And even as his work grappled with trauma, he had some fun.

The music of ''Plastic Ono Band,'' on its surface, repudiated the elaborate productions of the late Beatles. Instead, the tracks relied on bare-bones, three-man arrangements: Lennon on piano or guitar, Klaus Voormann on bass and Ringo Starr on drums, rarely even using all the tracks of an eight-track tape. The sound can be deliberately lo-fi, particularly when he cranks up the electric-guitar distortion on ''Well Well Well'' and ''I Found Out.''

The lyrics, and Lennon's fully exposed voice, reflected the insights and catharsis of the primal scream therapy Lennon had begun (but never completed) with the practice's leading exponent, Arthur Janov. ''He responded very well because he had an enormous amount of pain,'' Janov comments in the album's book. ''It was terrible and also good because it just drove him and made him what he was -- incredibly insightful, very close to his feelings and driven by his feelings.''

Lennon's songs made large topics deeply personal: family, faith, class, fame, drugs, love, fear. ''Mother,'' which opens the album, starts with a heartsick declaration -- ''Mother, you had me/But I never had you'' -- and ends with a crescendo of desolation, with Lennon repeatedly imploring, ''Mama don't go!/Daddy come home!'' in a voice that rasps, howls and breaks. (The boxed set includes the a cappella vocal track; it's harrowing.)

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

In ''***Working Class*** Hero,'' Lennon sympathizes with drab, numb lives and wrestles with his own status, heroic or not, while in ''Look at Me,'' he pleads, ''Who am I supposed to be?'' In ''Isolation,'' he sings about feeling trapped and attacked, ''afraid of everyone.'' And in ''God,'' joined by Billy Preston's gospel-piano flourishes, he renounces heroes, politicians, gurus and religions, a list that culminates in ''I don't believe in Beatles.'' After a pause to let that sink in, Lennon sings, quietly and firmly, ''I just believe in me/Yoko and me.'' Then the album's postscript, under a minute long, revisits a lingering childhood wound with a child's diction: ''My Mummy's Dead.'' (That song, recorded on cassette, had its own artifice; it was sped up in the studio, and filtered to sound like a vintage radio.)

Remixes can't help being anachronistic, and ''The Ultimate Mixes'' won't please everyone who has long cherished the original album. The virtue of the latest mixes is that they somehow create new space and transparency around Lennon's voice, bringing out the grain and passion of his performances. Stereo placements get shifted, sometimes for better -- the guitar and drums sound even meaner in ''Well Well Well'' -- and sometimes not, as Lennon's double-tracked vocals on ''Isolation'' are pulled widely apart. The new mixes also regularly boost the lower register, at times elevating Voormann's bass parts as if they were intended as counterpoint instead of a solid, unassuming harmonic foundation.

The discs of additional material present Lennon as a musician at work with a clear sense of what he's after. The demos reveal that most of the songs were substantially complete in their early stages, despite small changes to come. The demo of ''Mother'' was played on guitar rather than piano, but the drama of its final pleas was already built in. The demo of ''God,'' another song that moved from guitar to piano, doesn't yet mention ''Yoko and me.'' And the solo demos of ''Cold Turkey'' and an early fragment of ''Well Well Well'' sound more like vintage rural blues than the electric band versions would.

From the demos, Lennon's expertise and determination take over. The ''Evolution'' montages show him consulting and heeding Ono's advice from the control room; the outtakes show him toning up arrangements, placing piano chords for maximum warmth and impact in ''Isolation'' and ''Remember,'' deciding whether to use his fingers or a pick in ''***Working Class*** Hero.'' (The final choice, using a pick, gives the guitar its tolling gravity.)

For the singles released before the album, Lennon treated Plastic Ono Band as a name for whatever group he wanted to assemble. ''Give Peace a Chance'' gathered the bystanders at a 1969 Bed-In, a weeklong antiwar happening-protest in Montreal, including the poet Allen Ginsberg and the singing comedian Tommy Smothers; when the basic live recording sounded too thin, a choir was added in the studio. ''Cold Turkey'' -- which ends with Lennon's increasingly agonized vocals -- sounds spontaneous but went through 26 takes, with Lennon and Eric Clapton flinging barbed, feverish electric guitar lines back and forth.

''Instant Karma! (We All Shine On),'' a single that leapt out of radio speakers in 1970, was both Lennon at his purest -- it was recorded in a single day -- and Lennon at his most professional. ''I don't believe in Buddha,'' he sang in ''God,'' but the idea of karma -- consequences -- clearly appealed to him. As the multiple versions in the boxed set show, the basic shape of the song was complete from its demo, but Spector -- an expert on microphone placement, piling on overdubbed instruments, reverberation and effects -- gave it an explosive impact, in multiple iterations. The means were technical; the result was heartfelt.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

For all the concentration on his own new songs, Lennon also had a way to blow off steam, find a focus and consolidate his band: playing the oldies, as one disc in the set reveals. Between takes of his new, bruised songs, he hopped back to what was, even as far back as 1970, vintage rock 'n' roll: Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, Elvis Presley. It was a common language, a shared joke, a way to regroup, some comic relief. Then they went back to the hard stuff.

After all of the boxed set's traversals of Lennon's album sessions, there's an Easter egg tucked into the Blu-ray audio discs. It's the jam sessions, recorded on Oct. 10, 1970, with Lennon, Voormann and Starr, that Ono would edit down to most of her own ''Plastic Ono Band'' album, which was released the same day as Lennon's. (Ono's finished album isn't included in the boxed set; it was most recently rereleased in 2016.)

The unedited Ono tracks are long and usually nonstop: 21 minutes of ''Why Not,'' 16 minutes of ''Touch Me.'' The stalwart rhythm section takes up a vamp -- bluesy, rocky, droning -- and Lennon tops it with slide guitar, swooping and jabbing and quivering. Then Ono joins in to unleash a thoroughly astonishing array of vocal sounds -- shrieks, mews, moans, whoops, ululations, yowls, glottals, keening long lines, baby cries, witchy cackles -- with Lennon's guitar hovering nearby, mingling with her and egging her on. ''Paper Shoes,'' with assorted echoes and reverb layered atop vocals and instruments, becomes utterly dizzying. In 1970, the music's closest kin would have been the burgeoning krautrock of Can in Germany, who -- like Ono and the Plastic Ono Band -- were merging psychedelic improvisation with mantric Minimalism, simultaneously focused and deranged.

The sections of the jams that Ono excerpted to fit on an LP in 1970 were usually the most tense, jarring, abstract stretches -- which is to say she chose well. But the full-length tracks testify to the Plastic Ono Band's stamina and closeness, especially to how attentively Lennon and Ono were listening to each other. Teasing, goading, exploring and intertwining, their wordless interactions are intimate primal screams.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top, John Lennon at the home he and Yoko Ono rented in Bel Air, Calif., in 1970

with Ono, who was a producer of ''Plastic Ono Band''

posing in 1970 with a reminder meant for the staff of EMI Studios on Abbey Road in London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY YOKO ONO LENNON

RICHARD DILELLO, VIA YOKO ONO LENNON)

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Boris Johnson Urges Businesses to Help Resolve Britain’s Shortages***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63SF-H7B1-DXY4-X1ST-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 5, 2021 Tuesday 20:39 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 893 words

**Byline:** Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** The prime minister said current supply-chain disruptions were an inevitable step to a more robust economy.

**Body**

The prime minister said current supply-chain disruptions were an inevitable step to a more robust economy.

MANCHESTER, England — Prime Minister [*Boris Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/world/europe/uk-politics-boris-johnson-owen-paterson.html) on Tuesday dismissed suggestions that [*Britain was in crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/world/europe/boris-johnson-britain-brexit.html), saying that businesses needed to do more to end the [*fuel and goods shortages*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/10/08/world/europe/uk-fuel-shortage-crisis.html) that have afflicted the country by raising wages, improving working conditions and training Britons to drive trucks and do other hard-to-fill jobs.

Speaking on the eve of his keynote speech at the Conservative Party Conference, Mr. Johnson said that there was “no alternative” to the disruption that has closed gas stations, left supermarket shelves bare and threatens to drive up prices for ordinary Britons. A crippling shortage of truckers was, he said, caused not by lack of planning but by an economy recovering like “a giant waking up.”

The main backdrop to the conference has been the disruptions to daily life as a result of the [*gas shortages*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/business/boris-johnson-shortages-britain.html) now concentrated in southern England, and empty shelves in some supermarket shelves. Both are partly a result of Brexit, which has made it harder to hire workers from abroad and worsened a shortage of truck drivers. On Monday, troops were put to work [*driving fuel tankers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/world/europe/uk-fuel-shortages-military-truck-drivers.html) to make up for the lack of truckers.

Energy and other prices are rising, stirring fears of inflation, even as a bonus provided to many welfare recipients during the coronavirus pandemic is being withdrawn, and a furlough system that supported workers sent home is ending.

Britain’s labor market has been hit by Brexit, which prevents employers from freely recruiting workers from the continent, as they once could. Mr. Johnson and his allies, however, argue that this will improve workers’ lives in the long term because wages will have to rise.

Last week the government appeared to blame consumers for panic-buying fuel, causing long lines and shortages. But Mr. Johnson has been forced to retreat by offering visas to foreign truckers [*and extending the time*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/02/world/europe/uk-truckers-visas.html?searchResultPosition=2) they can work in Britain. On Tuesday, he said that only 127 visas had so far been issued.

In effect, Mr. Johnson and his conservative allies have doubled down on their policies, presenting shortages and supply disruption as a result of a fast post-pandemic economic recovery in a country where many workers are underpaid.

He has called on businesses to step up investment in employees and pay higher wages, and there has been speculation this week that among the measures Mr. Johnson would propose in his speech Wednesday was an increase to the minimum wage.

That message, and his resistance to increased immigration, could appeal to ***working-class*** voters who abandoned the opposition Labour Party in 2019 in the heartlands, switched to the Conservatives and gave Mr. Johnson a landslide general election victory.

Asked by the BBC whether there was a crisis, Mr. Johnson said “No,” adding that supply chains were reflecting “the stresses and strains you’d expect from a giant waking up.”

Pressing his case against business, he said that for too long Britain had taken “a low-wage, low-cost approach where business does not invest in skills, does not invest in capital or facilities.”

He singled out the trucking industry, saying: “The fact is that they haven’t been putting money into truck stops, into conditions, into pay, so there is no supply of young people in this country who frankly at the moment are thinking of becoming truck drivers.”

Critics have accused the Conservatives of complacency and of being out of touch with most people.

On Sunday, the prime minister seemed to make light of fears that [*thousands of pigs could be culled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/world/europe/uk-christmas-turkey-shortage.html) and disposed of because of a shortage of meatpacking workers. The “great [*hecatomb*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hecatomb) of pigs” had so far not taken place, Mr. Johnson said in a classical allusion to mass animal sacrifice, prompting anger from farmers.

Even some of the right-wing media commentary has been less than flattering.

“For all his hyperbolic railing against the unsustainability of Britain’s last-minute supply chains, the sorry truth is that we are at the mercy of a just-in-time Prime Minister,” [*wrote Judith Woods in the Daily Telegraph*](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/columnists/2021/10/05/crisis-crisis-anybody-actually-charge/), calling him “a man of straw who seems only to make decisions when they are forced upon him by circumstance or catastrophe.’’

The government also tried to stem criticism that Britain had a policing crisis, with the home secretary, Priti Patel, announcing [*an inquiry into the abduction and murder of Sarah Everard by a police officer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/01/world/europe/london-police-sarah-everard-murder.html) — a crime that shook the nation.

The Home Office said that this would not be a statutory inquiry with legal power to compel witnesses to give evidence, though it might be converted to one if necessary. The announcement came one day after London’s Metropolitan Police [*said it would commission an independent review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/04/world/europe/uk-police-behavior-review.html?searchResultPosition=1) into its culture and standards, in the wake of disturbing disclosures about how Ms. Everard’s killer used his authority as an officer to commit the crime.

Although the Conservative Party activists were meeting for the first time in person in two years, announcements by cabinet ministers have been relatively sparse, prompting speculation that some are being saved for Mr. Johnson’s closing speech.

PHOTO: Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain at the annual Conservative Party convention in Manchester on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Oli Scarff/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***America, the Frontier***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PV-X621-JBG3-6543-00000-00&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. 15; FICTION

**Length:** 1193 words

**Byline:** By Benjamin Markovits

**Body**

GOLIATHBy Tochi Onyebuchi

In ''The Death and Life of Great American Cities,'' Jane Jacobs describes her perfect neighborhood -- Greenwich Village, circa 1961. Gentrification has begun but not uprooted the ***working-class*** community that preceded it. You get a mix of old and new buildings, some cheap, some expensive, which include apartments, houses, shops, offices, restaurants, cafes. Different kinds of people live there and work there, and the variety itself sustains the new community, because at any point in the day you might have a freelancer typing away in the cafe, or a builder buying tools from the hardware store, or schoolchildren walking home, or drinkers emerging from the bar, which stays open until 3 a.m., so that the street is always busy and the residents feel safe. This is one reason she hated the suburbs -- empty streets.

Tochi Onyebuchi credits Jacobs in the acknowledgments of ''Goliath,'' his new novel, as someone whose books ''did more than anything else to reshape how I think about the metropole and all the different ways a city can be occupied.'' The story begins with a curious echo of that Greenwich Village moment: Jonathan and David, a gay white couple, have decided to return to Earth from the space colonies. Jonathan, playing pioneer, arrives first and wants to buy a house in New Haven, which has been devastated by a series of political and environmental disasters that predate the novel. Earth and air have become radioactive and cancerous. You need a face mask to breathe safely, unless you're one of the lucky few who live in a Dome, a kind of filtration bubble. In any case, most of the upper-middle classes have been partly cyberized, ''augmented'' in ways that allow them to replace cancerous organs and even detox their systems after a drug binge. The real danger, people warn Jonathan, is ''gangs.''

It's an ingenious premise: Onyebuchi suburbanizes outer space and makes battered, almost uninhabitable provincial America the frontier. ''Best thing that coulda happened to the planet was all the white folks left it,'' thinks one of the men left behind. Except now the white folks are coming back. The novel shifts from Jonathan's and David's stories to follow various ''stackers'' as they go about their daily lives -- local wrecking crews, mostly Black, whose job it is to tear down uninhabited houses (using fancy new technology) and rummage through the remains for reusable bricks. The head of one crew is a man named Bishop, an ex-con and a lay preacher, whose moral authority pervades the novel, though his aging body can barely keep up with the work. Even his wisdom has almost been exhausted by dealing with the endless repetitiveness of oppression.

The stackers' lives soon take over the novel. There's a brief overlap, when Bishop helps Jonathan electrify his new house, but Jacobs's Greenwich Village moment never really happens. Of course, you could tell this story without the science-fiction machinery but part of the point is to undermine the consolations of straight realism, the sense of deep roots, things fitting together, even if unhappily. Characters in the novel still wear their favorite Red Sox caps or smoke Newports or refer to an account of a house party that spills out of control as ''an Atlanta-ass story.'' These fragments of the old world matter to people but there aren't enough of them to build a meaningful life. They have to start over from scratch.

In its scale and ambition, ''Goliath'' has the feel of a Tom Wolfe novel, but there isn't really any central action or plot that forces the different characters, up and down the class ladder, into contact and conflict with one another. The story jumps between points of view and moves backward and forward in time. It also showcases an impressive range of registers -- from the painful self-explanations of a Yale-educated Black prison inmate (one of the high points of the book), to the embarrassing but well-meaning reportage of a white journalist who wants to tell the stackers' story, to the ''No Country for Old Men''-style account of marshals on the trail across North Texas for the grave of a murdered boy.

How all this hangs together matters less in the end than the picture of a broken America these stories present. It's a kind of postapocalyptic ''Our Town.'' Characters with different back stories wander onstage and reveal themselves. This puts a lot of pressure on each scene to deliver meaningful revelations. Either something terrible happens in it or people tell stories about something terrible that has happened to them in the past. In a strange way, though, the stakes remain low, if only because there's so little hope that their lives will ever get better. The closest thing to a central plotline begins when one of the stackers discovers wild horses outside New Haven, coming ''out of the shoreline mist in answer to a prayer she didn't even realize she'd uttered.'' Somebody decides to retrieve them and start a farm, whose real purpose is more symbolic than practical. Money doesn't seem to matter much.

The novel's worldview is based on the idea that the truest thing about people is their pain, and their most important daily task is the management of that pain. Occasionally they even get to escape from it (mostly through love or banter or drugs or horses) but not for long. ''When it came to grief,'' Onyebuchi writes, ''sometimes you ran up the bill and after a while the number just got meaningless.'' There's a lot of power to this idea but it also leaves much out, and sometimes tends to favor the characters' most sentimental views of themselves. David and Jonathan meet at a space hospital, where David is visiting his mother, who has dementia. Jonathan offers him a cigarette, which David takes, even though he doesn't really smoke. ''I do it because it hurts,'' David explains later. ''The smoking. ... I like it because it damages me.'' This is all prelude to a lover's confession: ''Then it all came out, a waterfall of words.''

David reappears briefly at the end, settled in New Haven now, in a town-hall meeting that shows how out of touch the returnees are. (David asks one of the panelists to define ''grass roots.'') His pain is not the issue. And as the novel unfolds, the question at the heart of Jacobs's description of Greenwich Village -- how much gentrification is enough? -- also turns out to miss the point. Inevitably, tensions between the two communities reach a climax, and the result is a tragedy you don't need to be a science-fiction writer to imagine. But the speculative machinery offers a nuance here, too. Earlier in the novel, when Bishop assaults the city comptroller (he catches him out jogging and slams a gun against his temple), to demand more food rations, he does so partly because he knows the guy's ''augmented'' -- no blood comes out, but a ''dent did mar the manufactured curvature.'' There's nothing morally ambiguous about the scene, but that also means there's no possibility of real compromise. The divide has grown too deep.Benjamin Markovits's most recent novel is ''Christmas in Austin.''GOLIATHBy Tochi Onyebuchi327 pp. Tordotcom. $26.99.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/books/review/tochi-onyebuchi-goliath.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/books/review/tochi-onyebuchi-goliath.html)

**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2022

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[***McGuire or Maguire? A Tussle Over Who Founded Labor Day***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60S5-T8C1-JBG3-63Y6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 5, 2020 Saturday 05:33 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1143 words

**Byline:** Jenny Gross

**Highlight:** Descendants of two men with similar last names claim their great-grandfather was the true father of the holiday.

**Body**

Descendants of two men with similar last names claim their great-grandfather was the true father of the holiday.

TOTOWA, N.J. — For nearly 50 years, Bill Collins, a retired history teacher, spent [*Labor Day*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-labor-day.html) not at a beach or a barbecue, but at a cemetery. He and a dozen or more relatives would gather around the tombstone of his great-grandfather to celebrate his founding of the national workers’ holiday.

JoAnn Richardson, a retired banker, also celebrates the founding of Labor Day. Ms. Richardson shows friends her family photos and yellowed newspaper clippings applauding her great-grandfather for proposing the holiday.

Mr. Collins and Ms. Richardson, who are not related, are honoring different men with similar names: Matthew Maguire and Peter J. McGuire.

At least as far back as 1894, there has been a debate over which man is the true father of [*Labor Day*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-labor-day.html).

Maguire, a machinist, and McGuire, a carpenter, shared a few similarities beyond their last names. Both were respected union leaders with Irish parents, both fought for the betterment of the ***working class***, and both attended the first Labor Day parade in New York City in 1882.

The Department of Labor [*credits McGuire*](https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/hallofhonor/2004_mcguire), who founded the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and was a co-founder of the organization that later became the American Federation of Labor, as the true father of Labor Day.

But over the years, evidence has emerged suggesting that credit should go to Maguire, the secretary of the Central Labor Union, which organized the first Labor Day parade.

Now, researchers from MyHeritage, a genealogy site based in Israel, say they have uncovered additional evidence that Maguire deserves credit, after gathering records from descendants of McGuire and Maguire. A key piece of evidence, they say, is an interment card from 1917, held at the Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Totowa, N.J., where Maguire is buried, that includes a handwritten message: “This man founded Labor Day.” (A spokeswoman for the cemetery said she did not know who wrote those words or when.)

Ms. Richardson, a great-granddaughter of McGuire, said she did not think there was any truth to claims that someone else was the actual father of Labor Day.

“I would fall right off my chair,” said Ms. Richardson, 76, who lives in Florida. “There’s no way I would believe it after all these years.”

In 1956, when she was 12, she was a guest of honor at a White House ceremony in which President Dwight D. Eisenhower unveiled a stamp dedicated to McGuire and the labor movement.

Since McGuire’s death in 1906, union officials and politicians have made an annual pilgrimage to Pennsauken, N.J., to visit his [*gravestone and a statue*](https://www.nps.gov/places/peter-j-mcguire-memorial-and-gravesite.htm) in his honor. Inscribed into both are the words “Father of Labor Day.”

On Friday, in an event that was smaller than usual because of the coronavirus pandemic, about 20 officials, including Representative Donald Norcross of New Jersey, visited McGuire’s grave to honor him and the workers he championed. Mr. Norcross said he had visited the grave for nearly 60 years, since he was a small child.

Referring to Labor Day, Mr. Norcross, a Democrat, said McGuire “was the person who led the charge to actually get this done.”

Unlike McGuire’s grave, Maguire’s is modest and makes no mention of Labor Day.

Mr. Collins, 75, who also lives in Florida, said his family never had any doubt that Maguire, not McGuire, deserved the credit. Mr. Collins’s uncle, also named Matthew Maguire, started the Maguire Association in the early 1970s to promote Maguire as the true founder.

“As far as I’m concerned, he’s the father of Labor Day,” Mr. Collins said.

The first Labor Day parade was held in New York City in 1882, when thousands of workers, including Maguire and McGuire, rode in carriages or marched in a procession uptown. They carried banners calling for, among other reforms, “Eight Hours for a Legal Day’s Work,” [*according to a New York Times account of the parade*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1882/09/06/102785446.html?pageNumber=8).

As the economy recovered from the depression of the 1870s, there was a growing sense among American workers that capitalism had become corrupted by business leaders who had amassed too much power, said Edward T. O’Donnell, a history professor at the College of the Holy Cross whose research focuses on the Gilded Age. The parade was both a celebration of the contributions the ***working class*** had made in the United States and a protest against inequality.

The New York parade grew in size each year, and states and municipalities adopted legislation to recognize Labor Day. In 1894, [*President Grover Cleveland signed a bill into law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/01/us/what-is-labor-day.html?searchResultPosition=1) declaring Labor Day a federal holiday.

Within days, a New Jersey newspaper, The Morning Call, published an editorial titled “Honor to Whom Honor Is Due,” arguing that Cleveland should have given credit to Maguire, the “undisputed author of Labor Day as a holiday.”

The mix-up may be explained by Maguire’s reservedness and his focus on seeking justice for workers, rather than on his legacy, Mr. Collins said, citing his mother’s description of his great-grandfather. McGuire, on the other hand, seemed to have no problem taking credit.

“It really has to do with the different personalities of the two men — one an extrovert, one an introvert, one self-serving and the other not,” Mr. Collins said.

At the center of the debate is a Central Labor Union meeting that took place in May 1882. In [*an 1897 article in The Carpenter*](https://archive.org/details/carpenter17unit/page/n149/mode/2up?q=McGuire+Labor+Day), a monthly union publication, McGuire wrote that he first proposed the holiday at that meeting. The parade’s grand marshal, William McCabe, later recalled, in an 1897 article in The Cleveland Recorder, that Maguire, not McGuire, proposed the idea at that meeting.

Still, over time, McGuire became accepted as the founder. Maguire, who ran for vice president on the Socialist Labor Party ticket in 1896, may have been pushed aside because his political beliefs were deemed too radical to be associated with Labor Day, Mr. Collins said.

Michael Kazin, a history professor and labor historian at Georgetown University, said that he did not know who had the original idea, but that it took more than one person to persuade the federal government to adopt a new national holiday.

“It caught on locally, gradually, more than in one fell swoop,” he said.

Mr. Collins said he was not bothered that, for 126 years, Maguire, his great-grandfather, had been overshadowed.

“Both of them were working for the same goal: an eight-hour workday for workers and a holiday to celebrate the laboring-class people,” Mr. Collins said. “In the long run, it really doesn’t matter. We have Labor Day.”

Sheelagh McNeill contributed research.

PHOTOS: Bill Collins believes his great-grandfather is the true father of Labor Day. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PHELAN M. EBENHACK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Descendants of Peter J. McGuire, top, and Matthew Maguire are clashing over who founded Labor Day. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA BILL COLLINS; JOANN RICHARDSON)

**Load-Date:** September 3, 2021

**End of Document**



[***An Epicurean City's Latest Food Fad Is Unapologetically Basic***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C5-B731-DXY4-X28P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 3, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 12; HONG KONG DISPATCH

**Length:** 1331 words

**Byline:** By Vivian Wang and Joy Dong

**Body**

In a city pummeled by political upheaval, economic downturn and the pandemic, bare-bones 'two dishes and rice' restaurants have become a go-to destination across all social classes.

HONG KONG -- The lines begin forming before lunchtime and wind on well into the night, with customers outside craning their necks for views of the day's selection through the window.

It is not a newly anointed Michelin bistro or the latest photogenic, Instagram-friendly confection that has captivated Hong Kong, a famously epicurean city.

It is a humble takeout box of white rice and two precooked main dishes of the diner's choosing. The price: around $4.

Bare-bones restaurants offering these simple meals have become an unexpected food fad in Hong Kong, prompting an explosion of vendors, the fascination of food bloggers and even a 77,000-member Facebook fan group.

The food itself hardly seems worth the attention. The offerings are standards of Cantonese cuisine, with options like stir-fried tomato and eggs, sweet and sour pork, or braised beef and turnip. They are ordered cafeteria-style, by pointing or shouting one's order to an expectant worker with a ladle. Even the name given to these establishments is as no-frills as their menus: ''two dishes and rice.''

But that plainness is the point.

In a city pummeled by two years of political upheaval, economic downturn and seemingly endless pandemic controls -- a ban on dining in after 6 p.m. just lifted late last month -- two-dishes-and-rice places have become a lifeline.

For struggling restaurant owners, this business model is a rare source of surging demand. For diners, the food is a cheap and convenient staple, the two dishes offering the comforting flavors and variety that define Chinese home cooking.

There are now at least 353 businesses selling two dishes and rice across the city, according to a crowdsourced map. No census exists of how many existed before, but Hong Kong food scholars and diners agreed there were far fewer before the pandemic.

''You can be sure that when you go into this kind of restaurant, you can get something that won't go wrong,'' said Kitty Ho, a nurse eating lunch with her boyfriend, Jack Fung, an I.T. worker, in the blue-collar neighborhood of North Point.

Ms. Ho and Mr. Fung, both in their 20s, said they had started eating the lunchboxes multiple times a week in recent months, especially after Ms. Ho, who follows many food-related pages on social media, found the Facebook fan group.

The spot they had chosen that day, Kai Kee, was a classic of the genre in its unapologetic lack of ambience. Its walls were lime green, matching the plastic chopsticks and upholstered chairs. (While many two-dishes-and-rice shops are takeout only, some offer spartan seating areas.)

Cardboard boxes, each holding 500 Styrofoam containers, were stacked in the middle of the floor. No music played; the only soundtrack was the shouts of workers hurrying between the kitchen, which exhaled clouds of steam into the dining area, and the front, where the food was served.

The day's two dozen or so dishes were displayed, buffet-style, in an L-shaped array of stainless steel pans. Two dishes cost 32 Hong Kong dollars, or $4, cash only; each additional dish was $1 extra. All the options -- spicy eggplant, pig ears, stir-fried cauliflower -- were brightly colored and clearly visible from the street through large windows to entice passers-by.

Two dishes and rice is not new to Hong Kong. But it had long been overlooked, or dismissed as the realm of broke students or the ***working class***. In both format and quality, it recalls Panda Express in the United States. In Hong Kong, some jokingly referred to it as ''cursory rice,'' to reflect their low expectations.

''It was seen as food for commoners, people with low incomes,'' said Siu Yan Ho, a lecturer who studies the city's food culture at Hong Kong Baptist University.

Then the pandemic hit. Unemployment jumped. Hong Kong's world-famous restaurant scene was left limping along. The most recent ban on dining in at restaurants in the evening lasted nearly four months, and even though it has been lifted, people still cannot gather in groups larger than four.

Many Hong Kongers also do not cook, in a city where groceries are expensive and tiny apartments may not have kitchens.

So the types and numbers of people who can appreciate a cheap, filling meal widened considerably. And Hong Kong's food entrepreneurs have responded.

Chefs at ailing cha chaan tengs -- traditional Hong Kong sit-down eateries -- quit to open two-dishes-and-rice shops. A popular local hot dog chain started its own two-dishes-and-rice offshoot. Seafood banquet halls wheeled out a few pans of ready-made dishes at night as takeout options when the dine-in ban kicked in. So did coffee shops better known for their latte artistry.

''We get office ladies, students, older people, cleaning workers,'' said Kai Kee's owner, Wong Chi-wai, adding that he usually sold 1,000 meals a day at each of his six locations.

To distinguish themselves among all the competition, some shops offer whole steamed fish or lobster for a few additional dollars. Others throw in free soup. One spot in the Yau Ma Tei neighborhood includes truffle chicken, red rice and quinoa to lure younger customers.

Still, even the most devoted customers have no illusions this is fine dining.

''I don't have too many requirements,'' said Kelvin Tam, another Kai Kee customer, who had chosen curried fish balls and a beef and leek stir fry. ''As long as it doesn't taste too bad and is edible, then it's OK.''

Despite his lukewarm praise, Mr. Tam, a 60-year-old property company employee dressed in a shirt and tie, said he was a regular, noting that the ingredients were fresher than elsewhere he had tried.

Tips like these for other diners abound on the Facebook fan group site. Every day, dozens of people post photos of their lunchbox, along with notes: The pork chops at a shop in the Prince Edward neighborhood were cold today, or the staff at this one in Tai Kok Tsui are especially friendly.

Some reviewers have the hallmarks of true connoisseurs. ''The meatballs were pretty good. The ratio of lean meat to flour to water chestnuts was about 5:4:1, and I didn't detect any fat,'' one member wrote.

The Facebook group's passion underscored the new importance of these meals during the pandemic, said Selina Ching Chan, a professor at Shue Yan University in Hong Kong who has studied the city's food culture. Diners were expressing their appreciation for something that had become ''a public good,'' she said.

And the conversations on the site were more inclusive than the ones that usually take place around Hong Kong's glittering food scene, she added. ''It's very different from Michelin stars, gourmet experts, which highlight distinction, outstanding stores. Here we salute different things.''

Like all food trends, this one is likely to end. It may already be in its sunset days: On the day the 6 p.m. dining-in ban was lifted, Andrew Wong, the Facebook fan group's founder, posted, ''The All-Hong Kong Two Dishes and Rice Thanksgiving Festival has officially ended.'' Many members wrote how excited they were to sit down at dim sum parlors with friends again.

Still, many said there would always be an appetite for the rice boxes -- both among the converted, and those who had long depended on them.

That includes Lo Siu-ying, 64. Peering at the day's selection at Kai Kee, Ms. Lo, dressed in a pair of rubber work boots, said she'd been eating there for years. It was the easiest option for herself and her husband, both of whom left home at 8 a.m. for their job as building cleaners and returned past midnight.

She would be glad, she said, when others became less reliant on it, though. Her work had become extra tiring during the pandemic, because the amount of trash she had to take out had doubled.

''Everyone is buying takeout,'' she said. ''There are so many boxes.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/world/asia/hong-kong-inexpensive-dining.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/world/asia/hong-kong-inexpensive-dining.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''Two dishes and rice'' shops in Hong Kong have been a lifeline for many as the territory has been stressed by political upheaval and pandemic restrictions. At these no-frills spots, for about $4, ''You can get something that won't go wrong,'' one diner said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILLY H.C. KWOK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Half a Century Later, John Lennon’s ‘Plastic Ono Band’ Still Hits Hard; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GV-70B1-DXY4-X0D3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 21, 2021 Wednesday 00:37 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1582 words

**Byline:** Jon Pareles

**Highlight:** A new boxed set tracking the making of Lennon’s first post-Beatles solo album reveals the construction of primal songs, and the clarity of his vision.

**Body**

A new boxed set tracking the making of Lennon’s first post-Beatles solo album reveals the construction of primal songs, and the clarity of his vision.

It was raw. Yet it was meticulously thought through.

“Plastic Ono Band,” released in December 1970, was [*John Lennon*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon)’s first solo album after the breakup of the Beatles earlier that year. It was a far cry from the tuneful reassurance of Paul McCartney’s one-man-studio-band album “McCartney” and the polished abundance of George Harrison’s triple album, “All Things Must Pass,” both of which were also released that year. In both music and lyrics, “Plastic Ono Band” was a stark statement of pain, separation, vulnerability and self-reclamation after the whirlwind that had been Lennon’s life as a Beatle. Half a century later, the album retains its power.

Now it has been remixed, massively expanded, anatomized and annotated as “Plastic Ono Band: The Ultimate Collection”: six CDs, two Blu-ray audio discs and a hardcover book, delving into the music with a recording engineer’s attention to details. The compilation was produced by Yoko Ono, Lennon’s widow and a producer (with Lennon and [*Phil Spector*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon)) of the original album, and Simon Hilton; there are other configurations for less obsessive fans.

The boxed set revisits the album and the Plastic Ono Band singles that preceded it — “[*Give Peace a Chance,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon) “Cold Turkey” and [*“Instant Karma! (We All Shine On)”*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon) — by unearthing demos, alternate takes, raw mixes, studio jams and even individual vocal and instrumental tracks. A disc of “Evolution Mixes” turns each song into a making-of montage, from demo through studio chatter and stray ideas to a glimpse of the finished version. The revelation of “The Ultimate Collection” is that for all the unbridled emotion in the songs, Lennon was still a deliberate craftsman. And even as his work grappled with trauma, he had some fun.

The music of “Plastic Ono Band,” on its surface, repudiated the elaborate productions of the late Beatles. Instead, the tracks relied on bare-bones, three-man arrangements: Lennon on piano or guitar, Klaus Voormann on bass and Ringo Starr on drums, rarely even using all the tracks of an eight-track tape. The sound can be deliberately lo-fi, particularly when he cranks up the electric-guitar distortion on “Well Well Well” and “I Found Out.”

The lyrics, and Lennon’s fully exposed voice, reflected the insights and catharsis of the primal scream therapy Lennon had begun (but never completed) with the practice’s leading exponent, Arthur Janov. “He responded very well because he had an enormous amount of pain,” Janov comments in the album’s book. “It was terrible and also good because it just drove him and made him what he was — incredibly insightful, very close to his feelings and driven by his feelings.”

Lennon’s songs made large topics deeply personal: family, faith, class, fame, drugs, love, fear. “Mother,” which opens the album, starts with a heartsick declaration — “Mother, you had me/But I never had you” — and ends with a crescendo of desolation, with Lennon repeatedly imploring, “Mama don’t go!/Daddy come home!” in a voice that rasps, howls and breaks. (The boxed set includes the a cappella vocal track; it’s harrowing.)

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon)]

In “***Working Class*** Hero,” Lennon sympathizes with drab, numb lives and wrestles with his own status, heroic or not, while in “Look at Me,” he pleads, “Who am I supposed to be?” In [*“Isolation,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon) he sings about feeling trapped and attacked, “afraid of everyone.” And in “God,” joined by Billy Preston’s gospel-piano flourishes, he renounces heroes, politicians, gurus and religions, a list that culminates in “I don’t believe in Beatles.” After a pause to let that sink in, Lennon sings, quietly and firmly, “I just believe in me/Yoko and me.” Then the album’s postscript, under a minute long, revisits a lingering childhood wound with a child’s diction: “My Mummy’s Dead.” (That song, recorded on cassette, had its own artifice; it was sped up in the studio, and filtered to sound like a vintage radio.)

Remixes can’t help being anachronistic, and “The Ultimate Mixes” won’t please everyone who has long cherished the original album. The virtue of the latest mixes is that they somehow create new space and transparency around Lennon’s voice, bringing out the grain and passion of his performances. Stereo placements get shifted, sometimes for better — the guitar and drums sound even meaner in “Well Well Well” — and sometimes not, as Lennon’s double-tracked vocals on “Isolation” are pulled widely apart. The new mixes also regularly boost the lower register, at times elevating Voormann’s bass parts as if they were intended as counterpoint instead of a solid, unassuming harmonic foundation.

The discs of additional material present Lennon as a musician at work with a clear sense of what he’s after. The demos reveal that most of the songs were substantially complete in their early stages, despite small changes to come. The demo of “Mother” was played on guitar rather than piano, but the drama of its final pleas was already built in. The demo of “God,” another song that moved from guitar to piano, doesn’t yet mention “Yoko and me.” And the solo demos of “Cold Turkey” and an early fragment of “Well Well Well” sound more like vintage rural blues than the electric band versions would.

From the demos, Lennon’s expertise and determination take over. The “Evolution” montages show him consulting and heeding Ono’s advice from the control room; the outtakes show him toning up arrangements, placing piano chords for maximum warmth and impact in “Isolation” and “Remember,” deciding whether to use his fingers or a pick in “***Working Class*** Hero.” (The final choice, using a pick, gives the guitar its tolling gravity.)

For the singles released before the album, Lennon treated Plastic Ono Band as a name for whatever group he wanted to assemble. “Give Peace a Chance” gathered the bystanders at a 1969 Bed-In, a weeklong antiwar happening-protest in Montreal, including the poet Allen Ginsberg and the singing comedian Tommy Smothers; when the basic live recording sounded too thin, a choir was added in the studio. “Cold Turkey” — which ends with Lennon’s increasingly agonized vocals — sounds spontaneous but went through 26 takes, with Lennon and Eric Clapton flinging barbed, feverish electric guitar lines back and forth.

“Instant Karma! (We All Shine On),” a single that leapt out of radio speakers in 1970, was both Lennon at his purest — it was recorded in a single day — and Lennon at his most professional. “I don’t believe in Buddha,” he sang in “God,” but the idea of karma — consequences — clearly appealed to him. As the multiple versions in the boxed set show, the basic shape of the song was complete from its demo, but Spector — an expert on microphone placement, piling on overdubbed instruments, reverberation and effects — gave it an explosive impact, in multiple iterations. The means were technical; the result was heartfelt.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon)]

For all the concentration on his own new songs, Lennon also had a way to blow off steam, find a focus and consolidate his band: playing the oldies, as one disc in the set reveals. Between takes of his new, bruised songs, he hopped back to what was, even as far back as 1970, vintage rock ’n’ roll: Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, Elvis Presley. It was a common language, a shared joke, a way to regroup, some comic relief. Then they went back to the hard stuff.

After all of the boxed set’s traversals of Lennon’s album sessions, there’s an Easter egg tucked into the Blu-ray audio discs. It’s the jam sessions, recorded on Oct. 10, 1970, with Lennon, Voormann and Starr, that Ono would edit down to most of her own “Plastic Ono Band” album, which was released the same day as Lennon’s. (Ono’s finished album isn’t included in the boxed set; it was [*most recently rereleased in 2016*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon).)

The unedited Ono tracks are long and usually nonstop: 21 minutes of “Why Not,” 16 minutes of “Touch Me.” The stalwart rhythm section takes up a vamp — bluesy, rocky, droning — and Lennon tops it with slide guitar, swooping and jabbing and quivering. Then Ono joins in to unleash a thoroughly astonishing array of vocal sounds — shrieks, mews, moans, whoops, ululations, yowls, glottals, keening long lines, baby cries, witchy cackles — with Lennon’s guitar hovering nearby, mingling with her and egging her on. [*“Paper Shoes,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/john-lennon) with assorted echoes and reverb layered atop vocals and instruments, becomes utterly dizzying. In 1970, the music’s closest kin would have been the burgeoning krautrock of Can in Germany, who — like Ono and the Plastic Ono Band — were merging psychedelic improvisation with mantric Minimalism, simultaneously focused and deranged.

The sections of the jams that Ono excerpted to fit on an LP in 1970 were usually the most tense, jarring, abstract stretches — which is to say she chose well. But the full-length tracks testify to the Plastic Ono Band’s stamina and closeness, especially to how attentively Lennon and Ono were listening to each other. Teasing, goading, exploring and intertwining, their wordless interactions are intimate primal screams.

PHOTOS: From top, John Lennon at the home he and Yoko Ono rented in Bel Air, Calif., in 1970; with Ono, who was a producer of “Plastic Ono Band”; posing in 1970 with a reminder meant for the staff of EMI Studios on Abbey Road in London. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY YOKO ONO LENNON; RICHARD DILELLO, VIA YOKO ONO LENNON; YOKO ONO LENNON)

**Load-Date:** April 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Should Democrats Be Less Progressive?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6422-JVC1-JBG3-6013-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 10, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 20; LETTERS

**Length:** 982 words

**Body**

To the Editor:

Re ''Face Reality, Democrats'' (editorial, Nov. 5):

It is perilous to ignore political reality. What is questionable is The Times's description of that reality.

Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans (including many Republicans) support many of Build Back Better's initiatives: lower prescription drug prices, support for child care and early childhood education, and more. Even more consistently, polls make it clear that large majorities want the people and big businesses that make the most money to pay their fair share of taxes -- which would go a long way toward paying for the programs Americans want.

Calling this ''a sharp leftward push'' is mistaken, and focusing on the old boogeymen of costs and growing the government is an anachronistic analysis.

Joe Biden was elected in part to end Donald Trump's war on our government. His promise was to make government work for Americans, not to make it smaller. The largest part of Democrats' peril is their failure to do that -- largely the fault of moderates. If Democrats can't make government work, they deserve the consequences. Unfortunately, the nation does not.

Gail GoldeyHarrison, N.Y.

To the Editor:

I certainly hope that this editorial will get the attention of Democratic members of Congress!

I am a liberal Democrat who decries the party infighting and obstructionism. These are not normal times, where we can have arcane political arguments about the fine points of policy. This is now Trump world -- an ex-president who actually tried to foment a coup, supported and enabled by his Republican Party.

So while factions in my party are being intransigent, they are also making the president look weak and ineffective and reminding voters that we can be chaotic, too -- ergo our recent electoral losses.

Face reality is right! Either coalesce and compromise and do some great things for the American people, or have the G.O.P. take over Congress and re-elect Donald Trump as president, which will cause us to fail as a country.

Carol KrainesDeerfield, Ill.

To the Editor:

Your editorial gets it exactly wrong.

You call for the Democrats to moderate in the face of the electorate's lurch toward the angry and disaffected right. The problem is that our society is broken. People are angry, people are disaffected. The progressives are the ones speaking to these people, with salvos against the destruction of the ***working class*** and obscene levels of inequality. Add in the energy of the young and engaged citizens who want to prevent the destruction of our planet.

The progressives among us are our only hope to lead our country with a mandate of the majority.

Mark KnobilPittsburgh

To the Editor:

The irony is overwhelming. The advice the editorial page gives to the Democratic Party is to ignore the Times editorial page. This is certainly excellent advice, and had the Democratic Party and the Biden administration followed it, the recent electoral losses might well have been smaller. Nonetheless, it leaves the reader puzzled as to how to apply this advice to the endless stream of progressive editorials that are certain to follow.

Jonathan BlankNew York

To the Editor:

I respectfully disagree with your analysis of the setbacks suffered by the Democratic Party in the recent elections. You give our divided citizenry too much credit. Ask the ordinary voter what he knows -- not thinks -- about matters like inflation, the state of the pandemic, the teaching of critical race theory, etc., and I am pretty sure you will come up with very little. We voters are vocal about what we think, even if we don't know much about the subject at hand.

Democrats, notably President Biden, refuse to admit that trying to reason with a party that only offers opposition is futile. The ideal of uniting the country is lofty but currently unrealistic. The G.O.P. over a long period has mastered the art of short, emotionally loaded phrases to manipulate its constituents and the unwary.

The media are being too quick to judge a presidency that is not yet a year old. Disappointing.

Norma GausterAvon, Conn.

How Aaron Rodgers Follows the Trump Playbook

To the Editor:

Re ''Rodgers Sees Covid Rules as Senseless'' (Sports, Nov. 6):

Aaron Rodgers's response is taken right from the former president's playbook, which is increasingly becoming a template for high-profile people who mess up. The parallels are uncanny.

Let's be clear. While many folks are angry that Rodgers, the Green Bay Packers' star quarterback, isn't vaccinated, the real issue here is that he knowingly broke the rules. And doesn't think he should be held accountable.

Rather than step up, Rodgers acted indignant, and tried to confuse the issue, provide alternative facts, play down the implications of his actions, highlight his critical thinking, and dare the powers that be to fully hold him accountable. This is the ''stable genius'' approach. He's so principled about this issue that he could express his true beliefs only after getting caught.

This isn't about the woke mob and cancel culture, as he claims. It's about not being a jerk. And not thinking you're above the rules. And accountability.

It's quaint to think about the days when at least some people in leadership positions actually apologized and took responsibility for their misdeeds. Today, too many people instead try to shift the goal posts, just like Rodgers.

John DudzinskyBrooklyn

The Anguish of War

To the Editor:

Re ''Desperation at Abbey Gate: America's Final Days in Afghanistan'' (front page, Nov. 8):

The valor of the Marines, the terror of the Afghans, the disastrous denouement of the war. How can anyone read this story and not be moved? The human anguish and the unimaginable waste of these international conflicts are powerful lessons that never seemed to be learned by those who cause them.

Keith W. HallRaleigh, N.C.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/opinion/letters/democrats-progressives.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/09/opinion/letters/democrats-progressives.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The U.S. Capitol building. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samuel Corum for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2021

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[***Let's Stop Warring Over Words***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648X-J2T1-DXY4-X0NY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 12, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2021 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 9; JAMELLE BOUIE

**Length:** 1139 words

**Byline:** By Jamelle Bouie

**Body**

After Donald Trump and the Republican Party made gains among Black and Hispanic voters in the 2020 presidential election, a chorus of voices emerged to blame the outcome on Democratic messaging.

Democrats, went the argument, were too ''woke,'' too preoccupied with ''identity politics,'' too invested in slogans like ''defund the police'' and too eager to embrace the language of the activist left. Terms like ''BIPOC'' (an acronym for Black, Indigenous and People of Color) and especially ''Latinx'' alienated the ***working-class*** Black and Hispanic voters who shifted to Trump in key states like Florida and North Carolina.

It makes sense that this is where the conversation turned. People who work with words -- journalists, commentators and political professionals -- are naturally interested in the impact of messaging and language on voters.

At the same time, it is important to remember that language does not actually structure politics. Yes, a political message can persuade voters or, on the other end, help them rationalize their choices. And yes, a political message can be effective or ineffective. But we should not mistake this for a causal relationship.

The forces that drive politics are material and ideological, and our focus -- when trying to understand and explain shifts in the electorate -- should be on the social and economic transformations that shape life for most Americans.

With that in mind, let's return to the debate over the Democratic Party's declining fortunes with Hispanic voters. (In all of this, it is important to remember that even with the significant shift to Trump, who improved on his 2016 total in 2020 by 10 percentage points, according to Pew, Biden still won 59 percent of the Hispanic voters who cast ballots.)

Does a term like ''Latinx'' alienate some portion of the Hispanic voting public? A recent survey says yes. According to a new national poll of Hispanic voters, only 2 percent chose the term to describe their ethnic background, and 40 percent said it offends them either ''a lot'' (20 percent), ''somewhat'' (11 percent) or ''a little'' (9 percent). To the extent that Democratic politicians and affiliated voices used the term -- demonstrating their distance from the communities in question -- that may have left a bad taste in the mouths of some Hispanic voters. But it does not follow from there that use of the term explains anything about electoral trends among Hispanics. For those, we have to look at the material and ideological shifts I mentioned earlier.

It would be too much for a single column to give a full inventory of those changes. But I can point to a few. First, there is the economy. In areas like the Rio Grande Valley of Texas -- where Republicans made major inroads with Mexican American voters in 2020 -- rising wages for workers in the region's oil and gas industry helped shift some voters to the right. Nationally, there's evidence that some Hispanic voters credited Trump with wage growth and rewarded him with additional support. In general, upward mobility and a greater sense of integration into the mainstream of American society have made a significant number of Hispanic voters more open to Republican appeals.

Playing a similar role is evangelical religion. As my news-side colleague Jennifer Medina noted in an article last year, ''Hispanic evangelicals are one of the fastest growing religious groups in the country.'' Churches remain important sites for political socialization, and evangelicalism is, at this juncture, a conservative force in American culture and politics. It makes sense, then, that Hispanic evangelicals are also much more likely than their Catholic counterparts to vote Republican.

According to a survey by the Public Religion Research Institute, ''Hispanic Protestants'' were more likely than all other Hispanics to approve of Trump's performance as president, his handling of the economy, his handling of ''racial justice protests'' and his handling of the pandemic. Hispanic Protestants were also much more likely to say that ''Christians face a lot of discrimination.''

There is also the longstanding effort by Republicans to mobilize Hispanic conservatives for the Republican Party. ''For the past half century,'' the historian Geraldo Cadava writes in ''The Hispanic Republican: The Shaping of an American Political Identity, from Nixon to Trump,'' ''Hispanic Republicans and the Republican Party have been deliberate and methodical in their mutual, sometimes hesitant, embrace.'' Beliefs about relations with Latin America, about ''the United States as the protector of freedom in the world'' and about ''market-driven capitalism as the best path to upward mobility'' have helped Republicans build a durable bulwark among Hispanic voters, one that the Trump campaign built on with focused and sustained outreach.

Entangled in these social and economic transformations is a longstanding and potent American ideology that slots some people as ''makers'' and others as ''takers,'' to use Mitt Romney's off-the-cuff language to donors during his presidential campaign in 2012. Although traditionally associated with whiteness and masculinity, this ''producerism'' holds sway and currency across the electorate. That's part of why candidates in both parties scramble to associate themselves with blue-collar workers and why some Democratic proponents of the social safety net insist that their policies provide a ''hand up, not a handout.''

I think that a part of Donald Trump's appeal, especially for men, was the degree to which he embodied the producerist ideal. His image, at least, was of the commanding provider, who generated wealth and prosperity for himself and others. Put another way, the prevalence of producerist ideology in American society helped frame Trump -- previously the star of ''The Apprentice'' -- as a political figure, making him legible to millions of Americans. Hispanic voters were as much a part of that dynamic as any other group.

The point here is not to write an exhaustive explanation of what happened among Hispanic voters in the 2020 presidential election. The point is that our constant battles over language are more distracting than not. The whys of American politics have much more to do with the ever-changing currents of race, religion and economic production than they do with political messaging. And no message, no matter how strong on the surface, will land if it isn't attentive to those forces and the other forces that structure the lives of ordinary people.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/opinion/hispanic-voters-messaging.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/opinion/hispanic-voters-messaging.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Marco Bello/Agence France-Presse -- Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***In Epicurean Hong Kong, a Humble $4 Lunchbox Is Now All the Rage; Hong Kong Dispatch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65C1-5S11-JBG3-6074-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 2, 2022 Monday 05:06 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 1368 words

**Byline:** Vivian Wang and Joy Dong

**Highlight:** In a city pummeled by political upheaval, economic downturn and the pandemic, bare-bones ‘two dishes and rice’ restaurants have become a go-to destination across all social classes.

**Body**

In a city pummeled by political upheaval, economic downturn and the pandemic, bare-bones ‘two dishes and rice’ restaurants have become a go-to destination across all social classes.

HONG KONG — The lines begin forming before lunchtime and wind on well into the night, with customers outside craning their necks for views of the day’s selection through the window.

It is not a newly anointed Michelin bistro or the latest photogenic, Instagram-friendly confection that has captivated Hong Kong, a famously epicurean city.

It is a humble takeout box of white rice and two precooked main dishes of the diner’s choosing. The price: around $4.

Bare-bones restaurants offering these simple meals have become an unexpected food fad in Hong Kong, prompting an explosion of vendors, the fascination of food bloggers and even a 77,000-member [*Facebook fan group*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2808948529353315).

The food itself hardly seems worth the attention. The offerings are standards of Cantonese cuisine, with options like stir-fried tomato and eggs, sweet and sour pork, or braised beef and turnip. They are ordered cafeteria-style, by pointing or shouting one’s order to an expectant worker with a ladle. Even the name given to these establishments is as no-frills as their menus: “two dishes and rice.”

But that plainness is the point.

In a city pummeled by two years of [*political upheaval*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/31/world/asia/hong-kong-election-national-security-law.html), [*economic downturn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/business/hong-kong-covid-supply-chain.html) and seemingly endless [*pandemic controls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/08/world/asia/hong-kong-covid-social-distancing.html) — a ban on dining in after 6 p.m. just lifted late last month — two-dishes-and-rice places have become a lifeline.

For struggling restaurant owners, this business model is a rare source of surging demand. For diners, the food is a cheap and convenient staple, the two dishes offering the comforting flavors and variety that define Chinese home cooking.

There are now at least 353 businesses selling two dishes and rice across the city, according to a crowdsourced[*map*](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1ajJqZDkUYSqW5JDGs554Z6C560SvXTBx&amp;shorturl=1&amp;ll=22.36719560848536%2C114.15926047961031&amp;z=12). No census exists of how many existed before, but Hong Kong food scholars and diners agreed there were far fewer before the pandemic.

“You can be sure that when you go into this kind of restaurant, you can get something that won’t go wrong,” said Kitty Ho, a nurse eating lunch with her boyfriend, Jack Fung, an I.T. worker, in the blue-collar neighborhood of North Point.

Ms. Ho and Mr. Fung, both in their 20s, said they had started eating the lunchboxes multiple times a week in recent months, especially after Ms. Ho, who follows many food-related pages on social media, found the Facebook fan group.

The spot they had chosen that day, Kai Kee, was a classic of the genre in its unapologetic lack of ambience. Its walls were lime green, matching the plastic chopsticks and upholstered chairs. (While many two-dishes-and-rice shops are takeout only, some offer spartan seating areas.)

Cardboard boxes, each holding 500 Styrofoam containers, were stacked in the middle of the floor. No music played; the only soundtrack was the shouts of workers hurrying between the kitchen, which exhaled clouds of steam into the dining area, and the front, where the food was served.

The day’s two dozen or so dishes were displayed, buffet-style, in an L-shaped array of stainless steel pans. Two dishes cost 32 Hong Kong dollars, or $4, cash only; each additional dish was $1 extra. All the options — spicy eggplant, pig ears, stir-fried cauliflower — were brightly colored and clearly visible from the street through large windows to entice passers-by.

Two dishes and rice is not new to Hong Kong. But it had long been overlooked, or dismissed as the realm of broke students or the ***working class***. In both format and quality, it recalls Panda Express in the United States. In Hong Kong, some jokingly referred to it as “cursory rice,” to reflect their low expectations.

“It was seen as food for commoners, people with low incomes,” said [*Siu Yan Ho*](https://artsbu.hkbu.edu.hk/about-us/our-community-of-teachers-and-researchers/dr-siu-yan-ho), a lecturer who studies the city’s food culture at Hong Kong Baptist University.

Then the pandemic hit. Unemployment [*jumped*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-04-13/hong-kong-gets-higher-than-expected-claims-for-pandemic-relief). Hong Kong’s world-famous restaurant scene was left [*limping along*](https://hongkongfp.com/2022/02/22/covid-19-industry-warns-of-5000-restaurant-closures-university-of-hong-kong-study-predicts-peak-of-182900-daily-cases/). The most recent ban on dining in at restaurants in the evening lasted nearly four months, and even though it has been lifted, people still cannot gather in groups larger than four.

Many Hong Kongers also do not cook, in a city where groceries are expensive and tiny apartments may [*not have kitchens*](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-hongkong-cafes-idUSKCN24S150).

So the types and numbers of people who can appreciate a cheap, filling meal widened considerably. And Hong Kong’s food entrepreneurs have responded.

Chefs at ailing cha chaan tengs — traditional Hong Kong sit-down eateries — quit to open two-dishes-and-rice shops. A popular local hot dog chain started its own two-dishes-and-rice offshoot. Seafood banquet halls wheeled out a few pans of ready-made dishes at night as takeout options when the dine-in ban kicked in. [*So did coffee shops*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CcWxiOgpWns/) better known for their latte artistry.

“We get office ladies, students, older people, cleaning workers,” said Kai Kee’s owner, Wong Chi-wai, adding that he usually sold 1,000 meals a day at each of his six locations.

To distinguish themselves among all the competition, some shops offer whole steamed fish or lobster for a few additional dollars. Others throw in free soup. One spot in the Yau Ma Tei neighborhood includes truffle chicken, red rice and quinoa to lure younger customers.

Still, even the most devoted customers have no illusions this is fine dining.

“I don’t have too many requirements,” said Kelvin Tam, another Kai Kee customer, who had chosen curried fish balls and a beef and leek stir fry. “As long as it doesn’t taste too bad and is edible, then it’s OK.”

Despite his lukewarm praise, Mr. Tam, a 60-year-old property company employee dressed in a shirt and tie, said he was a regular, noting that the ingredients were fresher than elsewhere he had tried.

Tips like these for other diners abound on the Facebook fan group site. Every day, dozens of people post photos of their lunchbox, along with notes: The pork chops at a shop in the Prince Edward neighborhood were cold today, or the staff at this one in Tai Kok Tsui are especially friendly.

Some reviewers have the hallmarks of true connoisseurs. “The meatballs were pretty good. The ratio of lean meat to flour to water chestnuts was about 5:4:1, and I didn’t detect any fat,” one member [*wrote*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2808948529353315/posts/3181557552092409/?__cft__[0]=AZWhg29LSswqLY1dZkQHxzoanvXFJ18-4HTQFUI3cOsbzKkbA7Avv6g4BHGRNKXXnBAWvUGRzGflebsFE5L041PBn9DguR0ColDIL9E7pKDibIXiXCzsxfictUFYJlwp2Dy4I48zikvpt9EuVxwHJFBHRdk-HZqfD7j0iUrSnhvumbYPmudjpV415E7oZsGvkxM&amp;__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R).

The Facebook group’s passion underscored the new importance of these meals during the pandemic, said [*Selina Ching Chan,*](https://sociology.hksyu.edu/en/Staff/detail/Professor%20CHAN%2C%20Ching%20Selina%20%E9%99%B3%E8%92%A8%20%E6%95%99%E6%8E%88) a professor at Shue Yan University in Hong Kong who has studied the city’s food culture. Diners were expressing their appreciation for something that had become “a public good,” she said.

And the conversations on the site were more inclusive than the ones that usually take place around Hong Kong’s glittering food scene, she added. “It’s very different from Michelin stars, gourmet experts, which highlight distinction, outstanding stores. Here we salute different things.”

Like all food trends, this one is likely to end. It may already be in its sunset days: On the day the 6 p.m. dining-in ban was lifted, Andrew Wong, the Facebook fan group’s founder, [*posted*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2808948529353315/posts/3181111292137035/), “The All-Hong Kong Two Dishes and Rice Thanksgiving Festival has officially ended.” Many members wrote how excited they were to sit down at dim sum parlors with friends again.

Still, many said there would always be an appetite for the rice boxes — both among the converted, and those who had long depended on them.

That includes Lo Siu-ying, 64. Peering at the day’s selection at Kai Kee, Ms. Lo, dressed in a pair of rubber work boots, said she’d been eating there for years. It was the easiest option for herself and her husband, both of whom left home at 8 a.m. for their job as building cleaners and returned past midnight.

She would be glad, she said, when others became less reliant on it, though. Her work had become extra tiring during the pandemic, because the amount of trash she had to take out had doubled.

“Everyone is buying takeout,” she said. “There are so many boxes.”

PHOTOS: “Two dishes and rice” shops in Hong Kong have been a lifeline for many as the territory has been stressed by political upheaval and pandemic restrictions. At these no-frills spots, for about $4, “You can get something that won’t go wrong,” one diner said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BILLY H.C. KWOK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Biden Is Pushing a Climate Agenda. Gina McCarthy Has to Make It Stick.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GM-RVR1-DXY4-X49B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 20, 2021 Tuesday 07:38 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1579 words

**Byline:** Coral Davenport

**Highlight:** Gina McCarthy, Barack Obama’s E.P.A. chief, could only watch as the Trump administration dismantled her climate work. Now, she’s back with another chance to build a lasting legacy.

**Body**

Gina McCarthy, Barack Obama’s E.P.A. chief, could only watch as the Trump administration dismantled her climate work. Now, she’s back with another chance to build a lasting legacy.

WASHINGTON — Gina McCarthy worked six or seven days a week, 12 to 14 hours a day, to produce America’s first real effort to combat climate change, a suite of Obama-era regulations that would cut pollution from the nation’s tailpipes and smokestacks and wean the world’s largest economy from fossil fuels.

Then the administration of Donald J. Trump shredded the work of President Barack Obama’s Environmental Protection Agency chief before any of it could take effect.

[*Ms. McCarthy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4) is back, as [*President Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4)’s senior climate change adviser, and this time, she is determined to make it stick.

She is the most powerful climate change official in the country other than [*Mr. Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4) himself, and her charge is not simply to reconstruct her Obama-era policies but to lead an entire government to tackle global warming, from the nation’s military to its diplomatic corps to its Treasury and Transportation Department. She will also lead negotiations with Congress for permanent new climate change laws that could withstand the next change of administration.

“I’ve got a small stronghold office, but I am an orchestra leader for a very large band,” Ms. McCarthy, 66, said in a speech in February.

Mr. Biden’s two-day global climate summit meeting, which begins Thursday, is his chance to proclaim America’s return to the international effort to stave off the most devastating impacts of a warming planet, but it is Ms. McCarthy’s re-emergence as well. Mr. Biden is expected to pledge that the United States will cut its [*planet-warming emissions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4) by at least 50 percent below 2005 levels in the next decade.

The world has seen such promises before, with the Kyoto accords in the 1990s, then the Paris Agreement in the Obama era, only to see them discarded by subsequent Republican administrations. It will fall to Ms. McCarthy to prove the skeptics wrong.

Washington “has offered nothing on how it plans to make up for the lost four years,” said the spokesman for China’s Foreign Ministry, Zhao Lijian, on Friday.

The administration plans concurrent efforts to [*enact regulations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4) to curb auto and power plant emissions, restrict fossil fuel development and conserve public lands while pressing Congress to pass the climate provisions in Mr. Biden’s $2 trillion infrastructure bill, such as renewable power and electric vehicle programs. Ms. McCarthy hopes to push the infrastructure bill further, possibly by mandating that power companies produce a certain percentage of their electricity from renewable sources such as wind and solar. That will be a tough sell to many Republicans — but if it passes Congress, it could stand as the Biden administration’s permanent climate legacy, even if other rules are swept away by future presidents.

“What Gina succeeds in pulling together is essential to our ability to have credibility in the world,” [*John Kerry,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4) a former secretary of state and now Mr. Biden’s international climate envoy, said in January. “And nobody knows the details better than she does, and nobody is going to be more effective in corralling everybody to move in the same direction.”

Ms. McCarthy, who spent the Trump administration first as a visiting fellow at Harvard and then as the head of the Natural Resources Defense Council, an advocacy group, said that, for the most part, she didn’t take the demolition of her work personally.

“But I was offended,” she said in a recent interview.

She said she poured enormous effort into creating Obama-era rules that could pass muster with the courts and ease into effect, only to watch them undone by Trump-era climate rollbacks that were slapped together, [*rife with spelling and math errors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4), and then promptly bogged down in court.

“It was almost embarrassing,” she said. “It was naïve. It was so poorly written. It had political statements in it. It was just outrageous.”

There was, however, some comfort in that. “I knew there was no way this would stand the test of time,” she said. “I knew that it could be rebuilt.”

Ms. McCarthy’s friends say she is driven to build back a climate legacy that will outlast her second round in government.

“She was angry, there’s no question about that,” said Mitchell Bernard, president of the Natural Resources Defense Council. “I heard many an expletive exit her mouth about what was going on in the government.”

During the 2020 presidential campaign, Ms. McCarthy worked with liberal activists to push Mr. Biden to embrace a far more ambitious climate plan than he first proposed — and to make it the centerpiece of his governing agenda.

It was Ms. McCarthy who was saying, “We absolutely can go bigger and should be asking for more,” said Evan Weber, the political director of Sunrise Movement, the progressive environmental group. “She wanted us to see the connections between environmental justice and racism and what was happening between Covid and the environmental crisis, and I thought, ‘Damn, that sounds like an activist.’”

When Mr. Biden asked her to join his White House, Ms. McCarthy said she was initially reluctant. But when he embraced much of the rhetoric and policies of the party’s left, she was won over.

“When President, then candidate, Biden made the connection between climate and health and environmental and racial justice, and he framed it in terms of what needed to be done after the pandemic for job growth, it just — it owned me,” she said. “It got me out of the drudgery of climate always being a planetary burden and a horrible potential future and brought it into a framing that to me, energized it.”

Republicans have taken notice, and they are not happy.

“For almost two months now, unaccountable czar Gina McCarthy has been working both behind the scenes and in front of the press to lay the groundwork for the Biden administration’s agenda,” Senator Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, the ranking Republican on the Senate Environment Committee, said last month. “She’s wielding her power publicly to make it clear who’s calling the shots and directing the troops.”

Ms. McCarthy, who has worked as a state and federal environmental regulator for nearly 40 years, is used to attacks from Republicans, and from the heads of the polluting industries that she has spent a career trying to rein in. But over those decades, she has won the grudging respect of some chief executives who have met her across negotiating tables.

“She was always willing to roll up her sleeves and dig into issues and take it seriously,” said Jeffrey Holmstead, a lawyer representing fossil fuel companies, who also served as a top E.P.A. official in the George W. Bush administration. “She doesn’t suffer fools lightly, but everybody always felt they had a fair hearing.”

He added, “From the president’s perspective, she is the ideal person in this job.”

Ms. McCarthy grew up in a ***working-class*** Irish Catholic family, just outside of Boston. Her mother worked in a doughnut factory and her father, a teacher, was in a union — a background that she says has served her well in building strong relationships both with her current boss and with some of the Republicans and union groups whose support she hopes to win.

She spent 25 years as a health and environmental-protection official for Massachusetts, working for five governors, including Mitt Romney, a Republican who assigned her to write a state climate-change plan.

Now Senator Romney is among a handful of Republicans whom Mr. Biden sees as possible votes for his infrastructure bill.

She is also drawing from her ***working-class*** background to woo union leaders as she prepares to reinstate tough new rules on emissions from cars and coal-fired power plants, the nation’s two largest sources of greenhouse pollution.

Coal workers attacked Ms. McCarthy’s Obama-era climate rules as a “war on coal” and turned out in support of Mr. Trump, but this week, Cecil E. Roberts, the president of the United Mine Workers of America, [*said that his members would accept a transition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/climate/gina-mccarthy-biden-climate.html?searchResultPosition=4) away from fossil fuels in exchange for heavy government investment in new jobs in renewable energy, spending on technology to make coal cleaner and financial aid for miners who lose their jobs — similar to some of the provisions in Mr. Biden’s infrastructure package.

But autoworkers are worried: The White House climate plan envisions a future in which most Americans drive zero-emission electric vehicles, but building an electric vehicle requires about a third fewer workers than building a traditional combustion-engine vehicle.

“I’m really impressed with her knowledge of what working life is for an autoworker,” said Rory Gamble, president of the United Auto Workers, who has Ms. McCarthy’s cellphone number. “In sister McCarthy we find a well-educated ear who is in tune with what we are facing. I appreciate knowing that she has labor roots.”

But, he said, she has yet to persuade him that new pollution rules won’t cost jobs.

“The hurdle, and I’ve shared this with Gina, is if the government is going to get into this and invest money in this, there has to be assurances that this work stays in America, with good wages and good benefits, and the workers can organize. That’s a lot of what-ifs there.”

PHOTO: Gina McCarthy has, over the decades, won the grudging respect of some chief executives who have met her across negotiating tables. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 28, 2021

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[***Big Business Won't Save Us From Itself***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PV-X621-JBG3-64XT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 6, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 3; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1298 words

**Byline:** By Kim Phillips-Fein

**Body**

When Larry Fink, the chief executive of the asset management company BlackRock, wrote in his 2022 annual letter to corporate America that prioritizing environmental sustainability, racial justice and other social goals is not ''woke'' and ''not about politics,'' he articulated anew a longstanding hope that business can be a driver for social change.

Mr. Fink's hymn to stakeholder capitalism -- the idea that companies should engage the interests of workers, the environment and local communities alongside shareholders -- puts forward a vision in which there is no necessary tension between private profit and collective progress.

In recent years, with traditional engines of progress so often in a state of dysfunction and gridlock, this ideal has appealed to some liberals. After all, even with unified party control in Washington, Democratic senators like Joseph Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona have been able to stymie legislation that would protect voting rights and take tentative steps toward addressing climate change. And despite the increasingly favorable perceptions of unions, only about 6 percent of private sector workers are members today -- the lowest proportion in more than 100 years. Against such a backdrop, it's tempting to see hedge funds as a better bet.

But, however seductive it may be, stakeholder capitalism does not offer a real alternative. The ideal of an easy symbiosis between public and private sectors would undermine the kinds of political mobilizations, however difficult to organize and enact, that are needed for reform that benefits most Americans.

Historically, some private companies have occasionally supported goals like health and safety legislation to protect workers or the expansion of the welfare state through unemployment insurance and Social Security. But it has very often followed from focused, tireless efforts by unions and other social movements to get them to take these positions -- and only when the disruptions have become so powerful that there appears to be no real choice and adoption offers companies a measure of control.

Mr. Fink's vision is not new. At the close of the 19th century, after years of intense conflict with workers who sought to organize unions to secure higher wages, shorter work hours and basic safety provisions, a few business executives founded the National Civic Federation. It promoted negotiation between executives and representatives of workers deemed politically reliable. But the federation became increasingly focused on anti-socialist and anti-communist agitation, while the post-World War I labor movement collapsed.

The disaster of the Great Depression prompted some companies to back greater government regulation of economic life. Executives at firms like General Electric supported programs like Social Security in part because they recognized that the mass movements of the era -- marches of the unemployed, sit-down strikes and other work disruptions -- were potentially explosive if concessions were not made to ***working-class*** Americans.

But this alliance proved fleeting: Companies that supported reforms in the depths of the Depression no longer did once they saw other options. General Electric turned on its unions after a strike wave in 1946, relocating plants to the Southwest, where laws favored employers, and adopting hard-line bargaining strategies to weaken the electrical workers' union.

In the late 1960s, after the legal victories of the civil rights movement in the South, the rise of Black power and uprisings of the decade in cities across the country, some corporate leaders suggested that they would do more to try to fight urban poverty -- committing to hiring and training the long-term unemployed and to making philanthropic contributions. At the high point of protest against the Vietnam War, some business leaders tried to rally support for ending the war; one organization, Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace, included almost 1,000 business leaders.

Today, some of the wealthiest Americans may be growing uncomfortable with the political destabilization that can accompany extreme inequality, and some may be anxious about the impact of climate change on their ability to generate profits. But this does not mean that they are eager to do the kinds of things that might actually address inequality or provide a meaningful way forward to a world less in danger of destroying itself. Mr. Fink's letter may be partly born of good intentions, but the opposition of the Business Roundtable (whose members lead many of the economy's largest corporations, including BlackRock) to potential corporate tax increases in Build Back Better played a key role in squashing it -- and its relatively limited climate proposals.

As Andrew Perez and David Sirota have reported in Jacobin, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has strongly opposed any reform of the filibuster, in part because it would simplify the passage of laws that, for example, could make it easier for workers to unionize.

A fantasy capitalism that magically balances the interests of workers, investors, communities and shareholders has a strong allure, but pursuing it is a self-defeating strategy -- and rooted in political despair. Focusing political energy on securing the commitment of a group of business elites would undermine the engagement of a broad democratic base that must be the real basis of substantial reform. To address many of our deepest problems, nothing less than a redistribution of economic and political power will be needed, and it will be achieved only over the opposition of business and the wealthy.

The social responsibility trend in general undermines the idea of citizenship and of a public sphere as the place where decisions and arguments over economic and social policy play out. The commitment of business to democratic norms is pretty shallow, or at least it emphasizes a narrow understanding of what those are.

You can see this dynamic even at BlackRock. Environmental activists have protested BlackRock for years, calling on it to withdraw its investments in oil, gas and coal companies. But for all Mr. Fink's talk about the long-term problem of climate change, his company has been unwilling to divest from these firms, despite his company's 2020 pledge to halt investment in firms that earned more than 25 percent of their revenue from thermal coal. (Businesses, he wrote in defending his approach, ''cannot be the climate police,'' and he called on governments to increase their efforts.)

The reality is that there is no way to bypass the arduous, contentious work of building a politics that can sustain a more democratic culture. The only thing that brought elites to support such causes in the past -- however tentative such support may be -- is the pressure of political and social movements.

Were these stronger today, the obstruction of Senators Manchin and Sinema would look like the actions of reactionaries with nowhere else to turn rather than an intractable stranglehold on any reform efforts. And while we might hear less about stakeholder capitalism, we would have a public realm that could make real the idea of the common good.

Kim Phillips-Fein, a historian at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University, is the author, most recently, of ''Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics'' and ''Invisible Hands: The Businessmen's Crusade Against the New Deal.''

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Allie Sullberg FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2022

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[***Climate Change Adviser Gets Another Chance to Tackle Global Warming***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GS-P7P1-JBG3-639M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 21, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 21

**Length:** 1568 words

**Byline:** By Coral Davenport

**Body**

Gina McCarthy, Barack Obama's E.P.A. chief, could only watch as the Trump administration dismantled her climate work. Now, she's back with another chance to build a lasting legacy.

WASHINGTON -- Gina McCarthy worked six or seven days a week, 12 to 14 hours a day, to produce America's first real effort to combat climate change, a suite of Obama-era regulations that would cut pollution from the nation's tailpipes and smokestacks and wean the world's largest economy from fossil fuels.

Then the administration of Donald J. Trump shredded the work of President Barack Obama's Environmental Protection Agency chief before any of it could take effect.

Ms. McCarthy is back, as President Biden's senior climate change adviser, and this time, she is determined to make it stick.

She is the most powerful climate change official in the country other than Mr. Biden himself, and her charge is not simply to reconstruct her Obama-era policies but to lead an entire government to tackle global warming, from the nation's military to its diplomatic corps to its Treasury and Transportation Department. She will also lead negotiations with Congress for permanent new climate change laws that could withstand the next change of administration.

''I've got a small stronghold office, but I am an orchestra leader for a very large band,'' Ms. McCarthy, 66, said in a speech in February.

Mr. Biden's two-day global climate summit meeting, which begins Thursday, is his chance to proclaim America's return to the international effort to stave off the most devastating impacts of a warming planet, but it is Ms. McCarthy's re-emergence as well. Mr. Biden is expected to pledge that the United States will cut its planet-warming emissions by at least 50 percent below 2005 levels in the next decade.

The world has seen such promises before, with the Kyoto accords in the 1990s, then the Paris Agreement in the Obama era, only to see them discarded by subsequent Republican administrations. It will fall to Ms. McCarthy to prove the skeptics wrong.

Washington ''has offered nothing on how it plans to make up for the lost four years,'' said the spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry, Zhao Lijian, on Friday.

The administration plans concurrent efforts to enact regulations to curb auto and power plant emissions, restrict fossil fuel development and conserve public lands while pressing Congress to pass the climate provisions in Mr. Biden's $2 trillion infrastructure bill, such as renewable power and electric vehicle programs. Ms. McCarthy hopes to push the infrastructure bill further, possibly by mandating that power companies produce a certain percentage of their electricity from renewable sources such as wind and solar. That will be a tough sell to many Republicans -- but if it passes Congress, it could stand as the Biden administration's permanent climate legacy, even if other rules are swept away by future presidents.

''What Gina succeeds in pulling together is essential to our ability to have credibility in the world,'' John Kerry, a former secretary of state and now Mr. Biden's international climate envoy, said in January. ''And nobody knows the details better than she does, and nobody is going to be more effective in corralling everybody to move in the same direction.''

Ms. McCarthy, who spent the Trump administration first as a visiting fellow at Harvard and then as the head of the Natural Resources Defense Council, an advocacy group, said that, for the most part, she didn't take the demolition of her work personally.

''But I was offended,'' she said in a recent interview.

She said she poured enormous effort into creating Obama-era rules that could pass muster with the courts and ease into effect, only to watch them undone by Trump-era climate rollbacks that were slapped together, rife with spelling and math errors, and then promptly bogged down in court.

''It was almost embarrassing,'' she said. ''It was naïve. It was so poorly written. It had political statements in it. It was just outrageous.''

There was, however, some comfort in that. ''I knew there was no way this would stand the test of time,'' she said. ''I knew that it could be rebuilt.''

Ms. McCarthy's friends say she is driven to build back a climate legacy that will outlast her second round in government.

''She was angry, there's no question about that,'' said Mitchell Bernard, president of the Natural Resources Defense Council. ''I heard many an expletive exit her mouth about what was going on in the government.''

During the 2020 presidential campaign, Ms. McCarthy worked with liberal activists to push Mr. Biden to embrace a far more ambitious climate plan than he first proposed -- and to make it the centerpiece of his governing agenda.

It was Ms. McCarthy who was saying, ''We absolutely can go bigger and should be asking for more,'' said Evan Weber, the political director of Sunrise Movement, the progressive environmental group. ''She wanted us to see the connections between environmental justice and racism and what was happening between Covid and the environmental crisis, and I thought, 'Damn, that sounds like an activist.'''

When Mr. Biden asked her to join his White House, Ms. McCarthy said she was initially reluctant. But when he embraced much of the rhetoric and policies of the party's left, she was won over.

''When President, then candidate, Biden made the connection between climate and health and environmental and racial justice, and he framed it in terms of what needed to be done after the pandemic for job growth, it just -- it owned me,'' she said. ''It got me out of the drudgery of climate always being a planetary burden and a horrible potential future and brought it into a framing that to me, energized it.''

Republicans have taken notice, and they are not happy.

''For almost two months now, unaccountable czar Gina McCarthy has been working both behind the scenes and in front of the press to lay the groundwork for the Biden administration's agenda,'' Senator Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, the ranking Republican on the Senate Environment Committee, said last month. ''She's wielding her power publicly to make it clear who's calling the shots and directing the troops.''

Ms. McCarthy, who has worked as a state and federal environmental regulator for nearly 40 years, is used to attacks from Republicans, and from the heads of the polluting industries that she has spent a career trying to rein in. But over those decades, she has won the grudging respect of some chief executives who have met her across negotiating tables.

''She was always willing to roll up her sleeves and dig into issues and take it seriously,'' said Jeffrey Holmstead, a lawyer representing fossil fuel companies, who also served as a top E.P.A. official in the George W. Bush administration. ''She doesn't suffer fools lightly, but everybody always felt they had a fair hearing.''

He added, ''From the president's perspective, she is the ideal person in this job.''

Ms. McCarthy grew up in a ***working-class*** Irish Catholic family, just outside of Boston. Her mother worked in a doughnut factory and her father, a teacher, was in a union -- a background that she says has served her well in building strong relationships both with her current boss and with some of the Republicans and union groups whose support she hopes to win.

She spent 25 years as a health and environmental-protection official for Massachusetts, working for five governors, including Mitt Romney, a Republican who assigned her to write a state climate-change plan.

Now Senator Romney is among a handful of Republicans whom Mr. Biden sees as possible votes for his infrastructure bill.

She is also drawing from her ***working-class*** background to woo union leaders as she prepares to reinstate tough new rules on emissions from cars and coal-fired power plants, the nation's two largest sources of greenhouse pollution.

Coal workers attacked Ms. McCarthy's Obama-era climate rules as a ''war on coal'' and turned out in support of Mr. Trump, but this week, Cecil E. Roberts, the president of the United Mine Workers of America, said that his members would accept a transition away from fossil fuels in exchange for heavy government investment in new jobs in renewable energy, spending on technology to make coal cleaner and financial aid for miners who lose their jobs -- similar to some of the provisions in Mr. Biden's infrastructure package.

But autoworkers are worried: The White House climate plan envisions a future in which most Americans drive zero-emission electric vehicles, but building an electric vehicle requires about a third fewer workers than building a traditional combustion-engine vehicle.

''I'm really impressed with her knowledge of what working life is for an autoworker,'' said Rory Gamble, president of the United Auto Workers, who has Ms. McCarthy's cellphone number. ''In sister McCarthy we find a well-educated ear who is in tune with what we are facing. I appreciate knowing that she has labor roots.''

But, he said, she has yet to persuade him that new pollution rules won't cost jobs.

''The hurdle, and I've shared this with Gina, is if the government is going to get into this and invest money in this, there has to be assurances that this work stays in America, with good wages and good benefits, and the workers can organize. That's a lot of what-ifs there.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/climate/gina-mccarthy-climate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/climate/gina-mccarthy-climate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Gina McCarthy has, over the decades, won the grudging respect of some chief executives who have met her across negotiating tables. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAH BLESENER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2021

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[***What Bernie Sanders’s Allies Want to Hear at Tonight’s Debate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YF4-1F51-DXY4-X2PP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 15, 2020 Sunday 19:42 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 959 words

**Byline:** Astead W. Herndon

**Highlight:** Progressives hope Mr. Sanders will push Joe Biden on the issues they care about most, and they realize that anything resembling a personal attack may seem off-putting amid the coronavirus crisis.

**Body**

Progressives hope Mr. Sanders will push Joe Biden on the issues they care about most, and they realize that anything resembling a personal attack may seem off-putting amid the coronavirus crisis.

Senator [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) of Vermont, the onetime Democratic presidential front-runner who notched victories in several early states, is now facing long odds. It’s not impossible — though it is statistically unlikely — for him to reverse the course of the primary and mount a comeback against former Vice President   [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html)

To regain a delegate lead or, failing that, to make the maximum impact on the race for the views he cares about most, he needs to use Sunday’s presidential debate stage to great effect, amplifying the distinctive message of his campaign and tailoring it to this moment of the [*coronavirus crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html).

Progressive allies and grass-roots organizations helped make Mr. Sanders a leading contender in the primary, and have pinned their hopes of systemic far-left change on his candidacy’s success.

Here’s what several prominent voices with these groups are looking for from Mr. Sanders on Sunday. Most agree that he should push Mr. Biden on the issues that the Sanders coalition prioritizes, but not come off as too oppositional.

Rebecca Katz, progressive consultant in New York City

Ms. Katz, a Democratic strategist who previously worked for Mayor Bill de Blasio of New York, said Mr. Sanders had little path to the nomination but should still push aggressively for the issues he champions.

Bernie Sanders has a chance to make sure Joe Biden is ready to lead. And that means ready to lead progressives and the country in this moment. And it’s Bernie Sanders’s duty, if Biden is the nominee, to make sure he can go one on one with Trump.

For Bernie Sanders, it has always been about the issues. So I think you’re going to see him lay out his core beliefs and what we need to do. And if Joe Biden is smart, he will pick up some of those issues and carry them into a possible administration.

Just because Dems don’t think an issue isn’t important enough to bring up in a primary, doesn’t mean it won’t define the general election. Don’t leave issues on the table for Trump to pick up.

Ryan Greenwood, director of movement politics for People’s Action

Mr. Greenwood’s group, a grass-roots organization that endorsed Mr. Sanders in December, emphasized how the current crisis revealed the serious vulnerabilities of the ***working class***, a subject that Mr. Sanders has made central in the 2020 campaign.

The coronavirus pandemic means that almost everyone in the country is now feeling the crisis and instability faced by the multiracial ***working class*** on a daily basis.

The question is, as Sanders has said, “Joe, what are you gonna do?”

The choice is pretty simple: On one hand we have a platform where nothing fundamentally changes, in which we leave millions of people out of the solutions when crisis hits. On the other hand, we have a platform in which no one gets left behind, everyone’s well-being is protected, and everyone can pursue their full potential. We look forward to Sanders highlighting that contrast.

Evan Weber, political director of the Sunrise Movement

The Sunrise Movement, a group of young activists that has been instrumental in pushing the Green New Deal, [*endorsed Mr. Sanders in January*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html). Mr. Weber emphasized that the Vermont senator still enjoyed a huge advantage among young voters, and that Mr. Biden must recognize that he needs to win over young people to win.

With questions of electability clearly shaping voters’ decisions in this election, Senator Sanders needs to use this debate as an opportunity to show Democratic voters why he’s the best candidate to take on Trump.

Luckily, the senator has a clear case to make: No Democrat can win in November without the support and enthusiasm of young people, and millennials and Generation Z are swinging in wide margins for Bernie because he is championing a platform that meets the scale of our generation’s challenges.

Ana María Archila, co-executive director at the Center for Popular Democracy Action

Ms. Archila’s group, [*which supports Mr. Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html), represents a number of smaller organizations that work with community groups on issues including immigration, health care and housing.

The coronavirus pandemic has exposed how fragile we all are when millions of people are uninsured, and when workers cannot afford to take a day off from work because they risk falling back on their bills.

On Sunday, we hope to hear Senator Sanders not only make the case for these policies in the context of the current crisis, but also force Biden to commit clearly to the agenda that has mobilized young people.

Throughout his campaign, Bernie has asked people to fight for someone they don’t know. We hope he will use this debate to remind people that we must take care of one another, and use our democracy to build a society where we all can thrive.

Maurice Mitchell, national director of the Working Families Party

The Working Families Party initially [*endorsed Senator Elizabeth Warren in the fall*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html), but moved to support Mr. Sanders after Ms. Warren left the race.

This fragile moment has vindicated Sanders’s fundamental critique of American capitalism. We’re far more dependent on each other than we’ve been led to believe, and our failure to invest in public goods — especially public health — has made us vulnerable.

If Sanders can connect his bold solutions to our current crisis, he can win the night, and maybe more.

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders in the spin room after the debate in Charleston, S.C. in February. He faces slim but not insurmountable odds for the Democratic presidential nomination. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Travis Dove for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 15, 2020

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[***Why Do We Ignore How the Other Half Lives?; Jane Coaston***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648R-1MH1-JBG3-64TN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 11, 2021 Saturday 12:08 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 975 words

**Byline:** Jane Coaston

**Highlight:** Confined to our own bubbles, we are less informed about people who lead entirely different cultural, social and political lives.

**Body**

I want to begin this week’s newsletter with several facts.

The most-watched television series in America from last fall to this spring was [*Sunday Night Football, followed by Thursday Night Football*](https://variety.com/2021/tv/news/most-popular-tv-shows-highest-rated-2020-2021-season-1234980743/). In third place was the CBS procedural “NCIS,” which, as I found out a few years ago, is a great show to watch if you happen to be at your sister’s house over the holidays and want to lie on the couch for a few hours.

Also: The number of people currently attending Ivy League universities is [*about 146,000*](https://www.univstats.com/comparison/ivy-league/student-population/) — basically two Texas A&amp;Ms or Universities of Central Florida.

These pieces of information have become obsessions of mine recently not just because they are interesting and good conversation fodder but also because there is a chance that, depending on your media diet, you may not have thought about them much.

Let me be clear: It is absolutely fine to enjoy fancy television shows on fancy networks that get a small fraction of the viewers of “NCIS.” HBO’s “Succession” may even be good (or so I hear). And I have nothing against Ivy League institutions. But the attention both prestige television and our most prestigious universities receive from people like me on Twitter and [*cable news*](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/12/03/time-to-pull-the-plug-on-cable-news-523720) and in our biggest newspapers seems to outstrip their actual, real-deal importance in the lives of most people in America.

I’ve written before in this newsletter about the definition of “elites” and how we’ve permitted [*wealthy people, generally on the political right, who compose the so-called American gentry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/02/opinion/rich-coastal-elites-politics.html) to deny their status because they lack cultural cachet. They still have money and power, of course, but not the kind of social clout they believe is necessary to achieve their political and cultural goals.

But I do agree with them on one thing: My urban, elite milieu has far too much reverence for itself. We pay too much attention to the interests and actions and political demands of people who occupy the top percentiles of American life and far too little to the people who, well, don’t. And I say this as a member of the cultural elite myself.

Sure, it’s not a crisis if “Succession” gets a weekly recap in The New York Times. But it is an indication of the silos in which we live. And in mine, the enthusiasms and persuasions of elites like me hold sway. Our conversations, our reading lists and even our controversies and interpersonal dust-ups become the sources for media discussion and analysis, a cycle of content that serves only to edify us about ourselves.

People tend to write about what they know. That’s why I write a lot about sports. I have spent years of my life learning about the vagaries of pass interference and the pistol and why zone defense is argued by some to be for cowards. So it makes sense to me that people who may have attended elite institutions, or spend time in circles with people who have, may want to write more about what goes on at, say, Yale than they do about the happenings at a community college around the corner from their apartment. Or that people who work in media are often interested in reading about other people who work in the same field.

But our fixation on reading about the shows we already like and the schools we went to and the people we already kind of know may be trapping us in our own bubbles. This can leave us less informed about people who may live a few miles away but lead entirely different cultural, social and political lives.

In 2020, I [*wrote*](https://www.vox.com/21504280/trumps-2020-campaign-too-online) about how Donald Trump’s presidential campaign was focused on topics that mattered a lot to conservatives on Twitter but made very little sense to people who spend most of their time offline and disconnected from the daily swirl of online politics. It is striking how unrepresentative of American life Twitter is: According to [*Pew surveys,*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/08/02/10-facts-about-americans-and-twitter/) 22 percent of Americans use Twitter, but the top 10 percent of users create 80 percent of the platform’s content. And Twitter users tend to be younger, more highly educated and wealthier than the average American.

Rather than discussing ***working-class*** issues or rising unemployment, Trump yelled about the need to repeal Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, a [*law*](https://www.eff.org/issues/cda230#:~:text=Section%20230%20says%20that%20%22No,%C2%A7%20230).) that states that websites like Twitter and Facebook and even your best friend’s recipe blog cannot be held liable for what someone who comments or posts on it says.

Now, Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act matters a great deal to me. (I think [*it’s great*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/14/opinion/the-argument-trump-twitter-ban.html)!) But I’m a writer and podcaster for The New York Times who spends a great deal of time on Twitter. So of course I’m interested. I’m also concerned (or, more accurately, confused) by Senator Josh Hawley’s [*demand*](https://www.foxnews.com/media/josh-hawley-break-up-twitter) late last month that Twitter be broken up.

But what gets said on Twitter or about Twitter should generate far less media and political attention than, say, recent purges of Black Democratic officials from [*election boards*](https://www.reuters.com/world/us/georgia-republicans-purge-black-democrats-county-election-boards-2021-12-09/) in several Georgia counties. And what most people need from a politician is probably not a laser focus on the inner workings of tech regulations but solutions to real problems like low-paying jobs, rising housing costs and the continuing opioid epidemic.

What matters to the most powerful Americans is important (and you can watch all the prestige television you want). But what matters to most Americans, period, matters too. What they watch, what they read and, crucially, why and how they vote — or, for almost 80 million Americans, [*why they didn’t in 2020*](https://www.npr.org/2020/12/15/945031391/poll-despite-record-turnout-80-million-americans-didnt-vote-heres-why). This has more significance than what happens at colleges where people like me went or what we watch on television.

Unless, of course, it’s sports.

Please send your thoughts to [*Coaston-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:Coaston-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jane Coaston is the host of Opinion’s podcast, “[*The Argument*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/the-argument).” Previously, she reported on conservative politics, the GOP, and the rise of the right. She also co-hosted the podcast “The Weeds.”[*@janecoaston*](https://twitter.com/janecoaston)

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Merto FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 11, 2021

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[***Trying to Save The City's Last 'Colored' School***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66K3-KV71-JBG3-6273-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 9, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 1; STREETSCAPES

**Length:** 2346 words

**Byline:** By John Freeman Gill

**Body**

The historic building at 128 West 17th Street has been vacant for years, and preservation advocates fear its damaged roof may eventually prompt developers to tear it down.

Unbeknown to most New Yorkers, the former Colored School No. 4 in Chelsea, the last-known ''colored'' schoolhouse remaining in Manhattan from the city's segregated school system of the 19th century, still stands at 128 West 17th Street. Though it has not been a school since 1894, the vacant, three-story yellow brick building is still owned by the city, under the control of the Sanitation Department, which used it as a lunchroom until about seven years ago.

But water has invaded the building and, despite appreciative statements from municipal agencies regarding its historic value, a four-year campaign to gain landmark protection for the former schoolhouse, led by an African American historian, has yielded no tangible results.

The local community board, which voted unanimously last year to support the building's designation as a landmark, has urged the city to perform a ''swift and thorough repair'' of the building's leaky roof.

''It's urgent for the Sanitation Department to maintain the building and it's urgent for Landmarks to designate it,'' said Kerry Keenan, a co-chair of the Chelsea Land Use Committee of Community Board 4, in an interview. ''When a building is not designated a landmark and it sits vacant and unchecked for a long time, it's cause for a developer to come along and argue to tear it down because it's unsafe.''

Vincent Gragnani, a Sanitation Department spokesman, said in an email that while the agency supported the building's ''landmarking and good stewardship going forward,'' it lacked the money to rehabilitate it, ''and we have a long list of dire facilities needs that we need to prioritize, with the safety of our work force at the forefront.''

He added that the department was working with other city agencies ''to advance the landmarking process and identify a long-term strategy for the structure.''

Built around 1853 from designs for a ''model primary'' schoolhouse adopted by the Public School Society, the modest West 17th Street building was used by Black children and teachers from 1860 to 1894. It also housed an evening school for adult Black students.

During the Draft Riots of July 1863, the schoolhouse came under assault by a mob of ***working-class*** white people incensed by the first federal draft, which conscripted citizens into the Union Army to fight in the Civil War while allowing wealthier people to buy their way out of military service. Just the night before, a white mob had burned the Colored Orphan Asylum on Fifth Avenue to the ground.

The West 17th Street school's charismatic new leader, Sarah J.S. Tompkins, rose to the challenge of protecting the children under her charge. According to The New-York Tribune, the mob tried to break into the school to hunt down two Black women it had chased inside. Teachers barricaded the doors, however, and the rioters, after a few failed attempts to gain entry, gave up and attacked the occupants of a nearby shanty instead.

Later that day, Tompkins escorted many of the schoolchildren safely to their homes through the dangerous streets before heading to her own home in Brooklyn. Two months later, The New York Times reported, she and her students held an observance ''in gratitude for their escape from death during the late riots.''

During its 34 years as a place of learning for Black children and adults, the West 17th Street school served as an institutional pillar for the Black community at the southern fringe of a gritty neighborhood then known as the Tenderloin, said Eric K. Washington, an independent historian.

Mr. Washington first learned of the school while researching ''Boss of the Grips,'' his biography of one of the school's graduates, James H. Williams, the first Black chief of the Red Cap porters of Grand Central Terminal.

Concerned that developers might have their eye on an empty building in such a prime Chelsea location, Mr. Washington submitted to the city Landmarks Preservation Commission in 2018 a request for evaluation of the former Colored School No. 4 as a potential landmark.

In January 2021, the commission started an ''equity framework,'' which its chairwoman, Sarah Carroll, said would ''ensure diversity and inclusion in designations, to make sure that we are telling the stories of all New Yorkers.'' Mayor Eric Adams recently reappointed Ms. Carroll to a new seven-year term.

That spring, having received little substantive response from the commission about the school, Mr. Washington provided the agency with additional research.

''There are woefully too few places you can cite that represent the African American experience in New York, which goes back to its history in New Amsterdam,'' he said in an interview. ''It's as old as New York, and there are very few surviving buildings that represent that experience, and those that do exist we lose so rapidly to development.''

Zodet Negrón, a Landmarks Preservation Commission spokeswoman, said that the agency had prioritized further research of Colored School No. 4 as part of its equity framework.

The commission has determined that the building ''merits consideration and is currently studying its potential for designation'' as a landmark, Ms. Negrón said in a statement. ''As the only known surviving former 'colored school' in Manhattan, it is a reminder of the history of racist segregation policies in New York City and has important associations with the Black community in 19th-century New York.'' The former Colored School No. 3, built in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn in 1881, when Brooklyn was still an independent city, was declared a landmark by the city in 1998.

To be eligible for landmark status, a building must not only possess historical, cultural or architectural significance but also retain enough physical integrity from its period of importance that its historic character associated with that era remains legible.

In this case, commission research has found that although the schoolhouse's original dark brick facade was reclad sometime in the early 20th century, the structure retains its 19th-century form and four-bay facade configuration, including its characteristic separate entrances for girls and boys. It also retains its multipaned double-hung windows on the upper floors. Several of those window panes are broken, while the doors and one doorway are marred with graffiti. Sheets of peeling paint hang from the ceiling inside.

Mr. Washington's landmarking campaign has garnered support from Erik Bottcher, the local city councilman, as well as preservation groups and local co-op boards and block associations. More than 1,500 people have signed a petition in favor of landmark designation.

In a May Zoom meeting facilitated by Mr. Bottcher, Gregory Anderson, a deputy commissioner of the Sanitation Department, told Mr. Washington and community stakeholders that a February inspection found the building to be remarkably intact, according to several of the meeting's participants. A department spokesman said in an email that the building has ''water damage in the interior'' caused by ''water infiltration through the roof'' but ''has no major structural issues.''

But preservation advocates remain concerned that a prolonged roof leak could damage the building's structural integrity.

Colored School No. 4 was one of a group of schoolhouses that developed from the African Free School, which was established in 1787 by the abolitionist Manumission Society to educate Black children; the society counted prominent figures like Alexander Hamilton among its members. After being conveyed in 1834 to the Public School Society, a group funded with public and private money, the schools were transferred in 1853 to the city Board of Education.

Built around that time, the West 17th Street schoolhouse hosted multiple primary schools for white children until 1860, when it became home to Colored School No. 7; its designation was changed to No. 4 in 1866.

The pupils of ''colored'' schools were primarily children of laborers, according to a history published in 1869 by what was then known as the U.S. Office of Education. ''Many of them are put out to service at an early age,'' the agency reported, ''and only get a chance to go to school when they are out of a situation.''

The West 17th Street school's primary animating spirit was Sarah J.S. Tompkins, one of the city's earliest Black public school principals and the same woman who escorted schoolchildren to safety during the Draft Riots. She became known as Sarah J.S. Garnet after marrying the influential abolitionist Henry Highland Garnet in 1875.

A prominent suffragist who began teaching at 14, Sarah Garnet was an early organizer of an equal suffrage league of Black women in Brooklyn and a co-founder of the National Women's Afro-American Union of New York. She also traveled to Albany, N.Y., to lobby New York State legislators for equal pay for women.

''She's beyond dynamic, she's charismatic,'' said Susan Goodier, an assistant professor of history at the State University of New York at Oneonta, who wrote an essay about Garnet for an upcoming anthology. ''She draws people to her like W.E.B. Du Bois,'' Dr. Goodier said, referring to the renowned Black civil rights activist, ''and Charles Ray, one of the editors of The Colored American. All these prominent leaders come to talk to her kids.''

Just a few blocks away from the former Colored School No. 4, another school at 320 West 21st Street was renamed the Sarah J. Garnet Elementary School this year. The change was driven by fourth and fifth graders who had become angry upon learning about William T. Harris, for whom their school had been named. Harris was a former U.S. commissioner of education who promoted the forced education and assimilation of Native American children, who he said belonged to a ''lower race.''

The staff of Colored School No. 4 included William Appo, an influential Black musician and composer, and Joan Imogen Howard, the only Black manager at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago, who was sent to the 1900 Paris Exposition by The Evening Telegram after winning the newspaper's great teachers competition.

Graduates included the violinist and composer Walter F. Craig, the leader of a pre-eminent society orchestra that performed for both Black and white audiences.

''These were not just teachers, not just students, these were important players in the social infrastructure of New York City, and they represent this really broad swath of interests,'' Mr. Washington said. ''They were abolitionists, they were ministers, they were orators, they were musicians, they were military people.''

The school's curriculum for boys most likely included reading, writing, math, science and some arts, as well as rudimentary practical skills that ''would help children get service-oriented jobs that were in the interest of the dominant culture,'' said Cynthia Copeland, a public historian who has done extensive research on Seneca Village and other Black communities of 19th-century New York. Girls' instruction probably included domestic subjects like sewing, cooking and etiquette, as well as lessons on how to read, write and speak.

''The most important thing to take away was how to comport yourself, because perceptions of the Black community were very important,'' Ms. Copeland said, adding that it was ''likely that Black history was introduced in those spaces but probably not called Black history.''

In 1873, New York State passed a law prohibiting school officials from denying children access to any public school ''on account of race or color.'' But the law was not uniformly enforced, and the Black community itself held varying views about whether its children should share schools with white students.

By the early 1880s, according to Mr. Washington, the State Legislature appeared ready to let the city Board of Education absorb its few ''colored'' schools into its overall system. This proposal prompted Garnet to join a mass protest calling on the board to either retain Black teachers as equals with white ones or leave the Black schools alone.

Though the Board of Education's bylaws were amended to abolish the ''colored'' schools by 1884, Gov. Grover Cleveland signed a superseding state law that year that permitted just two of the Black schools to retain their Black teachers and continue to function largely as de facto Black schools, even as their doors were opened to students of all races. One was Colored School No. 4, which was renamed Grammar School No. 81.

By 1888, enrollment had dipped notably at the West 17th Street school while at least a salting of white students had joined the Black ones.

''This was formerly known as an exclusively colored school and our pupils came from all parts of the city,'' Garnet told The New York Herald. ''But now they have left in order to attend schools nearer their homes.''

The school closed in 1894.

Two years later, the city rented the building as a clubhouse for Civil War veterans of the 73rd Regiment. By the 1930s, the former schoolhouse had been turned over to the Sanitation Department.

''Because it's owned by the city, it should be easier to convert it to public use rather than have it sold to the highest bidder for upscale development,'' said Thomas Lunke, an urban planner and 30-year Chelsea resident who has helped Mr. Washington understand the intricacies of city government.

Mr. Washington said that he would like to see the old schoolhouse become some kind of lyceum, with public programming that echoes its past as an educational institution full of life and learning, perhaps with performances and book signings.

''When you walk by the building, it's not going to stop you in your tracks because of its ornateness,'' Mr. Washington said. ''The ornateness comes from the souls that inhabited the place.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/realestate/segregated-school-landmark-manhattan.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/07/realestate/segregated-school-landmark-manhattan.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, the historian Eric K. Washington in front of the former Colored School No. 4, which is now controlled by the Sanitation Department. Top right, a photo of the building from around 1940. Bottom right, a recent view. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLARK HODGIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (RE1)

Above, a photograph of the former schoolhouse taken in 1908. Above right, a recent photograph. Near right, an undated photo of Sarah J. S. Garnet, the principal of Colored School No. 4. Far right, Public School 11 in Chelsea was renamed the Sarah J. Garnet School this year. Below right, drawings of the building from the 1800s. Left, James H. Williams, one of many notable graduates of the West 17th Street school, in a photo from around 1906. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLARK HODGIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

NYPL) (RE8)

**Load-Date:** October 9, 2022

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[***After ‘Rocketman’, Taron Egerton Transforms Again for ‘Black Bird’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TS-P4J1-JBG3-64TK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 1, 2022 Friday 09:29 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1562 words

**Byline:** Sarah Bahr

**Highlight:** The 32-year-old plays an imprisoned drug dealer facing an unusual choice in the Apple TV+ series, written by Dennis Lehane.

**Body**

The 32-year-old plays an imprisoned drug dealer facing an unusual choice in the Apple TV+ series, written by Dennis Lehane.

Taron Egerton channeled a pop god in the Elton John biopic “Rocketman,” winning raves — and a Golden Globe — for his portrayal of how a shy piano prodigy blossomed into an international superstar.

But in his latest role, as a convicted drug dealer in the new Apple TV+ drama “Black Bird,” he had no outlandish sunglasses or feather boas to cast off when shooting wrapped each day. For “Black Bird,” which is based on a true story, he had to cast off something darker: the confessions of Larry Hall, a man [*convicted in connection with one girl’s death*](http://www.cnn.com/2011/CRIME/07/04/tricia.reitler.disappearance/index.html\) who was suspected to have kidnapped, raped and killed many more.

“As much as it was a great experience creatively, there were days where I went home feeling like, I don’t really want to listen to this stuff anymore,” Egerton, whose character’s task is to elicit those confessions, said in a recent video call from his London kitchen.

Egerton, 32, who has lent his soulful tenor voice to characters both flamboyant (John) and furry (the mountain gorilla Johnny in the animated musical “Sing”), could have taken his pick of just about any musical role after “Rocketman.” And then there are those chiseled good looks and piercing green eyes, which seem to beg for a cape and spandex.

Instead, he wanted his next major on-camera role to be one that showed the world he was more than a song-and-dance man.

“I wanted to do something that felt really different from ‘Rocketman,’” he said. “People tend to think of you as the last thing you did. They don’t want to take that risk on giving an actor a role that they’ve not seen them do a version of before.”

He found it in the psychological thriller “Black Bird,” a six-episode mini-series that the author and screenwriter Dennis Lehane (“Mystic River”) adapted from the prison memoir “In With the Devil,” written by James Keene with Hillel Levin.

The series, which debuts July 8, centers on Egerton as Jimmy Keene, who is offered a chance to commute his 10-year prison sentence with just one condition: He must convince Hall (Paul Walter Hauser) to tell him where he buried the body of at least one missing girl, and perhaps a dozen more.

“A part like Jimmy — or, indeed, a part like Elton — they are absolutely the roles I want from my career,” Egerton said. “That’s not to say everything I want to do needs to be heavy and dark — I’m definitely drawn to that stuff — but it’s really, really creatively nourishing to have writing like that because it makes you want to bring your absolute best.”

EGERTON WASN’T ALWAYS SO ENTHUSIASTIC about acting. He was born into a British ***working-class*** family, with a father who ran a bed-and-breakfast in Liverpool and a mother who worked in social services. They divorced when he was 2, and he moved with his mother to Wales.

When he was 12, he moved to a different part of Wales, Aberystwyth, which left him feeling desperately lonely. “I lost all my friends I’d had as a child when I moved,” he said. “I was quite cocky and quite confident, but that was to mask the insecurity I was feeling.” He didn’t dabble in acting until he was 15. “It was as much about trying to be social and make friends as it was an interest in acting,” he said.

The acting stuck. After he graduated from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in 2012, he landed some smaller roles, performing in a stage production of “The Last of the Haussmans” at the National Theater in London and appearing in the British TV dramas “Lewis” and “The Smoke.”

Then came his big break: The director Matthew Vaughn (“Kick-Ass,” “X-Men: First Class”) cast him as the street-rat-turned-spy Eggsy in the 2014 British action-comedy film “Kingsman: The Secret Service.” The role made him a colead, alongside Colin Firth, despite Egerton’s having never been on a film set.

“He came in and did a perfect audition,” Vaughn said by phone. “He was Eggsy. I liked that side of him in the role because Eggsy was also about being around a world you’ve never been in and growing.”

On the heels of the success of the first “Kingsman” film, which grossed more than $414 million worldwide, he landed roles in “Eddie the Eagle,” the animated film “Sing” and a sequel, “Kingsman: The Golden Circle.”

Then he hit a rough patch, first in the title role in Otto Bathurst’s 2018 “Robin Hood” adaptation, and then as the antagonist of the 2018 biographical crime drama “Billionaire Boys Club.” Both were critically lampooned box-office flops.

“I ignored my instincts on those two jobs because I was offered quite a lot of money to do them,” he said. “And that’s just fatal. You can’t pick roles that way.”

“But I feel like I should be kinder to myself,” he continued. “I was a 25-year-old kid who was raised by a single mother with very little money. I wanted to make money, not just for me, but for people who are important to me. And as much as I was not pleased with how those two movies turned out, I can see very clearly, in retrospect, why I did them.”

Things turned around with “Rocketman,” for which he learned to play the piano and sang many of his numbers live.

“He has an incredible singing voice,” said Dexter Fletcher, who directed “Rocketman.” “But he was also an actor who was willing to go to a place where he wasn’t afraid to make a fool of himself. He wasn’t wrapped up in being this supercool, emotionless, good-looking dude.”

Vaughn, who was a producer of “Rocketman,” said he believed the role had helped prove that Egerton could “literally play any role.”

“He’s in a rare, rare club,” Vaughn added. “Hugh Jackman is the only other guy who’s genuinely an action star and a musical star.”

It was that versatility that caught the eye of Lehane, who developed, wrote and executive produced “Black Bird,” when he was looking for a leading man.

“I’d just seen ‘Rocketman,’” he said, “and I was like, ‘My God, the range on this kid.’”

Egerton needed more than range to shoot “Black Bird”; the series was also incredibly heavy. Lehane said that crafting a scene in Episode 5 had made him cry — the first time he had experienced that while writing a script. Hauser said he was so affected by his role as Hall that his life began spinning out of control. He eventually had to get sober.

“Being Larry Hall 12 hours a day, you want to go home and eat junk food, drink booze, have an edible,” he said in a recent phone call. “It was like living in a haunted house.”

But Egerton, whose character serves as a sounding board for Hall’s disturbing revelations, managed to remain largely above it, Hauser and Lehane said, despite a taxing six-month shoot in New Orleans.

“It’s a hard thing to do,” said Egerton, who bulked up to play Keene, a burly former high school football star. “Especially with long days, working nights, it can be hard to switch off. But you find a way.”

Egerton, who also earned his first executive producer credit with “Black Bird,” said he was immensely proud of the result, particularly his scenes with Ray Liotta (“Goodfellas,” “Field of Dreams”), who played Keene’s father. Liotta [*died in May*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/26/movies/ray-liotta-dead.html), and the role appears to be Liotta’s last for TV.

“I loved that relationship,” Egerton said of his and Liotta’s characters. “These two complicated, very, very flawed, imperfect men, but with this real love for each other.”

“He had such an edge and such a toughness to him,” he added about Liotta, “but also this incredible capacity to be very open and quite childlike and vulnerable.”

IN THE THREE YEARS SINCE THE RELEASE OF “ROCKETMAN,” Egerton has done a lot of voice work and also returned to the stage. In March, he made his West End debut in a revival of the Mike Bartlett comedy “Cock” opposite the “Bridgerton” star Jonathan Bailey.

On opening night, however, he collapsed onstage at the first performance and, after a successful but brief return, tested positive for Covid-19. Ultimately, [*he left the production*](https://people.com/theater/taron-egerton-no-longer-starring-in-west-end-play-cock/), citing what [*producers at the time said*](https://www.instagram.com/p/Cb12JnQI7wX/?utm_source=ig_embed&amp;ig_rid=e19f71bc-aa77-4261-a359-f65b6596e8d5) were “personal reasons.”

“Toward the end of last year, a close family member was diagnosed with cancer, and I dropped out of a film to come home and be with that person,” he explained. “I thought that, with the play, I was ready to go back to work, but I wasn’t. I had to leave, and it was sad, and absolutely one of the hardest decisions I’ve had to make.”

Things appear to be back on track, and looking ahead, he has no shortage of acting work. He has a starring turn as the Tetris Company founder Henk Rogers in the Apple TV+ film “Tetris,” which is scheduled for later this year, and a return to the “Kingsman” franchise.

He also hopes to succeed Jackman as the next Wolverine and has met with Marvel Studio executives, including the company’s president, Kevin Feige.

“I don’t think it would be wrong to say that,” he said, laughing. “I’d be excited but I’d be apprehensive as well, because Hugh is so associated with the role that I’d wonder if it’d be very difficult for someone else to do it.”

He paused, then flashed a grin. “But hopefully if it does come around, they’ll give me a shot.”

PHOTOS: “People tend to think of you as the last thing you did,” said Taron Egerton, top, who starred as Elton John in “Rocketman,” above. For “Black Bird,” center, a psychological thriller, Egerton plays a convicted drug dealer. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANA CUBA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ALFONSO BRESCIANI/APPLE TV+; DAVID APPLEBY/PARAMOUNT PICTURES)

**Load-Date:** July 6, 2022

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[***Push, Pull***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62P4-GWH1-DXY4-X4D5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 16, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 19; FICTION

**Length:** 646 words

**Byline:** By Lysley Tenorio

**Body**

MY GOOD SONBy Yang Huang

Early in Yang Huang's new novel, ''My Good Son,'' we see a middle-aged tailor, Mr. Cai, working in his shop. ''All his planning, cutting and sewing took final shape,'' Huang writes. ''In the end the garment itself made sense.'' For Mr. Cai, it's a rare moment of pride, a recognition that there is value, even contentment, in a hard day's work. But the rest of the time, he sees his ***working-class*** life as a cautionary tale for his aimless 22-year-old son, Feng. Determined to save him from a life of tailoring, Mr. Cai makes it his mission to send Feng to a university in the United States. All Mr. Cai needs is an American willing to sponsor a student visa for Feng.

Enter Jude, an American expat and Mr. Cai's newest customer. Mr. Cai asks Jude to persuade his father, a Texas businessman, to become Feng's sponsor. Jude agrees but wants a favor in return: Jude is gay, and believes that Feng, by posing as his ''best friend'' (which Mr. Cai suspects is code for ''gay lover''), might help persuade Jude's father to accept his sexuality (Jude has yet to come out to his family). It's a convoluted scheme; Jude's logic that a Chinese ''best friend'' might push his conservative father toward acceptance is difficult for Mr. Cai (and, admittedly, this reader) to track. Nonetheless, Mr. Cai tells his son to play along, convincing him that his only hope for success is to study abroad. ''Don't be a loser,'' he tells Feng. ''All my labors are wasted if you end up like me.''

As with her previous books, ''Living Treasures'' and ''My Old Faithful,'' Huang's latest explores the generational push-pull of family life in post-Tiananmen China. While Mrs. Cai is easier on Feng, Mr. Cai pushes. But Feng isn't always worthy of his father's efforts. He's moody and quick to tears. At times, he's a spoiled brat. Yet Mr. Cai's devotion to Feng is unyielding. In one instance, rather than allow Feng to stand in an all-night line outside the American Consulate before a visa interview, Mr. Cai, with ''a folding stool and palm fan, which he used to drive away mosquitoes,'' waits in Feng's place, so that Feng can get a good night's sleep. Other parents are doing the same thing, a detail that highlights the novel's beating heart: what it means to be a good parent or, in Mr. Cai's case, a good Chinese father.

But is Mr. Cai actually a good parent? That question ultimately drives the narrative. For all he's accomplished, Mr. Cai devalues, heartbreakingly, the very life he's made for himself as a way of pressuring Feng to strive for more. But when Feng expresses interest in the family business, Mr. Cai is conflicted: ''He had shown his son the mundane life of a tailor. If this hadn't scared Feng off but rather attracted him, was this not a credit to himself as a father?'' The possibility lingers: Can Feng achieve success by following in Mr. Cai's humble footsteps?

The story moves quickly, rendered in straightforward prose. While occasionally flat, the deliberate plainness of the writing reflects Mr. Cai's no-nonsense mentality and his willingness to articulate harsh truths. ''Face it,'' he says of Feng, ''he isn't a girl who can marry up with her looks.'' While securing Feng's future is always Mr. Cai's objective, the novel contains other dramatic threads: an unplanned pregnancy, Feng's interest in the girl next door, a back story about Mr. Cai's first true love. At times, these threads compete, and the scheme with Jude, the novel's initial dramatic engine, ultimately feels rushed and underutilized. Fortunately, Mr. Cai remains front and center, always compelling, a man doing everything for his boy, the way a good father -- supposedly -- should.Lysley Tenorio is the author of the story collection ''Monstress'' and the novel ''The Son of Good Fortune.''MY GOOD SONBy Yang Huang304 pp. University of New Orleans Press. Paper, $18.95.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/books/review/my-good-son-yang-huang.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/books/review/my-good-son-yang-huang.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Yang Huang (PHOTOGRAPH BY NANCY RUBIN)

**Load-Date:** May 16, 2021

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[***This Is Why We Need to Spend $4 Trillion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63RH-JY91-DXY4-X513-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 1, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; DAVID BROOKS

**Length:** 898 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

I've spent the last few weeks in a controlled fury -- and I'm not normally a fury kind of guy. Joe Biden, Nancy Pelosi and others are trying to pass arguably the most consequential legislative package in a generation, and what did I sense in my recent travels across five states? The same thing I sense in my social media feed and on the various media ''most viewed'' lists.

Indifference.

Have we given up on the idea that policy can change history? Have we lost faith in our ability to reverse, or even be alarmed by, national decline? More and more I hear people accepting the idea that America is not as energetic and youthful as it used to be.

I can practically hear the spirits of our ancestors crying out -- the ones who had a core faith that this would forever be the greatest nation on the planet, the New Jerusalem, the last best hope of earth.

My ancestors were aspiring immigrants and understood where the beating heart of the nation resided: with the ***working class*** and the middle class, the ones depicted by Willa Cather, James Agee, Ralph Ellison, or in ''The Honeymooners,'' ''The Best Years of Our Lives'' and ''On the Waterfront.'' There was a time when the phrase ''the common man'' was a source of pride and a high compliment.

Over the past few decades there has been a redistribution of dignity -- upward. From Reagan through Romney, the Republicans valorized entrepreneurs, C.E.O.s and Wall Street. The Democratic Party became dominated by the creative class, who attended competitive colleges, moved to affluent metro areas, married each other and ladled advantages onto their kids so they could leap even further ahead.

There was a bipartisan embrace of a culture of individualism, which opens up a lot of space for people with resources and social support, but means loneliness and abandonment for people without. Four years of college became the definition of the good life, which left roughly two-thirds of the country out.

And so came the crisis that Biden was elected to address -- the poisonous combination of elite insularity and vicious populist resentment.

Read again Robert Kagan's foreboding Washington Post essay on how close we are to a democratic disaster. He's talking about a group of people so enraged by a lack of respect that they are willing to risk death by Covid if they get to stick a middle finger in the air against those who they think look down on them. They are willing to torch our institutions because they are so resentful against the people who run them.

The Democratic spending bills are economic packages that serve moral and cultural purposes. They should be measured by their cultural impact, not merely by some wonky analysis. In real, tangible ways, they would redistribute dignity back downward. They would support hundreds of thousands of jobs for home health care workers, child care workers, construction workers, metal workers, supply chain workers. They would ease the indignity millions of parents face having to raise their children in poverty.

Look at the list of states that, according to a recent analysis of White House estimates by CNBC, could be among those getting the most money per capita from the infrastructure bill. A lot of them are places where Trumpian resentment is burning hot: Alaska, Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota.

Biden had it exactly right when he told a La Crosse, Wis., audience, ''The jobs that are going to be created here -- largely, it's going to be those for blue-collar workers, the majority of whom will not have to have a college degree to have those jobs.''

In normal times I'd argue that many of the programs in these packages may be ineffective. I'm a lot more worried about debt than progressives seem to be. But we're a nation enduring a national rupture, and the most violent parts of it may still be yet to come.

These packages say to the struggling parents and the warehouse workers: I see you. Your work has dignity. You are paving your way. You are at the center of our national vision.

This is how you fortify a compelling moral identity, which is what all of us need if we're going to be able to look in the mirror with self-respect. This is the cultural transformation that good policy can sometimes achieve. Statecraft is soulcraft.

These measures would not solve our problems, obviously. In many large Western nations, there are vast tectonic forces concentrating wealth in the affluent metro areas and leaving vast swaths of the countryside behind. We don't yet know how to do the sort of regional development that reverses this trend.

But we can make it clear that we value people's choices. For years there was almost an officially approved life: Get a B.A., move to those places where capital and jobs are congregating, even if it means leaving your community, roots and extended family.

Those were not desired or realistic options for millions of people. These packages, on the other hand, say: We support the choices you have made, in the places where you have chosen to live.

That fundamental respect is the key scarcity in America right now.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 1, 2021

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[***Growing Turmoil for Energy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P6-3DJ1-DXY4-X3TD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 3, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1228 words

**Byline:** By Clifford Krauss

**Body**

Geopolitical tensions and a growing disparity between supply and demand have driven up prices. Here is what that means and what could happen next.

HOUSTON -- Oil prices are increasing, again, casting a shadow over the economy, driving up inflation and eroding consumer confidence.

Crude prices rose more than 15 percent in January alone, with the global benchmark price crossing $90 a barrel for the first time in more than seven years, as fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine grew.

Though the summer driving season is still months away, the average price for regular gasoline is fast approaching $3.40 a gallon, roughly a dollar higher than it was a year ago, according to AAA.

The Biden administration said in November that it would release 50 million barrels of oil from the nation's strategic reserves to relieve the pressure on consumers, but the move hasn't made much of a difference.

Many energy analysts predict that oil could soon touch $100 a barrel, even as electric cars become more popular and the coronavirus pandemic persists. Exxon Mobil and other oil companies that only a year ago were considered endangered dinosaurs by some Wall Street analysts are thriving, raking in their biggest profits in years.

Why are oil prices suddenly so high?

The pandemic depressed energy prices in 2020, even sending the U.S. benchmark oil price below zero for the first time ever. But prices have snapped back faster and more than many analysts had expected in large part because supply has not kept up with demand.

Western oil companies, partly under pressure from investors and environmental activists, are drilling fewer wells than they did before the pandemic to restrain the increase in supply. Industry executives say they are trying not to make the same mistake they made in the past when they pumped too much oil when prices were high, leading to a collapse in prices.

Elsewhere, in countries like Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Libya, natural disasters and political turbulence have curbed output in recent months.

''Unplanned outages have flipped what was thought to be a pivot towards surplus into a deep production gap,'' said Louise Dickson, an oil markets analyst at Rystad Energy, a research and consulting firm.

On the demand side, much of the world is learning to cope with the pandemic and people are eager to shop and make other trips. Wary of coming in contact with an infectious virus, many are choosing to drive rather than taking public transportation.

But the most immediate and critical factor is geopolitical.

A potential Russian invasion of Ukraine has ''the oil market on edge,'' said Ben Cahill, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. ''In a tight market, any significant disruptions could send prices well above $100 per barrel,'' Mr. Cahill wrote in a report this week.

Russia produces 10 million barrels of oil a day, or roughly one of every 10 barrels used around the world on any given day. Americans would not be directly hurt in a significant way if Russian exports stopped, because the country sends only about 700,000 barrels a day to the United States. That relatively modest amount could easily be replaced with oil from Canada and other countries.

But any interruption of Russian shipments that transit through Ukraine, or the sabotage of other pipelines in northern Europe, would cripple much of the continent and distort the global energy supply chain. That's because, traders say, the rest of the world does not have the spare capacity to replace Russian oil.

Even if Russian oil shipments are not interrupted, the United States and its allies could impose sanctions or export controls on Russian companies, limiting their access to equipment, which could gradually reduce production in that country.

In addition, interruptions of Russian natural gas exports to Europe could force some utilities to produce more electricity by burning oil rather than gas. That would raise demand and prices worldwide.

What can the United States and its allies do if Russian production is disrupted?

The United States, Japan, European countries and even China could release more crude from their strategic reserves. Such moves could help, especially if a crisis is short-lived. But the reserves would not be nearly enough if Russian oil supplies were interrupted for months or years.

Western oil companies that have pledged not to produce too much oil are likely to change their approach if Russia was unable or unwilling to supply as much oil as it did. They would have big financial incentives -- from a surging oil price -- to drill more wells. That said, it would take those businesses months to ramp up production.

What is OPEC doing?

President Biden has been urging the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to pump more oil, but several members have been falling short of their monthly production quotas, and some may not have the capacity to quickly increase output. OPEC members and their allies, Russia among them, agreed on Wednesday to stick to a plan for increasing production next month by a relatively modest 400,000 barrels a day.

In addition, if Russian supplies are suddenly reduced, Washington is likely to put pressure on Saudi Arabia to raise production independently of the cartel. Analysts think that the kingdom has several million barrels of spare capacity that it could tap in a crisis.

What impact would higher oil prices have on the U.S. economy?

A big jump in oil prices would push gasoline prices even higher, and that would hurt consumers. ***Working-class*** and rural Americans would be hurt the most because they tend to drive more. They also drive older, less fuel-efficient vehicles. And energy costs tend to represent a larger percentage of their incomes, so price increases hit them harder than more affluent people or city dwellers who have access to trains and buses.

But the direct economic impact on the nation would be more modest than in previous decades because the United States produces more and imports less oil since drilling in shale fields exploded around 2010 because of hydraulic fracturing. The United States is now a net exporter of fossil fuels, and the economies of several states, particularly Texas and Louisiana, could benefit from higher prices.

What would it take for oil prices to fall?

Oil prices go up and down in cycles, and there are several reasons prices could fall in the next few months. The pandemic is far from over, and China has shut down several cities to stop the spread of the virus, slowing its economy and demand for energy. Russia and the West could reach an agreement -- formal or tacit -- that forestalls a full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

And the United States and its allies could restore a 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran that former President Donald J. Trump abandoned. Such a deal would allow Iran to sell oil much more easily than now. Analysts think the country could export a million or more barrels daily if the nuclear deal is revived.

Ultimately, high prices could depress demand for oil enough that prices begin to come down. One of the main financial incentives for buying electric cars, for example, is that electricity tends to be cheaper per mile than gasoline. Sales of electric cars are growing fast in Europe and China and increasingly also in the United States.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/02/business/economy/oil-price.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/02/business/economy/oil-price.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A liquified natural gas facility in Italy. Global tensions are disrupting energy markets while supply has not kept up with demand. Prices for oil and natural gas are spiking. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CLARA VANNUCCI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 3, 2022

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[***What Makes a Good Chinese Father? In a New Novel, It’s Complicated.; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62NP-0K11-DXY4-X1HW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 14, 2021 Friday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 647 words

**Byline:** Lysley Tenorio

**Highlight:** In “My Good Son,” by Yang Huang, a Chinese father strives to offer his floundering son a better life. But is he actually being a good parent?

**Body**

MY GOOD SON

By Yang Huang

Early in Yang Huang’s new novel, “My Good Son,” we see a middle-aged tailor, Mr. Cai, working in his shop. “All his planning, cutting and sewing took final shape,” Huang writes. “In the end the garment itself made sense.” For Mr. Cai, it’s a rare moment of pride, a recognition that there is value, even contentment, in a hard day’s work. But the rest of the time, he sees his ***working-class*** life as a cautionary tale for his aimless 22-year-old son, Feng. Determined to save him from a life of tailoring, Mr. Cai makes it his mission to send Feng to a university in the United States. All Mr. Cai needs is an American willing to sponsor a student visa for Feng.

Enter Jude, an American expat and Mr. Cai’s newest customer. Mr. Cai asks Jude to persuade his father, a Texas businessman, to become Feng’s sponsor. Jude agrees but wants a favor in return: Jude is gay, and believes that Feng, by posing as his “best friend” (which Mr. Cai suspects is code for “gay lover”), might help persuade Jude’s father to accept his sexuality (Jude has yet to come out to his family). It’s a convoluted scheme; Jude’s logic that a Chinese “best friend” might push his conservative father toward acceptance is difficult for Mr. Cai (and, admittedly, this reader) to track. Nonetheless, Mr. Cai tells his son to play along, convincing him that his only hope for success is to study abroad. “Don’t be a loser,” he tells Feng. “All my labors are wasted if you end up like me.”

As with her previous books, “Living Treasures” and “My Old Faithful,” Huang’s latest explores the generational push-pull of family life in post-Tiananmen China. While Mrs. Cai is easier on Feng, Mr. Cai pushes. But Feng isn’t always worthy of his father’s efforts. He’s moody and quick to tears. At times, he’s a spoiled brat. Yet Mr. Cai’s devotion to Feng is unyielding. In one instance, rather than allow Feng to stand in an all-night line outside the American Consulate before a visa interview, Mr. Cai, with “a folding stool and palm fan, which he used to drive away mosquitoes,” waits in Feng’s place, so that Feng can get a good night’s sleep. Other parents are doing the same thing, a detail that highlights the novel’s beating heart: what it means to be a good parent or, in Mr. Cai’s case, a good Chinese father.

But is Mr. Cai actually a good parent? That question ultimately drives the narrative. For all he’s accomplished, Mr. Cai devalues, heartbreakingly, the very life he’s made for himself as a way of pressuring Feng to strive for more. But when Feng expresses interest in the family business, Mr. Cai is conflicted: “He had shown his son the mundane life of a tailor. If this hadn’t scared Feng off but rather attracted him, was this not a credit to himself as a father?” The possibility lingers: Can Feng achieve success by following in Mr. Cai’s humble footsteps?

The story moves quickly, rendered in straightforward prose. While occasionally flat, the deliberate plainness of the writing reflects Mr. Cai’s no-nonsense mentality and his willingness to articulate harsh truths. “Face it,” he says of Feng, “he isn’t a girl who can marry up with her looks.” While securing Feng’s future is always Mr. Cai’s objective, the novel contains other dramatic threads: an unplanned pregnancy, Feng’s interest in the girl next door, a back story about Mr. Cai’s first true love. At times, these threads compete, and the scheme with Jude, the novel’s initial dramatic engine, ultimately feels rushed and underutilized. Fortunately, Mr. Cai remains front and center, always compelling, a man doing everything for his boy, the way a good father — supposedly — should.

Lysley Tenorio is the author of the story collection “Monstress” and the novel “The Son of Good Fortune.” MY GOOD SON By Yang Huang 304 pp. University of New Orleans Press. Paper, $18.95.

PHOTO: Yang Huang (PHOTOGRAPH BY NANCY RUBIN)

**Load-Date:** May 14, 2021

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[***A Look Inside New York’s Swirling Kaleidoscope of Faiths***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:673D-JFV1-JBG3-63Y8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 15, 2022 Thursday 11:22 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2942 words

**Byline:** James Estrin and Liam Stack

**Highlight:** The city is home to some of the most spiritually and culturally diverse areas in the world. Here are some of them.

**Body**

New York City is a place of maximum diversity in minimum space, [*to borrow a phrase*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2007/01/08/die-weltliteratur) from the writer Milan Kundera. Its spiritual communities are no exception. Last year, the Public Religion Research Institute underscored this in a [*first-of-its-kind study*](https://www.prri.org/research/2020-census-of-american-religion/) that measured the religious diversity of every county in the United States.

Three of the city’s boroughs — Manhattan, Brooklyn and Queens — were among the 10 most diverse counties in the country, according to the survey. The other two, Staten Island and the Bronx, were not far behind.

There is a dizzying array of global faiths across the five boroughs, from Black Baptist churches and Buddhist temples to Islamic high schools and L.G.B.T.Q.-friendly synagogues.

But the city is not just a home for many different world religions; it is also a place that empowers New Yorkers to express their faith — and share its treasures and ideals — in a multitude of ways.

“We have different cultures in New York, so we get anything we need,” said Frank Bell, a priest of Santería. His is an Afro-Cuban faith whose rituals require ceramics and other items found here affordably in abundance, from Yemeni bodegas in the Bronx to Ikea in Brooklyn.

“You can get herbs from the Arabs, fabric from the Indians or the Chinese,” he said. “This place, New York, is the best place in the world for our religion.”

In Queens, a Catholic church provides succor that extends beyond faith

Corona is home to a large ***working-class*** Latino immigrant community, and their commitment to Our Lady of Sorrows keeps its pews packed on Sundays.

“The Catholic Church in the United States, for Hispanic immigrants, is a place where people socialize,” said the Rev. Manuel De Jesús Rodriguez, its pastor. “People do their weddings here, people do their birthdays here, people do their quinceañeras and funerals here.”

Our Lady of Sorrows is woven into many aspects of neighborhood life, including some of its most troubled. The pastor said religion is “perhaps the most important” part of his work in Corona, “but it is not the only one.”

Corona was part of the epicenter of the coronavirus pandemic in New York. Covid-19 killed at least 100 parishioners at Our Lady of Sorrows and drove away thousands more who never came back when restrictions on in-person events were lifted.

Few places on Earth are home to as much cultural diversity as Queens. [*Forty-seven percent of its residents*](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/queenscountynewyork/PST045221) were born overseas, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, and [*more than 300 languages*](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/more-than-300-languages-are-spoken-along-this-nyc-street#:~:text=Queens%20is%20known%20as%20%E2%80%9CThe,York%20City%20borough%20of%20Queens.) are spoken within its borders.

The range of faiths practiced here is similarly vast. There are Buddhist and Jain temples, Sikh soup kitchens, Orthodox grade schools that teach in Greek, and communities that follow Bon, an ancient Indigenous Tibetan faith.

But for many, religious communities are more than a spiritual respite from city life. At Our Lady of Sorrows, Father Rodriguez spends more than half his time each week on what he calls “spiritual counseling,” which covers all manner of crisis and conflict.

“Priests are the psychologists for the immigrants,” he said. “Every issue that takes place in a family comes to our attention. Sex abuse. Domestic violence. ‘My husband tried to kill me.’ Overdose.”

The pastor said he has often helped parishioners file police reports. The church also has a close relationship with Elmhurst Hospital. Since he came to Our Lady of Sorrows two years ago, he has brought several people to its emergency room for drug overdoses or psychiatric care, he said.

“Because of the language barrier, it is difficult for people to understand what to do,” he explained. “So they come here first.”

In Brooklyn, a Black Baptist church takes on a gentrifying borough

Mr. Waterman has also taken to preaching in a tent behind the church. At first it was a temporary place to worship while Antioch was being renovated. But after the work had been completed and the church had reopened, the tent became a warm-weather fixture that he refers to as “the Moses experience — being in the wilderness.”

“In order for you to be effective in the community, you have to go out into the community,” said Mr. Waterman, also known as Pastor Rob. “When you open up wide, it lets people experience God wherever they are.”

People in Brooklyn experience God in a wide variety of ways, from Vodou practitioners in East New York and modern-day witches who make offerings in cemeteries, to Catholic parishes that offer Mass in numerous languages, including Spanish, Italian, Polish and Chinese.

Antioch Baptist views itself as a shelter against a world that is not designed to make life easy for its congregants, many of whom are working or middle class and are dealing with the impacts of gentrification, racism and poverty. That is never far from the pastor’s mind when he takes the pulpit.

“You can’t depend upon the system,” he said during a tent sermon on a hot July day. “Their job is to lock us up and throw away the key, and it’s OK that we come out 20 years later and then we can’t find a job.”

That day, Pastor Rob was preaching before 200 smartly dressed worshipers. More sat on stoops across the street or in double-parked cars to listen to the sermon and the hymns sung by Sheila Carpenter, the minister of music, and her three children.

“God don’t want you to be poor another day in your life,” he told the congregation. “Everybody say, ‘I haven’t given up!’ Everybody say, ‘I am God’s opportunity!’ I need you to look at somebody and say, ‘Neighbor, I am God’s opportunity.’”

But he does more than preach about these issues. The church also hosts a job training program for young people, who can learn skills in technology, customer service and construction.

“Some of these young people were at Rikers,” said Ms. Carpenter, who also serves as the training program’s financial officer, referring to the jail. “Now they are giving back to the community, helping the community to prosper.”

On Staten Island, an Islamic cultural center gains in strength, outreach and numbers

In the early days of the mosque, the worshipers were mainly Albanians, but today roughly half are Arabs, Turks, Uzbeks and others, said Imam Tahir Kukaj, the mosque’s leader.

Staten Island is the least diverse, least populous and most politically conservative borough in New York City. Still, it is far more diverse than most places in the United States.

Most residents are white Catholics. But the borough is home to a thriving community of Muslims and Buddhists, among others.

Unlike many mosques in the United States, the cultural center, in Tompkinsville, has a minaret, a tower that historically would be used to broadcast the call to prayer but that often draws the ire of community and zoning groups.

Mr. Kukaj said its traditional purpose is not really needed in New York because so many here have phone apps that remind them to pray. But his mosque made sure to build a minaret “for the cultural meaning,” he said, to remind immigrants of their birth countries and to make a statement: This neighborhood is your home.

“We live in tough times,” he said. “Anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish sentiment is still here.”

For Idris Guven, a New York City police captain who moved to New York from Turkey, the mosque has been a safe place for his children to study. That day, Mr. Guven’s daughter was awarded a merit scholarship by a local university that would cover 90 percent of her nursing school tuition.

“We live in the U.S.A., and we love what it offers, but we want them to know their culture and their identity,” he said in June at his daughter’s graduation ceremony, just after the imam had led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

But Mr. Guven is still worried about mass shootings and Islamophobia, he said. Sitting in the school’s brightly lit basement, he was glad to have his N.Y.P.D. service weapon tucked into his waistband.

Lamiaa Rafaey, the headmistress of Miraj, knows the world her students will graduate into, she said. For her, a core part of the school’s mission is to remind children that no matter what anyone says — on the street or on cable news — they are just as American as anyone else.

“We always tell our students, ‘If you are Muslim, Christian, Jewish or have no religion, we are all Americans’,” she said. “We are all New Yorkers. We are all people.”

In Manhattan, there is a synagogue for everyone, especially the L.G.B.T.Q. community

Manhattan is home to towering cathedrals and ornate synagogues, and it serves as the seat of power for mighty institutions, including the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York.

But since it was founded in 1625 as the Dutch colony of New Amsterdam, religious tolerance has been a bedrock of Manhattan’s vibrancy.

The borough today is home to many groups that expand the boundaries of their faiths by exploring new ways of doing things.

This can be seen at Catholic parishes, like the [*Church of St. Francis Xavier*](https://sfxavier.org/) in Chelsea, which organizes book clubs and discussion groups for L.G.B.T.Q. parishioners, or [*Hadar*](https://www.hadar.org/), a self-described traditional Jewish yeshiva on the Upper West Side that is open to Jews of all denominations, genders and sexual orientations.

[*Congregation Beit Simchat Torah*](https://cbst.org/) began as a small volunteer-run effort. Dues were $50 a year, and it didn’t hire a full-time rabbi for 19 years. But this grass roots ethos was impossible to sustain during the AIDS crisis.

Hired in 1992, Rabbi Kleinbaum was the synagogue’s first paid staff member. In her first month on the job, she conducted four funerals for young men who died of AIDS. “At 33, I was burying my own generation of gay men,” she said.

She had been on the job for five years when treatments for H.I.V. started to become more effective. By then, 40 percent of the congregation had died of the disease.

Today, the synagogue has 1,200 members, “big dreams,” and a stubborn budget deficit, she said. “The gay community thinks we are rich because we are Jewish, and the Jewish community thinks we are rich because we are gay.”

At first, Rabbi Kleinbaum’s goal was to provide a safe harbor for people. Over the years, that mission has stayed the same, but its meaning and scope have evolved as the synagogue and the society around it have changed.

About a decade ago, the synagogue introduced a religious education program for children and teenagers. “The founders of C.B.S.T. couldn’t imagine gay families having kids,” she said.

Currently, 50 children are enrolled in bar mitzvah classes. Others attend teen programs on civil rights history and current events.

The synagogue has also expanded into immigrant rights work. Most of the immigrants who benefit from its services are not Jewish, but some remain part of the synagogue community long after their cases have been settled.

“This is a value of ours, to take positions on issues we care about in the world,” Rabbi Kleinbaum said. “We are very liberal,” she continued, touting her synagogue’s politics and inclusivity. “We welcome straight people here.”

In the Bronx, a Hindu temple focuses on ‘food justice work’

The Bronx is the city’s poorest borough. It is home to a large Catholic population, with 38 percent of its residents [*identifying as such*](https://www.prri.org/spotlight/religious-affiliation-of-new-york-residents-by-borough/#:~:text=New%20York%20Catholics%20are%20the,as%20another%20race%20or%20ethnicity.) in 2014, including 28 percent who are Latino.

Although the oldest and grandest Hindu temples are in Queens, Hindu New Yorkers in the other four boroughs often frequent small, intimate houses of worship like Vishnu Mandir, in Soundview.

It is a point of pride for the community that since it opened in the ’90s, the temple has never shut its doors, even during the height of the pandemic, Ms. Kemraj said.

Pandit Vyaas took his father’s place as the temple’s pandit, or Hindu priest, after he died. Every Sunday he drives in from his home on Long Island to lead roughly 75 devotees in a two-hour service of chants and prayers.

After services, volunteers pass out vegan meals in to-go containers — rice, dal, curries of pumpkin, eggplant — and bags of fresh produce.

It is part of what Ms. Kemraj calls the temple’s “food justice work,” which includes food giveaways and events aimed at people outside the temple, too. She believes Vishnu Mandir to be the first Hindu temple, perhaps in the world, she said, to book a Muslim drag queen to perform during Pride Month.

“We don’t just serve the needs of the Hindu community or the South Asian community, but others in the Caribbean community, especially Guyana,” she said.

On a recent windy Sunday, Mr. Sukul shared a teaching from the deity Hanuman, on the importance of appreciating God during the good times and the bad.

“If you use the name of God like medicine to get better, and then you leave it in the cabinet when you are not sick, it makes no sense,” Pandit Vyaas said. “Hanumanji says when you have a problem, chant the name of God. But also when you are happy and don’t have a problem, chant the name of God.”

Afterward, the worshipers blessed themselves, put on their layers of heavy coats and headed out into the cold.

PHOTOS: At Wat Buddha Thai Thavorn Vanaram, a Thai Buddhist temple in Elmhurst, Queens. (MB1); Above, a first communion service at Our Lady of Sorrows, a Roman Catholic church in Corona that is mostly Ecuadorean, Mexican and Central American. On this day, over 75 young people took part.; Above, Gurdwara Sikh Cultural Society, in Richmond Hill, which serves thousands of free meals a week. (MB6); At right, the Good Friday procession in April near Our Lady of Sorrows. Spiritual counseling is part of the church’s mission. (MB6-MB7); The Bon Shen Ling temple in Woodside. Bon is an ancient Indigenous Tibetan religion that was influenced by Indian Buddhism.; A boy waiting as his grandmother picks out free groceries at a food pantry run by Faith Bible Church, an evangelical house of worship in Flushing.; Sunday prayer service at the Jain Center of America in Elmhurst. People washed statues as part of a ceremony to purify themselves.; At St. Demetrios Cathedral, a Greek Orthodox Church in Astoria that also has a school, students participated in a Good Friday service. (MB7); The Rev. Dr. Robert M. Waterman at a Father’s Day service at Antioch Baptist Church in Bedford-Stuyvesant. He encourages his congregation not to give up.; Deacon Anthony Mammoliti of St. Dominic Roman Catholic Church in Bensonhurst — the last church in Brooklyn offering daily Masses in Italian — led communion on a home visit.; Followers moved and swayed rapidly as they sang at a traditional outdoor celebration of the Lag B’Omer holiday in Borough Park.; Members of Ile Osunfikayo, a temple in Flatbush dedicated to Yoruba practices from West Africa, gave offerings to a river deity on the Hudson.; In the Mapleton neighborhood, a christening takes place at St. Athanasius Roman Catholic Church, which used to be mainly Italian American but today is more diverse. (MB8); Antioch Baptist Church is a well-connected neighborhood hub that is sometimes called the town hall of Bed-Stuy. The church sees itself as a shelter against a world not designed to make life easy for its congregants.; In a backyard tent in East New York, the Haitian Vodou priestess Jocelyn Pierre-Louis, right, invoked spirits in Haitian Creole. Enslaved people from West Africa brought Vodou, a nature-based religion and way of life, to Haiti. And Haitians brought it to Brooklyn. (MB8-MB9); Sierra and Pete Vasquez, center, hosted an evangelical gathering in Washington Heights. They are associated with Liberty Church, which conducts in-person and remote services.; Members of the New York Coven of Witches performing a private Wiccan harvest ritual at the Immigrant bar in the East Village.; Aurelio Santana, left, from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, prayed with Maria Tineo in her apartment in Washington Heights during a weekly visit.; Rabbi Aviva Richman led morning prayers at Hadar, an egalitarian yeshiva, or Jewish learning center, on the Upper West Side that is open to Jews of all denominations. (MB10); At Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in Chelsea, a Torah was unrolled and displayed by congregants for the Simhat Torah holiday, above, while Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum and Cantor Sam Rosen danced, right, in observance of the day marking a new cycle of Torah readings. (MB10-MB11); A youth choir at Church of the Heavenly Rest, which is Episcopal, on the Upper East Side. (MB11); Students during noon prayers at the Albanian Islamic Cultural Center on Staten Island. Enrollment at the mosque’s school, Miraj, has increased greatly since it opened in the late 1990s.; Holy water being sprinkled on congregants during a Saturday service at the Virgin Mary &amp; St. George Coptic Orthodox Church in Tottenville. The Coptic Church, an ancient religion, is based in Egypt.; A Sunday morning service at Christ Assembly Lutheran Church in Stapleton. The congregation is mostly from West Africa, and the pastor is from Liberia.; Shree Ram Mandir, also known as the Staten Island Hindu Temple, in Sunnyside. (MB12); Bharati Kemraj, foreground, at a Janmashtami holiday service in August at Vishnu Mandir, a small Hindu temple in the Soundview neighborhood. Since opening in the 1990s, the temple has never shut its doors, even during the height of the pandemic.; An offering for a deity. Santería is based on Yoruba beliefs and traditions brought by enslaved West Africans to Cuba.; Sister Clara Bravo, who came to New York from an order in Puebla, Mexico, helped an altar server prepare for Sunday Mass at St. Luke Roman Catholic Church in the Mott Haven neighborhood.; During Eid al-Adha this summer, Yankasa Masjid, a mosque in Mount Hope, was so full that people prayed in an alleyway near the women’s entrance. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ESTRIN) (MB13) This article appeared in print on page MB1, MB6, MB7, MB8, MB9, MB10, MB11, MB12, MB13.

**Load-Date:** December 19, 2022

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[***Opposites Attract***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651T-HYG1-JBG3-654D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 20, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 12; FICTION

**Length:** 1294 words

**Byline:** By Hamilton Cain

**Body**

GROUNDSKEEPINGBy Lee Cole

On the first Tuesday evening in November, die-hard political junkies huddle around wide-screen televisions tuned into Fox News, MSNBC or CNN, depending on partisan flavor. Studio maps light up in red and blue, announcing victors in mostly two-party races and charting broader trends of sorting-out: From cities to suburbs to farms, Americans now cluster among our political tribes, folks who share our values on topics from budget deficits to border refugees to Roe v. Wade. If we zoom in, though, these maps are more pixelated: Voters blur together in purple-hued swirls, ZIP code by ZIP code, family by family, fanning tensions that often blaze into open conflict.

Enter 28-year-old Owen Callahan, the pensive narrator of Lee Cole's exacting, beautifully textured debut novel, ''Groundskeeping,'' who returns to his native Kentucky from a forestry stint in Colorado in the fall of 2016, as the country limps down the homestretch of a bitterly contested presidential election.

Raised in a dot of a town in the western part of the state, Owen moves into the basement of his conservative grandfather, Pop, on the outskirts of Louisville, a place Cole describes in fine brushstrokes: ''Platoon of beer cans in the corner, black banana peels on paper plates, stained coffee cups. Pallid moonlight slanting down from the window.'' Owen bobs and weaves through arguments with his middle-aged, medicated uncle, Cort, whose penchant for video games and Make America Great Again signs annoys him. (Owen's divorced parents have each remarried and still live near Paducah.) He's hired as a groundskeeper at prestigious Ashby College, which boasts ''Georgian-style structures of red brick with dormer windows and columns.'' Cole writes: ''There were flower beds all along the sidewalks. Black-eyed Susans. Purple asters. Huge, gnarled oak trees shaded everything. ... But none of the students seemed to notice. Moreover, none of them seemed to notice us -- the groundskeepers taking their lunch.''

If economic class is the third rail of American life, then Cole eases his hand out, gently, to touch it, his realism a meld of Richard Russo and Anne Tyler by way of Sally Rooney. Despite Owen's modest upbringing, he's a striver with scant chill. He's liberal in his politics and passionate about Walt Whitman and Modigliani, stoking a sense of curiosity and discipline not always associated with his demographic. He yearns to be a writer.

As an Ashby employee, Owen is allowed to enroll in a creative writing workshop; he chooses ''Jungle Narratives,'' whose pedantic instructor encourages him. At a party Owen meets the beguiling Alma Hadzic, Ashby's author in residence, younger by two years but with one lauded book already under her belt and a second under contract; she embodies the ''coastal elite'' whose ranks he aspires to join. Their mutual attraction is immediate, although Alma is dating one of Owen's classmates. No matter. Alcohol and cocaine are consumed; noses are broken; conversations are had; the boyfriend is tossed aside.

Once together, the couple fall into routines of domesticity, thrown off only by trips to meet each other's parents. The daughter of Bosniak Muslim refugees, Alma came to the United States as a toddler, first living in a cramped apartment in Queens, then relocating to an affluent Washington, D.C., suburb as her family ascended a ladder of prosperity and assimilation. She's Princeton-educated and urbane, yet haunted by the blood-drenched Balkan genocides, as Owen discovers in her fiction, cannily embedded here.

For his part, Owen is determined to persuade Alma of the humanity beneath his people, xenophobic descendants of English and Scottish settlers who poured through the Cumberland Gap and bogged down in rural poverty, ''sharecropping, scraping by,'' their lives invisible to the Acelarati.

''Groundskeeping'' is, unsurprisingly, a novel of place. Cole's Kentucky is rife with Southern Baptists, sausage biscuits, flea markets, mobile homes, pregnant teenagers, fentanyl overdoses. There's even an ode to that awesome regional institution, Cracker Barrel. ''I explained that Cracker Barrel was cheap, and they were ***working-class*** people without a lot of money who nonetheless wanted the experience of a family outing,'' Owen notes. ''They loved the food and the décor not because they had bad taste, but because it was familiar to them. They'd grown up on actual farms, milking cows and pulling the suckers from actual tobacco. They'd eaten stewed apples and turnip greens and ham hock, and the tools on the walls had been the tools their fathers used, in a time that was not, at least in Kentucky, some distant yesteryear. It was recent and vivid, and the ache of its passing away therefore still present, like a phantom limb.'' Cheever country this is not.

The nonagenarian Pop is the novel's beating heart. Feeble in body but sharp as a tack, he's a World War II veteran, a collector of Civil War antiques and a connoisseur of John Wayne movies, shuffling from recliner to kitchen, where he makes ''crumble-ins,'' a sop of milk and cornbread. (If you know, you know.) While Pop, Cort and Owen form a fraternity on the skids, it's a thrill -- a relief -- to read a writer who approaches his male characters with generosity and intuition, steering blessedly free of caricature.

Cole paints in airy watercolors rather than bright acrylics; his touch is light, restrained, but always authoritative and precise. As with Helen Frankenthaler's canvases, ''Groundskeeping'' achieves poise and uplift. But beneath the languid tale of young campus love, he's playing a shell game: The novel's not only a forensic examination of our toxic politics, it's also a sly sendup of literary culture, a conveyor belt of M.F.A. programs and prizes and teaching gigs. The workshop teacher drones on about ''cataloging'' details, ''a bad habit,'' and yet Cole flagrantly does it in scene after scene, a wink to the reader.

Alma and Owen's romance tacks back and forth -- at times Cole seems almost as bored with it as they are -- until a more primal instinct kicks in. As the artist Grace Hartigan observed of her fellow Abstract Expressionists: ''Men have no objection to women as creators. It's only when they're all scrambling for recognition that the trouble begins.'' So it is with Owen and Alma. The first competitive vibe flickers when he wins a coveted fellowship, which Alma mocks. She compiles her own catalog of Southern colloquialisms -- critters, do what? -- which he perceives as patronizing. And when he shares his work in progress with Alma, an autofiction, she recoils: He hasn't bothered to change the names and situations of his family, or hers. Owen waves it away as an novice's gaffe, but his betrayal whips her into a frenzy. He can't help noticing a burr of resentment in her voice, though -- perhaps he's more talented than his girlfriend? And perhaps she knows that he knows?

Cole teases us, right up to the final sentence, with the notion that ''Groundskeeping'' is itself an autofiction once removed. Like so many Southern writers before him, he can't go home again. If Owen faces a lack of resolution, in life as well as art, he's in excellent company among the millions of us who straddle fault lines between red and blue. Inertia is not an option; he must reconcile ''this fission in my heart ... always these two selves, these repellent points of view.'' A sterling novel that presages a major career, ''Groundskeeping'' puts a fresh spin on the divided self adrift in a divided nation.Hamilton Cain is contributing books editor at Oprah Daily and the author of ''This Boy's Faith: Notes From a Southern Baptist Upbringing.''GROUNDSKEEPINGBy Lee Cole336 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/books/review/groundskeeping-lee-cole.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/books/review/groundskeeping-lee-cole.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Lina Müller FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Bid to Aid Sanders With Black Voters, Before a Mostly White Crowd***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD0-RG91-JBG3-62VB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 9, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 971 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Lerer

**Body**

An event in Michigan was billed as an opportunity for the senator to make his case directly to black voters, who have broken strongly for Joe Biden. It didn't work out that way.

FLINT, Mich. -- Cornel West pleaded with his ''own black people'' to support Senator Bernie Sanders.

An African-American pediatrician praised Mr. Sanders's health care plans, describing how ''black lives matter so much'' to the senator.

And community activists assailed Mr. Sanders's rival, former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., attacking criminal justice and housing policies that they argue devastated communities of color in places like this majority-black city.

Amid this parade of support at a Flint town-hall-style event on Saturday night, Mr. Sanders looked on, largely silent -- at least when it came to wooing the black voters whose strong backing of a rival candidate could once again cost Mr. Sanders the Democratic presidential nomination.

Sanders campaign aides had billed the event as an opportunity for him to make a case directly to black voters for why they should support him over Mr. Biden. But the audience ended up being overwhelmingly white, and Mr. Sanders made so few overtures directly to black voters that the event seemed unlikely to pull large numbers of African-Americans away from Mr. Biden.

Mr. Sanders's relative silence was deliberate, those involved in the event said. The guest speakers -- several of whom were flown into Flint by the campaign -- decided before the event that it would be better to let them discuss the issues affecting their communities than the man running for president to represent them.

Mr. Sanders opted not to deliver the speech that he had spent much of the day crafting, according to aides, who declined to describe the message he had hoped to communicate.

Instead, he was left asking questions of the panelists, in effect turning over his campaign message to others like Mr. West, the fiery celebrity academic, Harvard professor and fixture on the left.

''Dr. West, do you think given the reality of the condition of the African-American community right now that supporting a status quo, same-old, same-old type of politician is going to address these issues?'' Mr. Sanders asked.

Mr. West, who described Mr. Biden as a ''neoliberal centrist,'' responded with his own question, wondering why ''brother Bernie'' wasn't getting more support among ''chocolate'' voters.

''The neoliberalist who all of a sudden now is coming back to life, and the catalyst was my own black people. Oh, I'm so disappointed,'' he said. ''What has happened to our black leadership? Some have just sold out.''

The decision to let the panelists provide the message was an unusual one, particularly for a candidate who has cast his campaign as a multiracial coalition that can mobilize a movement of ***working-class*** Americans.

''He didn't want to speak on behalf of people of color when there were people of color on the panel,'' said Mike Casca, a campaign spokesman. ''Bernie does not have those experiences. He's a white Jewish man.''

The event itself was an acknowledgment that Mr. Sanders is still struggling to improve his standing among black voters four years after he lost his first run for president in part because of his inability to gain their support.

On Super Tuesday last week, Mr. Biden outperformed Mr. Sanders by 40 points or more among black voters in Texas, North Carolina and Virginia. In several states, Mr. Sanders came in third among black voters, behind not only Mr. Biden but also Michael R. Bloomberg.

In Flint, Mr. Sanders drew only a smattering of nonwhite voters to his Saturday night event, advertised as a ''racial and economic justice town hall'' with the candidate.

Five years after Michigan switched Flint's water supply to the contaminated Flint River from Lake Huron, the city is still dealing with the aftereffects of the lead crisis, which exposed nearly 30,000 schoolchildren to a neurotoxin known to have detrimental effects on children's developing brains and nervous systems. Neurological and behavioral problems -- real or feared -- among students are threatening to overwhelm the education system.

Those lingering challenges were not given significant attention during Mr. Sanders's remarks.

Aides say Mr. Sanders is still working to improve his standing with black voters, admitting that winning Michigan -- a state where African-Americans make up a significant portion of the Democratic primary electorate -- will be an uphill climb. Exit polling and survey data indicate that Mr. Sanders is also facing declining support among ***working-class*** white voters.

Some voters said they recognized the challenge Mr. Sanders faces in their state.

''I'm nervous,'' said Kori Chase, 32, a home health aide. ''I really want the people that have supported him vocally to really show up because that's really what it takes.''

During a 30-minute stump speech, Mr. Sanders did not hold back on Mr. Biden, issuing a series of attacks on the former vice president's record on trade, Social Security cuts, abortion rights, same-sex marriage and the war in Iraq.

But when it came to racial issues, Mr. Sanders made only one direct reference, arguing that ''status quo politics'' had ''failed the African-American community.''

His panelists were far less restrained. They delivered a series of searing attacks on Mr. Biden's record on race.

''We fought for the liberation of our people,'' said Jennifer Epps-Addison, the president of the Center for Popular Democracy, a liberal think tank. ''We need to elect a candidate who understands that the crime bill is wrong, who is going to repeal and replace it and Senator Sanders has made that commitment to our community.''

The overwhelmingly white audience burst into applause.

Trip Gabriel contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-michigan.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/08/us/politics/bernie-sanders-michigan.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Cornel West, one of the black activists whom Bernie Sanders let do most of the talking in Flint, Mich. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCAS JACKSON/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Warren Voters Lean Left, but They're Hardly a Lock for Sanders***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCK-5331-DXY4-X1XW-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. 17; POLL WATCH

**Length:** 870 words

**Byline:** By Giovanni Russonello

**Body**

Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are longtime allies on the left. But her pool of voters generally doesn't look like his base.

Welcome to Poll Watch, our weekly look at polling data and survey research on the candidates, voters and issues that will shape the 2020 election.

Throughout the 2020 presidential race, Senators Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders have seemed like reluctant foes.

They met with each other before starting their campaigns. They had each other's backs at the debates, until they didn't. Most important, they agreed on how to confront the issues -- boldly and structurally -- if not always on the exact details.

But Ms. Warren's pool of voters, who are casting for an alternative after she dropped out of the Democratic race on Thursday, generally doesn't look like Mr. Sanders's base. There is reason to believe that former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. could pick up nearly as many of Ms. Warren's former voters as Mr. Sanders does.

''Obviously the more strong liberal policy folks should break more for Sanders than Biden,'' Paul Maslin, a longtime Democratic pollster, said in an interview. ''But I don't know that it's going to be anywhere near unanimous. If Biden is over the hump and is now clearly the accepted candidate as the best to beat Trump, and there's a coalescing of the party around that view, he's going to gain all kinds of support.''

There is certainly significant overlap between the core support of Mr. Sanders and Ms. Warren, the party's two leading liberals. He is particularly well positioned to usurp the kinds of older millennials and Generation X liberals who often favored Ms. Warren.

Indeed, in a Quinnipiac poll conducted early last month, when Mr. Biden was reeling from a weak performance in the Iowa caucuses, Ms. Warren's voters were four times as likely to name Mr. Sanders as their second choice as they were to pick Mr. Biden.

Even still, only a third of her supporters in that poll pointed to Mr. Sanders as a runner-up. That equals out to less than 5 percent of the Democratic electorate. Besides, a lot has happened in the past month; most other candidates have disappeared from the race, and much of the party has united behind Mr. Biden.

Most troublingly for Mr. Sanders, Ms. Warren's support profile has roughly as much overlap with Mr. Biden's as it does with his.

Ms. Warren's base is heavily tilted toward college graduates, women, white people and middle-to-high-earners. It's not as if Mr. Sanders has been unable to win votes in these demographics. For instance, his backers on Super Tuesday were just as likely to be women as to be men.

But there is a ***working-class*** tilt to Mr. Sanders's support that does not play out with Ms. Warren's. He is diminishingly popular as you go up the income scale, whereas the opposite is true of Ms. Warren.

If the average Warren voter is an upper-middle-class white woman, Mr. Sanders is in a tough spot: He has serious vulnerabilities among this group. In Massachusetts -- where Mr. Sanders beat Ms. Warren in her home state by five percentage points -- he won just one-fifth of white women with college degrees, making this his weakest such age-education-gender group. Ultimately he lost the state to Mr. Biden by seven points.

''For most suburban or upper-middle-class white women, Joe Biden is a pretty comfortable place to land,'' Mr. Maslin said.

''There's the Obama connection, there's a sense of stability and experience that's probably pretty helpful, and then to the extent that they're being pragmatic, they probably see him as a potentially stronger candidate against Trump,'' he added, though he noted that polling did not suggest that either Mr. Biden or Mr. Sanders was significantly better positioned for the general election.

The good news for Mr. Sanders is that Ms. Warren's backers are highly likely to identify as liberals -- even more so than his own -- and exit polls suggest that the two candidates' voters tend to agree on the issues.

The bad news for him is that his remaining rival, Mr. Biden, has already shown an ability to win over a solid chunk of liberal voters. In Super Tuesday states with available data, 40 to 60 percent of Biden voters identified as liberals.

But the moderate former vice president isn't an ideal choice for Ms. Warren's voters, either. He has not articulated policy goals nearly as far-reaching or precise as Ms. Warren did. Many of her higher-educated, technocratic-minded voters may struggle to find either candidate convincing.

Ultimately, Ms. Warren's voters are likely to wash out, unless she makes a big endorsement that effectively pushes them one way or the other. And even in that case, it can be hard for candidates to break through with certain demographics that have proved stubbornly averse to them.

The fundamental problems for Mr. Sanders as he looks to stall Mr. Biden's momentum are that he cannot seem to break through with black voters or older voters, in spite of his increasingly targeted appeals to African-Americans and his campaign's focus on his lifelong attempts to preserve Social Security. Ms. Warren's base -- heavily white, and light on voters over 65 -- doesn't have much to offer him on those fronts.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/us/politics/elizabeth-warren-bernie-sanders-voters.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/us/politics/elizabeth-warren-bernie-sanders-voters.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Elizabeth Warren's supporters skew liberal, as do Senator Bernie Sanders's. But there is a ***working-class*** tilt to Mr. Sanders's support that does not play out with Ms. Warren's. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ruth Fremson/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Sanders Is Behind With Black Voters. He Didn’t Fix That in Flint.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCK-4781-JBG3-64TD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2020 Sunday 17:43 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 983 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

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FLINT, Mich. — Cornel West pleaded with his “own black people” to support Senator [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html).

An African-American pediatrician praised Mr. Sanders’s health care plans, describing how “black lives matter so much” to the senator.

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Amid this parade of support at a Flint town-hall-style event on Saturday night, Mr. Sanders looked on, largely silent — at least when it came to wooing the black voters whose strong backing of a rival candidate could once again cost Mr. Sanders the Democratic presidential nomination.

Sanders campaign aides had billed the event as an opportunity for him to make a case directly to black voters for why they should support him over Mr. Biden. But the audience ended up being overwhelmingly white, and Mr. Sanders made so few overtures directly to black voters that the event seemed unlikely to pull large numbers of African-Americans away from Mr. Biden.

Mr. Sanders’s relative silence was deliberate, those involved in the event said. The guest speakers — several of whom were flown into Flint by the campaign — decided before the event that it would be better to let them discuss the issues affecting their communities than the man running for president to represent them.

Mr. Sanders opted not to deliver the speech that he had spent much of the day crafting, according to aides, who declined to describe the message he had hoped to communicate.

Instead, he was left asking questions of the panelists, in effect turning over his campaign message to others like [*Mr. West, the fiery celebrity academic,*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) Harvard professor and fixture on the left.

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Mr. West, who described Mr. Biden as a “neoliberal centrist,” responded with his own question, wondering why “brother Bernie” wasn’t getting more support among “chocolate” voters.

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The decision to let the panelists provide the message was an unusual one, particularly for a candidate who has cast his campaign as [*a multiracial coalition that can mobilize a movement*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html)of ***working-class*** Americans.

“He didn’t want to speak on behalf of people of color when there were people of color on the panel,” said Mike Casca, a campaign spokesman. “Bernie does not have those experiences. He’s a white Jewish man.”

The event itself was [*an acknowledgment that Mr. Sanders is still struggling to improve*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) his standing among black voters four years after he lost his first run for president in part because of his inability to gain their support.

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Those lingering challenges were not given significant attention during Mr. Sanders’s remarks.

Aides say Mr. Sanders is still working to improve his standing with black voters, admitting that winning Michigan — a state where African-Americans make up a significant portion of the Democratic primary electorate — will be an uphill climb. Exit polling and survey data indicate that Mr. Sanders [*is also facing declining support among* ***working-class*** *white voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html).

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But when it came to racial issues, Mr. Sanders made only one direct reference, arguing that “status quo politics” had “failed the African-American community.”

His panelists were far less restrained. They delivered a series of searing attacks on Mr. Biden’s record on race.

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Trip Gabriel contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Cornel West, one of the black activists whom Bernie Sanders let do most of the talking in Flint, Mich. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LUCAS JACKSON/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Push to Landmark the Last-Known ‘Colored’ School in Manhattan; Streetscapes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66JN-4M91-DXY4-X24X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 7, 2022 Friday 14:26 EST

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 2451 words

**Byline:** John Freeman Gill

**Highlight:** The historic building at 128 West 17th Street has been vacant for years, and preservation advocates fear its damaged roof may eventually prompt developers to tear it down.

**Body**

The historic building at 128 West 17th Street has been vacant for years, and preservation advocates fear its damaged roof may eventually prompt developers to tear it down.

Unbeknown to most New Yorkers, the former Colored School No. 4 in Chelsea, the last-known “colored” schoolhouse remaining in Manhattan from the city’s segregated school system of the 19th century, still stands at [*128 West 17th Street*](https://www.google.com/maps/place/128+W+17th+St,+New+York,+NY+10011/@40.7397437,-73.9981578,19z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x89c259bd028e8b97:0xd82ac68c9f71915!8m2!3d40.7397437!4d-73.9970366). Though it has not been a school since 1894, the vacant, three-story yellow brick building is still owned by the city, under the control of the Sanitation Department, which used it as a lunchroom until about seven years ago.

But water has invaded the building and, despite appreciative statements from municipal agencies regarding its historic value, a four-year campaign to gain landmark protection for the former schoolhouse, led by an African American historian, has yielded no tangible results.

The local community board, which voted unanimously last year to support the building’s designation as a landmark, has urged the city to perform a “swift and thorough repair” of the building’s leaky roof.

“It’s urgent for the Sanitation Department to maintain the building and it’s urgent for Landmarks to designate it,” said Kerry Keenan, a co-chair of the Chelsea Land Use Committee of Community Board 4, in an interview. “When a building is not designated a landmark and it sits vacant and unchecked for a long time, it’s cause for a developer to come along and argue to tear it down because it’s unsafe.”

Vincent Gragnani, a Sanitation Department spokesman, said in an email that while the agency supported the building’s “landmarking and good stewardship going forward,” it lacked the money to rehabilitate it, “and we have a long list of dire facilities needs that we need to prioritize, with the safety of our work force at the forefront.”

He added that the department was working with other city agencies “to advance the landmarking process and identify a long-term strategy for the structure.”

Built around 1853 from designs for a “model primary” schoolhouse adopted by the Public School Society, the modest West 17th Street building was used by Black children and teachers from 1860 to 1894. It also housed an evening school for adult Black students.

During the Draft Riots of July 1863, the schoolhouse came under assault by a mob of ***working-class*** white people incensed by the first federal draft, which conscripted citizens into the Union Army to fight in the Civil War while allowing wealthier people to buy their way out of military service. Just the night before, a white mob had burned the Colored Orphan Asylum on Fifth Avenue to the ground.

The West 17th Street school’s charismatic new leader, Sarah J.S. Tompkins, rose to the challenge of protecting the children under her charge. According to The New-York Tribune, the mob tried to break into the school to hunt down two Black women it had chased inside. Teachers barricaded the doors, however, and the rioters, after a few failed attempts to gain entry, gave up and attacked the occupants of a nearby shanty instead.

Later that day, Tompkins escorted many of the schoolchildren safely to their homes through the dangerous streets before heading to her own home in Brooklyn. Two months later, [*The New York Times reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/1863/09/20/archives/general-city-news.html), she and her students held an observance “in gratitude for their escape from death during the late riots.”

During its 34 years as a place of learning for Black children and adults, the West 17th Street school served as an institutional pillar for the Black community at the southern fringe of a gritty neighborhood then known as the Tenderloin, said Eric K. Washington, an independent historian.

Mr. Washington first learned of the school while researching “Boss of the Grips,” his biography of one of the school’s graduates, James H. Williams, the first Black chief of the Red Cap porters of Grand Central Terminal.

Concerned that developers might have their eye on an empty building in such a prime Chelsea location, Mr. Washington submitted to the city Landmarks Preservation Commission in 2018 a request for evaluation of the former Colored School No. 4 as a potential landmark.

In January 2021, the commission started an “equity framework,” which its chairwoman, Sarah Carroll, said would “ensure diversity and inclusion in designations, to make sure that we are telling the stories of all New Yorkers.” Mayor Eric Adams recently reappointed Ms. Carroll to a new seven-year term.

That spring, having received little substantive response from the commission about the school, Mr. Washington provided the agency with additional research.

“There are woefully too few places you can cite that represent the African American experience in New York, which goes back to its history in New Amsterdam,” he said in an interview. “It’s as old as New York, and there are very few surviving buildings that represent that experience, and those that do exist we lose so rapidly to development.”

Zodet Negrón, a Landmarks Preservation Commission spokeswoman, said that the agency had prioritized further research of Colored School No. 4 as part of its equity framework.

The commission has determined that the building “merits consideration and is currently studying its potential for designation” as a landmark, Ms. Negrón said in a statement. “As the only known surviving former ‘colored school’ in Manhattan, it is a reminder of the history of racist segregation policies in New York City and has important associations with the Black community in 19th-century New York.” The former Colored School No. 3, built in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn in 1881, when Brooklyn was still an independent city, was declared a landmark by the city in 1998.

To be eligible for landmark status, a building must not only possess historical, cultural or architectural significance but also retain enough physical integrity from its period of importance that its historic character associated with that era remains legible.

In this case, commission research has found that although the schoolhouse’s original dark brick facade was reclad sometime in the early 20th century, the structure retains its 19th-century form and four-bay facade configuration, including its characteristic separate entrances for girls and boys. It also retains its multipaned double-hung windows on the upper floors. Several of those window panes are broken, while the doors and one doorway are marred with graffiti. Sheets of peeling paint hang from the ceiling inside.

Mr. Washington’s landmarking campaign has garnered support from Erik Bottcher, the local city councilman, as well as preservation groups and local co-op boards and block associations. More than 1,500 people have signed [*a petition in favor of landmark designation*](https://www.change.org/p/designate-chelsea-s-former-colored-school-no-4-as-a-new-york-city-landmark).

In a May Zoom meeting facilitated by Mr. Bottcher, Gregory Anderson, a deputy commissioner of the Sanitation Department, told Mr. Washington and community stakeholders that a February inspection found the building to be remarkably intact, according to several of the meeting’s participants. A department spokesman said in an email that the building has “water damage in the interior” caused by “water infiltration through the roof” but “has no major structural issues.”

But preservation advocates remain concerned that a prolonged roof leak could damage the building’s structural integrity.

Colored School No. 4 was one of a group of schoolhouses that developed from the African Free School, which was established in 1787 by the abolitionist Manumission Society to educate Black children; the society counted prominent figures like Alexander Hamilton among its members. After being conveyed in 1834 to the Public School Society, a group funded with public and private money, the schools were transferred in 1853 to the city Board of Education.

Built around that time, the West 17th Street schoolhouse hosted multiple primary schools for white children until 1860, when it became home to Colored School No. 7; its designation was changed to No. 4 in 1866.

The pupils of “colored” schools were primarily children of laborers, according to a history published in 1869 by what was then known as the U.S. Office of Education. “Many of them are put out to service at an early age,” the agency reported, “and only get a chance to go to school when they are out of a situation.”

The West 17th Street school’s primary animating spirit was Sarah J.S. Tompkins, one of the city’s earliest Black public school principals and the same woman who escorted schoolchildren to safety during the Draft Riots. She became known as Sarah J.S. Garnet after marrying the influential abolitionist Henry Highland Garnet in 1875.

A prominent suffragist who began teaching at 14, Sarah Garnet was an early organizer of an equal suffrage league of Black women in Brooklyn and a co-founder of the National Women’s Afro-American Union of New York. She also traveled to Albany, N.Y., to lobby New York State legislators for equal pay for women.

“She’s beyond dynamic, she’s charismatic,” said Susan Goodier, an assistant professor of history at the State University of New York at Oneonta, who wrote an essay about Garnet for an upcoming anthology. “She draws people to her like W.E.B. Du Bois,” Dr. Goodier said, referring to the renowned Black civil rights activist, “and Charles Ray, one of the editors of The Colored American. All these prominent leaders come to talk to her kids.”

Just a few blocks away from the former Colored School No. 4, another school at 320 West 21st Street was renamed the Sarah J. Garnet Elementary School this year. The change was driven by fourth and fifth graders who had become angry upon learning about William T. Harris, for whom their school had been named. Harris was a former U.S. commissioner of education who promoted the forced education and assimilation of Native American children, who he said belonged to a “lower race.”

The staff of Colored School No. 4 included William Appo, an influential Black musician and composer, and Joan Imogen Howard, the only Black manager at the 1893 World’s Fair in Chicago, who was sent to the 1900 Paris Exposition by The Evening Telegram after winning the newspaper’s great teachers competition.

Graduates included the violinist and composer Walter F. Craig, the leader of a pre-eminent society orchestra that performed for both Black and white audiences.

“These were not just teachers, not just students, these were important players in the social infrastructure of New York City, and they represent this really broad swath of interests,” Mr. Washington said. “They were abolitionists, they were ministers, they were orators, they were musicians, they were military people.”

The school’s curriculum for boys most likely included reading, writing, math, science and some arts, as well as rudimentary practical skills that “would help children get service-oriented jobs that were in the interest of the dominant culture,” said Cynthia Copeland, a public historian who has done extensive research on Seneca Village and other Black communities of 19th-century New York. Girls’ instruction probably included domestic subjects like sewing, cooking and etiquette, as well as lessons on how to read, write and speak.

“The most important thing to take away was how to comport yourself, because perceptions of the Black community were very important,” Ms. Copeland said, adding that it was “likely that Black history was introduced in those spaces but probably not called Black history.”

In 1873, New York State passed a law prohibiting school officials from denying children access to any public school “on account of race or color.” But the law was not uniformly enforced, and the Black community itself held varying views about whether its children should share schools with white students.

By the early 1880s, according to Mr. Washington, the State Legislature appeared ready to let the city Board of Education absorb its few “colored” schools into its overall system. This proposal prompted Garnet to join a mass protest calling on the board to either retain Black teachers as equals with white ones or leave the Black schools alone.

Though the Board of Education’s bylaws were amended to abolish the “colored” schools by 1884, Gov. Grover Cleveland signed a superseding state law that year that permitted just two of the Black schools to retain their Black teachers and continue to function largely as de facto Black schools, even as their doors were opened to students of all races. One was Colored School No. 4, which was renamed Grammar School No. 81.

By 1888, enrollment had dipped notably at the West 17th Street school while at least a salting of white students had joined the Black ones.

“This was formerly known as an exclusively colored school and our pupils came from all parts of the city,” Garnet told The New York Herald. “But now they have left in order to attend schools nearer their homes.”

The school closed in 1894.

Two years later, the city rented the building as a clubhouse for Civil War veterans of the 73rd Regiment. By the 1930s, the former schoolhouse had been turned over to the Sanitation Department.

“Because it’s owned by the city, it should be easier to convert it to public use rather than have it sold to the highest bidder for upscale development,” said Thomas Lunke, an urban planner and 30-year Chelsea resident who has helped Mr. Washington understand the intricacies of city government.

Mr. Washington said that he would like to see the old schoolhouse become some kind of lyceum, with public programming that echoes its past as an educational institution full of life and learning, perhaps with performances and book signings.

“When you walk by the building, it’s not going to stop you in your tracks because of its ornateness,” Mr. Washington said. “The ornateness comes from the souls that inhabited the place.”

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PHOTOS: Above, the historian Eric K. Washington in front of the former Colored School No. 4, which is now controlled by the Sanitation Department. Top right, a photo of the building from around 1940. Bottom right, a recent view. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLARK HODGIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (RE1); Above, a photograph of the former schoolhouse taken in 1908. Above right, a recent photograph. Near right, an undated photo of Sarah J. S. Garnet, the principal of Colored School No. 4. Far right, Public School 11 in Chelsea was renamed the Sarah J. Garnet School this year. Below right, drawings of the building from the 1800s. Left, James H. Williams, one of many notable graduates of the West 17th Street school, in a photo from around 1906. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CLARK HODGIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; NYPL) (RE8)

**Load-Date:** October 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Why Warren Supporters Aren’t a Lock to Get Behind Sanders; Poll Watch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC5-MF61-JBG3-61NM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2020 Friday 01:16 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 916 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are longtime allies on the left. But her pool of voters generally doesn’t look like his base.

**Body**

Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are longtime allies on the left. But her pool of voters generally doesn’t look like his base.

Welcome to [*Poll Watch*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch), our weekly look at   [*polling data*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) and survey research on the candidates, voters and issues that will shape the   [*2020 election*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch).

Throughout the 2020 presidential race, Senators Elizabeth Warren and [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) have seemed like reluctant foes.

They [*met with each other*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) before starting their campaigns. They   [*had each other’s backs*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) at the debates,   [*until they didn’t*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch). Most important, they agreed on how to confront the issues — boldly and structurally — if not always on the exact details.

But Ms. Warren’s pool of voters, who are casting for an alternative after [*she dropped out of the Democratic race*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) on Thursday, generally doesn’t look like Mr. Sanders’s base. There is   [*reason to believe*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) that former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. could pick up nearly as many of Ms. Warren’s former voters as Mr. Sanders does.

“Obviously the more strong liberal policy folks should break more for Sanders than Biden,” Paul Maslin, a longtime Democratic pollster, said in an interview. “But I don’t know that it’s going to be anywhere near unanimous. If Biden is over the hump and is now clearly the accepted candidate as the best to beat Trump, and there’s a coalescing of the party around that view, he’s going to gain all kinds of support.”

There is certainly significant overlap between the core support of Mr. Sanders and Ms. Warren, the party’s two leading liberals. He is particularly well positioned to usurp the kinds of older millennials and Generation X liberals who often favored Ms. Warren.

Indeed, in a [*Quinnipiac poll conducted early last month*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch), when Mr. Biden was reeling from a weak performance in the Iowa caucuses, Ms. Warren’s voters were four times as likely to name Mr. Sanders as their second choice as they were to pick Mr. Biden.

Even still, only a third of her supporters in that poll pointed to Mr. Sanders as a runner-up. That equals out to less than 5 percent of the Democratic electorate. Besides, a lot has happened in the past month; most other candidates have disappeared from the race, and much of the party has united behind Mr. Biden.

Most troublingly for Mr. Sanders, Ms. Warren’s support profile has roughly as much overlap with Mr. Biden’s as it does with his.

Ms. Warren’s base is heavily tilted toward college graduates, women, white people and middle-to-high-earners. It’s not as if Mr. Sanders has been unable to win votes in these demographics. For instance, his backers on Super Tuesday were just as likely to be women as to be men.

But there is a ***working-class*** tilt to Mr. Sanders’s support that does not play out with Ms. Warren’s. He is diminishingly popular as you go up the income scale, whereas the opposite is true of Ms. Warren.

If the average Warren voter is an upper-middle-class white woman, Mr. Sanders is in a tough spot: He has serious vulnerabilities among this group. In Massachusetts — where Mr. Sanders beat Ms. Warren in her home state by five percentage points — he won just one-fifth of white women with college degrees, making this his weakest such age-education-gender group. Ultimately he lost the state to Mr. Biden by seven points.

“For most suburban or upper-middle-class white women, Joe Biden is a pretty comfortable place to land,” Mr. Maslin said.

“There’s the Obama connection, there’s a sense of stability and experience that’s probably pretty helpful, and then to the extent that they’re being pragmatic, they probably see him as a potentially stronger candidate against Trump,” he added, though he noted that polling did not suggest that either Mr. Biden or Mr. Sanders was significantly better positioned for the general election.

The good news for Mr. Sanders is that Ms. Warren’s backers are highly likely to identify as liberals — even more so than his own — and [*exit polls suggest*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) that the two candidates’ voters tend to agree on the issues.

The bad news for him is that his remaining rival, Mr. Biden, has already shown an ability to win over a solid chunk of liberal voters. In Super Tuesday states with available data, 40 to 60 percent of Biden voters identified as liberals.

But the moderate former vice president isn’t an ideal choice for Ms. Warren’s voters, either. He has not articulated policy goals nearly as far-reaching or precise as Ms. Warren did. Many of her higher-educated, technocratic-minded voters may struggle to find either candidate convincing.

Ultimately, Ms. Warren’s voters are likely to wash out, unless she makes [*a big endorsement*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) that effectively pushes them one way or the other. And even in that case, it can be hard for candidates to break through with certain demographics that have proved stubbornly averse to them.

The fundamental problems for Mr. Sanders as he looks to stall Mr. Biden’s momentum are that he cannot seem to break through with black voters or older voters, in spite of his [*increasingly targeted appeals to African-Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) and his campaign’s   [*focus on his lifelong attempts to preserve Social Security*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch). Ms. Warren’s base — heavily white, and light on voters over 65 — doesn’t have much to offer him on those fronts.

PHOTO: Senator Elizabeth Warren’s supporters skew liberal, as do Senator Bernie Sanders’s. But there is a ***working-class*** tilt to Mr. Sanders’s support that does not play out with Ms. Warren’s. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ruth Fremson/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2020

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[***The Words Democrats Use Are Not the Real Problem; Jamelle Bouie***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647V-45R1-JBG3-60FR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 7, 2021 Tuesday 22:42 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1141 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** The whys of American politics have much more to do with the ever-changing currents of race, religion and economic production than they do with political messaging.

**Body**

After Donald Trump and the Republican Party made gains among Black and Hispanic voters in the 2020 presidential election, a chorus of voices emerged to blame the outcome on Democratic messaging.

Democrats, [*went the argument*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2020/11/16/bill_maher_democrats_need_to_get_over_hypersensitive_social_justice_warrior_woke_bs_voters_think_theyre_nuts.html), were too “woke,” too preoccupied with “identity politics,” [*too invested*](https://www.axios.com/jim-clyburn-defund-police-house-democrats-b43b1ec8-65d9-461b-a08c-df48f4276207.html) in slogans like “defund the police” and too eager to embrace the language of the activist left. Terms like “BIPOC” (an acronym for Black, Indigenous and People of Color) and especially “Latinx” alienated the ***working-class*** Black and Hispanic voters who shifted to Trump in key states like Florida and North Carolina.

It makes sense that this is where the conversation turned. People who work with words — journalists, commentators and political professionals — are naturally interested in the impact of messaging and language on voters.

At the same time, it is important to remember that language does not actually structure politics. Yes, a political message can persuade voters or, on the other end, help them rationalize their choices. And yes, a political message can be effective or ineffective. But we should not mistake this for a causal relationship.

The forces that drive politics are material and ideological, and our focus — when trying to understand and explain shifts in the electorate — should be on the social and economic transformations that shape life for most Americans.

With that in mind, let’s return to the debate over the Democratic Party’s declining fortunes with Hispanic voters. (In all of this, it is important to remember that even with the significant shift to Trump, who improved on his 2016 total in 2020 by 10 percentage points, [*according to Pew*](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/06/30/behind-bidens-2020-victory/), Biden still won 59 percent of the Hispanic voters who cast ballots.)

Does a term like “Latinx” alienate some portion of the Hispanic voting public? [*A recent survey says yes*](https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000017d-81be-dee4-a5ff-efbe74ec0000). According to a new national poll of Hispanic voters, only 2 percent chose the term to describe their ethnic background, and 40 percent said it offends them either “a lot” (20 percent), “somewhat” (11 percent) or “a little” (9 percent). To the extent that Democratic politicians and affiliated voices used the term — demonstrating their distance from the communities in question — that may have left a bad taste in the mouths of some Hispanic voters. But it does not follow from there that use of the term explains anything about electoral trends among Hispanics. For those, we have to look at the material and ideological shifts I mentioned earlier.

It would be too much for a single column to give a full inventory of those changes. But I can point to a few. First, there is the economy. In areas like the Rio Grande Valley of Texas — where Republicans made major inroads with Mexican American voters in 2020 — rising wages for workers in the region’s oil and gas industry helped shift some voters to the right. Nationally, [*there’s evidence*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/10/trump-latinos-biden-2020/616901/) that some Hispanic voters credited Trump with wage growth and rewarded him with additional support. In general, upward mobility and a greater sense of integration into the mainstream of American society have made a significant number of Hispanic voters more open to Republican appeals.

Playing a similar role is evangelical religion. As my news-side colleague Jennifer Medina [*noted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/11/us/politics/hispanic-evangelical-trump.html) in an article last year, “Hispanic evangelicals are one of the fastest growing religious groups in the country.” Churches remain important sites for political socialization, and evangelicalism is, at this juncture, a conservative force in American culture and politics. It makes sense, then, that Hispanic evangelicals are also much more likely than their Catholic counterparts to vote Republican.

[*According to a survey by the Public Religion Research Institute*](https://www.prri.org/spotlight/religion-divides-hispanic-opinion-in-the-u-s/), “Hispanic Protestants” were more likely than all other Hispanics to approve of Trump’s performance as president, his handling of the economy, his handling of “racial justice protests” and his handling of the pandemic. Hispanic Protestants were also much more likely to say that “Christians face a lot of discrimination.”

There is also the longstanding effort by Republicans to mobilize Hispanic conservatives for the Republican Party. “For the past half century,” the historian Geraldo Cadava writes in “[*The Hispanic Republican: The Shaping of an American Political Identity, from Nixon to Trump*](https://shc.stanford.edu/news/stories/hispanic-republican),” “Hispanic Republicans and the Republican Party have been deliberate and methodical in their mutual, sometimes hesitant, embrace.” Beliefs about relations with Latin America, about “the United States as the protector of freedom in the world” and about “market-driven capitalism as the best path to upward mobility” have helped Republicans build a durable bulwark among Hispanic voters, one that the Trump campaign built on with [*focused and sustained outreach*](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/trump-s-gains-among-latino-voters-shouldn-t-come-surprise-n1246463).

Entangled in these social and economic transformations is a longstanding and potent American ideology that slots some people as “makers” and others as “takers,” to use Mitt Romney’s off-the-cuff language to donors during his presidential campaign in 2012. Although traditionally associated with whiteness and masculinity, this “producerism” holds sway and currency across the electorate. That’s part of why candidates in both parties scramble to associate themselves with blue-collar workers and why some Democratic proponents of the social safety net insist that their policies provide a “hand up, not a handout.”

I think that a part of Donald Trump’s appeal, especially for men, was the degree to which he embodied the producerist ideal. His image, at least, was of the commanding provider, who generated wealth and prosperity for himself and others. Put another way, the prevalence of producerist ideology in American society helped frame Trump — previously the star of “The Apprentice” — as a political figure, making him legible to millions of Americans. Hispanic voters were as much a part of that dynamic as any other group.

The point here is not to write an exhaustive explanation of what happened among Hispanic voters in the 2020 presidential election. The point is that our constant battles over language are more distracting than not. The whys of American politics have much more to do with the ever-changing currents of race, religion and economic production than they do with political messaging. And no message, no matter how strong on the surface, will land if it isn’t attentive to those forces and the other forces that structure the lives of ordinary people.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Marco Bello/Agence France-Presse — Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden Has Had a Flimsy Political Organization. It Hasn't Hurt Him.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCK-5331-DXY4-X1WT-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. 14

**Length:** 1496 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck and Thomas Kaplan

**Body**

The less quantifiable elements of Mr. Biden's campaign -- including his association with Barack Obama, his empathy and his momentum -- have outweighed his lack of organizational heft.

Joseph R. Biden Jr.'s campaign organization in key Super Tuesday states was so flimsy that it shocked and alarmed Democratic Party leaders. Mr. Biden had little cash for advertising on the airwaves. His message just days before the big vote was sometimes unfocused and meandering.

But when 14 states voted on Tuesday, none of that mattered: Mr. Biden swept to victory in 10 of them, reflecting a quickly coalescing moderate wing of the Democratic Party and a desperation among voters to start taking the fight to President Trump.

''There's no analogous situation that I can think of in presidential politics where a candidate who was really on the brink of extinction came back and, over four days, took command of a race without benefit of media or organization,'' said David Axelrod, who served as chief strategist for President Barack Obama. ''It's an unparalleled situation.''

Mr. Biden was greatly aided by the late endorsements of two former rivals, Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., who exited the race at the beginning of the week. Mr. Biden's overwhelming victory in South Carolina last Saturday, powered by African-American voters, injected a stunning dose of momentum into the campaign after losses in the first three nominating contests.

But Tuesday's results also showed that in a matchup that was largely against Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, the less quantifiable elements of Mr. Biden's campaign -- his association with Mr. Obama, his empathy and his more moderate approach to governing -- outweighed his lack of organizational heft in many places.

Those operational challenges have not evaporated. Representative Emanuel Cleaver II of Missouri, a Biden supporter, said the campaign had ''virtually no operation'' in his state, which votes on Tuesday.

Yet as the presidential contest moves into a battle for large, delegate-rich states like Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Florida, Mr. Biden is racing to cement his advantage with the sprawling coalition that propelled him in the past week -- this time with the momentum, money and avalanche of endorsements that had eluded him throughout the race, even as his team scrambles to scale up.

Headed into the next round of contests on Tuesday, when six states including Michigan and Missouri will vote, Mr. Biden is again seeking to run up the score in heavily African-American congressional districts, build on his newfound strength with moderate suburbanites and fight Mr. Sanders for white ***working-class*** voters. He is quickly rerouting some staff to key states, uncorking new ad spending and leaning into sharper criticisms of Mr. Sanders, now his chief rival for the nomination.

Mr. Biden's financial fortunes are rapidly changing: Since last Saturday, the day of his resounding victory in South Carolina, his campaign has raised more than $22 million in online donations -- more than double its total fund-raising in the entire month of January. A fund-raiser he attended in Los Angeles on Wednesday was moved outdoors to accommodate the number of people who wanted to come (the guest list included the actor Leonardo DiCaprio and his mother).

Mr. Biden's surrogates have sprung into action, seeking to help him acquire additional support in upcoming key states through methods both traditional -- Ms. Klobuchar deployed to Michigan for Mr. Biden -- and creative: The former U.S. ambassador to Ireland was listed as hosting an organizing event recently for Mr. Biden in the small city of Bolivar, Mo.

According to his campaign, Mr. Biden has more than 70 endorsements in Missouri, more than 50 in Florida and around 20 in Michigan. Among his newest endorsers in Michigan is Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who was named a national co-chair of his campaign.

Former Senator Bill Nelson of Florida, a Biden supporter, said the campaign had focused resources on South Carolina out of necessity. But with an eye on the March 17 contest in his own state, Mr. Nelson said, ''Now I think you will see a flood of people that will be coming in and augmenting the existing staff in Florida.''

''People like a winner,'' added Mr. Nelson, who has been pounding the phones, seeking to get more state legislators on board.

Still, there is limited time to build out the kind of on-the-ground infrastructure that can often make a difference in close races.

In Michigan, Mayor Mike Duggan of Detroit, another Biden supporter, said the Biden campaign was relying on volunteers, and had long made clear that it did not intend to establish a large presence of paid staff in the state.

''They flat-out said we're not putting field resources in Michigan,'' he said, noting that he agreed with their approach. ''I told them we'd do the organizing with the volunteers here and we'd be ready to go on March 10, and I think we will be.''

Bill Neidhardt, a Sanders aide in Michigan, said that campaign had 25 paid staff members in the state.

''We're down to two campaigns: one that has a grass-roots organizing infrastructure that is deployed in multiple states, including here in Michigan,'' he said. ''Then you have Joe Biden's campaign, which they seem to be figuring out.''

Mississippi, Washington, Idaho and North Dakota are also holding nominating contests on Tuesday. In contrast to 2016, Washington and Idaho Democrats have now embraced primaries -- not caucuses, which tend to draw only the most committed activists -- a move that some Biden allies hope will allow him to cut into Mr. Sanders's potential advantages in those states, both of which he won handily in the previous presidential race.

On Thursday, Mr. Sanders canceled a rally in Mississippi, a state with a heavily African-American Democratic electorate, redeploying instead to delegate-heavy Michigan, where he and Mr. Biden look poised for a fierce fight over the blue-collar workers that helped Mr. Sanders narrowly win the state in his 2016 presidential bid.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders have criticized each other during the primary race -- over Mr. Biden's vote to authorize the war in Iraq, for example, or Mr. Sanders's record on gun control -- but they now both appear willing to wage their most pointed fights to date. Mr. Sanders has released ads jabbing Mr. Biden over his position on trade and his past support at times for Social Security freezes -- reviving a fight the two men had in Iowa that Mr. Sanders's allies believe played to his advantage.

Mr. Sanders also released an ad highlighting his ties to Mr. Obama, a move that drew incredulity from some of Mr. Biden's supporters who note not only Mr. Biden's service as vice president under Mr. Obama, but also that Mr. Sanders reportedly weighed a primary challenge to Mr. Obama in the 2012 election.

''I'm sorry, what?'' Senator Chris Coons, Democrat of Delaware and a strong Biden supporter, said when asked about the ad. ''Senator Sanders seriously considered primarying Barack Obama in 2012 and routinely criticized him and his proposals. So if this is a race between former Vice President Biden and Senator Sanders as to who has the experience and the vision that moves forward the Obama-Biden agenda, it's undeniably Joe Biden.'' Mr. Sanders has denied that he considered challenging Mr. Obama.

Mr. Sanders won a surprise victory in Michigan in 2016 when competing against Hillary Clinton, whom he criticized over her support for trade deals like the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA. That is an issue that plays to Mr. Sanders's strengths with white ***working-class*** voters, a constituency over which he and Mr. Biden battled intensely in Iowa, where Mr. Biden came in fourth.

Mr. Biden voted for NAFTA as a senator, giving Mr. Sanders ammunition to raise the issue of trade in this year's primary as well.

Mr. Neidhardt promised a ''precise, specific'' conversation around the economy.

Mr. Biden has been endorsed by the Michigan Democratic Party Black Caucus, and party leaders in the state say he also has a growing opportunity with moderates who had gravitated to other candidates like former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York, Ms. Klobuchar and Mr. Buttigieg. They also note his work on the auto industry bailout as part of the Obama administration, and his own blue-collar background, which helps him connect with ***working-class*** voters.

Mr. Duggan, the Detroit mayor, suggested that affection for Mr. Biden would make up for the campaign's lack of staff in his state.

''Their strategy was Nevada, South Carolina and Super Tuesday, but they got a lot of deeply loyal individuals like me, and we'll see how the campaign performs in the next week,'' he said. ''But I feel confident that what you had here were people who were with Biden because they love Biden. And that's been paying off around the country.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/us/politics/joe-biden-democratic-primary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/06/us/politics/joe-biden-democratic-primary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. won 10 states on Super Tuesday even though he had campaigned in only half of them. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH HANER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2020

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[***Manchin and Sinema Should Just Say No; Bret Stephens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PY-CSK1-JBG3-64T6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 28, 2021 Tuesday 13:45 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 880 words

**Byline:** Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** Don’t let the Democrats spend themselves into oblivion.

**Body**

Dear Senators Manchin and Sinema,

Whether the occasion is social or political, the hero of the party is the person who’ll grab the keys before the drunks can get behind their wheels.

This week, it falls to the two of you to be that person. The progressives in your party think you’re all that stands in the way of their expensive utopia, and they’re willing to hold a popular infrastructure bill as hostage in order to get their wish. The leaders in your party expect you to go along, at least partway, with a $4.5 trillion spending bonanza — $1 trillion for infrastructure, an additional $3.5 trillion for new entitlements — because that’s what some members of their caucus demand. If you don’t, much of the media will cast you as the villains who kneecapped an already faltering Biden presidency.

And they are doing this in the week when the only thing that ought to matter to Congress is raising the debt ceiling to avert default.

This is dumb. The likeliest way for President Biden to fail — and for Democrats to lose their congressional majorities next year and for Donald Trump to return to the White House next term — is for the spending bills to pass mostly as they are. A Democratic Party that abandons its center (where many congressional seats are vulnerable) for the sake of its left (where the seats are usually safe) is heading straight for the minority come November 2022.

Let them call you names now so that they can thank you for your sobriety later.

The ***working class*** faces no greater thief than inflation. The rich can switch among asset classes, find different tax shelters, rely on financial experts, ride it out. The less fortunate — your constituency and much of the Democratic base — depend on regular paychecks to pay the rent. And [*rents are now skyrocketing*](https://www.cbsnews.com/news/us-apartment-rent-hike-pre-pandemic-price-levels/).

In June, the inflation forecast [*was 3.4 percent*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/us-policy/2021/06/16/fed-powell-inflation-unemployment-june-meeting/) for the year. The forecast [*has since risen to 4.2 percent*](https://www.npr.org/2021/09/22/1039317128/federal-reserve-inflation-economy-taper-interest-rates) — more than double the Federal Reserve’s target rate of 2 percent. The Fed hopes this will taper once the pandemic ends and supply disruptions, supposedly the cause of inflation, cease.

But what if it isn’t just supply disruptions that are causing prices to rise but rather a case of too much money chasing too few goods? And what if the pandemic continues to defy expectations and carries over until next year? Congress has already appropriated close to $6 trillion for Covid relief. A continuing pandemic would most likely require further trillions in spending. How does that square, fiscally, with the $4.5 trillion extravaganza?

This is what ought to keep Democratic leaders awake at night, along with [*the record spike in homicides*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/us/fbi-murders-2020-cities.html), an [*incoherent and chaotic policy on the southern border*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/14/world/americas/mexico-border-biden.html) and the possibility that a [*ticking real-estate debt bomb in China*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/business/china-evergrande-crisis.html) could be the world’s next Lehman Brothers collapse.

Instead, they’re pushing for the biggest expansion of the welfare state since the 1960s, to be financed with the biggest tax increase in decades and to be passed with a three-vote edge in the House and a tiebreaker vote in the Senate on a 100 percent partisan basis. This is not what swing voters had in mind when they elected Biden on his pledge to be a unifier, a compromiser and a moderate.

And it shows: Biden began with a 61 percent approval rating among independents, [*according to Gallup*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/354872/biden-approval-rating-hits-new-low-harris.aspx?utm_campaign=wp_the_daily_202&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_source=newsletter&amp;wpisrc=nl_daily202). Eight months later, it’s at 37 percent. This is another stark portent of a midterm blowout.

Would it help the cause if Democrats came up with a lower topline? Nope: It would be a classic case of falling between two stools, placating neither friends nor critics. Is it honest to claim the bill adds nothing to the national debt? “Biden’s own budget officials earlier this year estimated that his agenda would increase the national debt by nearly $1.4 trillion over the decade,” The Associated Press [*reports*](https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-congress-budget-08d7ca3ffc7f438148570b04bc61ded0). Does it help that Biden is now claiming that his spending plan “[*costs zero dollars*](https://twitter.com/POTUS/status/1441924106765602819?s=20)”? Only if you enjoy having your intelligence insulted.

Which neither of you do.

There’s a way out of this standoff. Trade a clean vote in the House on infrastructure for Senate Republican support for a debt-ceiling increase, gained by putting the $3.5 trillion reconciliation bill on ice. Or simply hold a clean House vote on infrastructure and increase the debt ceiling unilaterally through reconciliation. Then disaggregate the spending bill into separate items of legislation that could be voted on à la carte, according to their merits and political appeal. Let the American people know what’s in this huge legislative burrito. Maybe they’ll find some of it appetizing.

For Biden, it’s a way of realigning himself with the center of the country with a policy win on infrastructure and strengthening moderates of the party with a political win over the left. For the two of you, it’s a chance to be both statesmanlike and politically shrewd.

Sometimes, the heroes of the story are those who just say no. Here’s your chance.

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PHOTO:   (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2021

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[***I Wouldn’t Bet on the Kind of Democracy Big Business Is Selling Us; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64NS-GG11-DXY4-X1N4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 1, 2022 Tuesday 16:52 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1299 words

**Byline:** Kim Phillips-Fein

**Highlight:** “Stakeholder capitalism” does not offer a real alternative to broad political mobilizations that would benefit most Americans.

**Body**

When Larry Fink, the chief executive of the asset management company BlackRock, [*wrote*](https://www.blackrock.com/corporate/investor-relations/larry-fink-ceo-letter) in his 2022 annual letter to corporate America that prioritizing environmental sustainability, racial justice and other social goals is not “woke” and “not about politics,” he articulated anew a longstanding hope that business can be a driver for social change.

Mr. Fink’s hymn to stakeholder capitalism — the idea that companies should engage the interests of workers, the environment and local communities alongside shareholders — puts forward a vision in which there is no necessary tension between private profit and collective progress.

In recent years, with traditional engines of progress so often in a state of dysfunction and gridlock, this ideal has appealed to some liberals. After all, even with unified party control in Washington, Democratic senators like Joseph Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona have been able to stymie legislation that would protect voting rights and take tentative steps toward addressing climate change. And despite the increasingly favorable perceptions of unions, only [*about 6 percent of private sector workers*](https://lbo-news.com/2022/01/23/union-membership-resumes-its-fall/) are members today — the lowest proportion in [*more than 100 years*](http://publicpurpose.com/lm-unn2003.htm). Against such a backdrop, it’s tempting to see hedge funds as a better bet.

But, however seductive it may be, stakeholder capitalism does not offer a real alternative. The ideal of an easy symbiosis between public and private sectors would undermine the kinds of political mobilizations, however difficult to organize and enact, that are needed for reform that benefits most Americans.

Historically, some private companies have occasionally supported goals like health and safety legislation to protect workers or the expansion of the welfare state through unemployment insurance and Social Security. But it has very often followed from focused, tireless efforts by unions and other social movements to get them to take these positions — and only when the disruptions have become so powerful that there appears to be no real choice and adoption offers companies a measure of control.

Mr. Fink’s vision is not new. At the close of the 19th century, after years of intense conflict with workers who sought to organize unions to secure higher wages, shorter work hours and basic safety provisions, a few business executives founded the National Civic Federation. It promoted negotiation between executives and representatives of workers deemed politically reliable. But the federation became increasingly focused on anti-socialist and anti-communist agitation, while the post-World War I labor movement collapsed.

The disaster of the Great Depression prompted some companies to back greater government regulation of economic life. Executives at firms like General Electric supported programs like Social Security in part because they recognized that the mass movements of the era — marches of the unemployed, sit-down strikes and other work disruptions — were potentially explosive if concessions were not made to ***working-class*** Americans.

But this alliance proved fleeting: Companies that supported reforms in the depths of the Depression no longer did once they saw other options. General Electric turned on its unions after a strike wave in 1946, relocating plants to the Southwest, where laws favored employers, and adopting hard-line bargaining strategies to weaken the electrical workers’ union.

In the late 1960s, after the legal victories of the civil rights movement in the South, the rise of Black power and uprisings of the decade in cities across the country, some corporate leaders suggested that they would do more to try to fight urban poverty — committing to hiring and training the long-term unemployed and to making philanthropic contributions. At the high point of protest against the Vietnam War, some business leaders tried to rally support for ending the war; one organization, Business Executives Move for Vietnam Peace, included almost 1,000 business leaders.

Today, some of the wealthiest Americans may be growing uncomfortable with the political destabilization that can accompany extreme inequality, and some may be anxious about the impact of climate change on their ability to generate profits. But this does not mean that [*they are eager*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/business/business-roudtable-stakeholder-capitalism.html) to do the kinds of things that might actually address inequality or provide a meaningful way forward to a world less in danger of destroying itself. Mr. Fink’s letter may be partly born of good intentions, but the opposition of the Business Roundtable (whose members lead many of the economy’s largest corporations, including BlackRock) to potential corporate tax increases in Build Back Better played a key role in squashing it — and its relatively limited climate proposals.

As Andrew Perez and David Sirota have [*reported*](https://jacobinmag.com/2022/01/kyrsten-sinema-joe-manchin-filibuster-voting-reform-corporate-power) in Jacobin, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has strongly [*opposed*](https://www.uschamber.com/improving-government/unpacking-the-filibuster) any reform of the filibuster, in part because it would simplify the passage of laws that, for example, could make it easier for workers to unionize.

A fantasy capitalism that magically balances the interests of workers, investors, communities and shareholders has a strong allure, but pursuing it is a self-defeating strategy — and rooted in political despair. Focusing political energy on securing the commitment of a group of business elites would undermine the engagement of a broad democratic base that must be the real basis of substantial reform. To address many of our deepest problems, nothing less than a redistribution of economic and political power will be needed, and it will be achieved only over the opposition of business and the wealthy.

The social responsibility trend in general undermines the idea of citizenship and of a public sphere as the place where decisions and arguments over economic and social policy play out. The commitment of business to democratic norms is pretty shallow, or at least it emphasizes a narrow understanding of what those are.

You can see this dynamic even at BlackRock. Environmental activists have protested BlackRock for years, calling on it to withdraw its investments in oil, gas and coal companies. But for all Mr. Fink’s talk about the long-term problem of climate change, his company has been unwilling to divest from these firms, despite his company’s 2020 pledge to halt investment in firms that earned more than 25 percent of their revenue from thermal coal. (Businesses, he wrote in defending his approach, “cannot be the climate police,” and he called on governments to increase their efforts.)

The reality is that there is no way to bypass the arduous, contentious work of building a politics that can sustain a more democratic culture. The only thing that brought elites to support such causes in the past — however tentative such support may be — is the pressure of political and social movements.

Were these stronger today, the obstruction of Senators Manchin and Sinema would look like the actions of reactionaries with nowhere else to turn rather than an intractable stranglehold on any reform efforts. And while we might hear less about stakeholder capitalism, we would have a public realm that could make real the idea of the common good.

Kim Phillips-Fein, a historian at the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University, is the author, most recently, of “[*Fear City: New York’s Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780805095265/fearcity)” and “[*Invisible Hands: The Businessmen’s Crusade Against the New Deal*](https://wwnorton.com/books/Invisible-Hands/).”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Allie Sullberg FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2022

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[***Manchin and Sinema Should Just Say No***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63R3-MJ81-DXY4-X1JV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 29, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21; BRET STEPHENS

**Length:** 873 words

**Byline:** By Bret Stephens

**Body**

Dear Senators Manchin and Sinema,

Whether the occasion is social or political, the hero of the party is the person who'll grab the keys before the drunks can get behind their wheels.

This week, it falls to the two of you to be that person. The progressives in your party think you're all that stands in the way of their expensive utopia, and they're willing to hold a popular infrastructure bill as hostage in order to get their wish. The leaders in your party expect you to go along, at least partway, with a $4.5 trillion spending bonanza -- $1 trillion for infrastructure, an additional $3.5 trillion for new entitlements -- because that's what some members of their caucus demand. If you don't, much of the media will cast you as the villains who kneecapped an already faltering Biden presidency.

And they are doing this in the week when the only thing that ought to matter to Congress is raising the debt ceiling to avert default.

This is dumb. The likeliest way for President Biden to fail -- and for Democrats to lose their congressional majorities next year and for Donald Trump to return to the White House next term -- is for the spending bills to pass mostly as they are. A Democratic Party that abandons its center (where many congressional seats are vulnerable) for the sake of its left (where the seats are usually safe) is heading straight for the minority come November 2022.

Let them call you names now so that they can thank you for your sobriety later.

The ***working class*** faces no greater thief than inflation. The rich can switch among asset classes, find different tax shelters, rely on financial experts, ride it out. The less fortunate -- your constituency and much of the Democratic base -- depend on regular paychecks to pay the rent. And rents are now skyrocketing.

In June, the inflation forecast was 3.4 percent for the year. The forecast has since risen to 4.2 percent -- more than double the Federal Reserve's target rate of 2 percent. The Fed hopes this will taper once the pandemic ends and supply disruptions, supposedly the cause of inflation, cease.

But what if it isn't just supply disruptions that are causing prices to rise but rather a case of too much money chasing too few goods? And what if the pandemic continues to defy expectations and carries over until next year? Congress has already appropriated close to $6 trillion for Covid relief. A continuing pandemic would most likely require further trillions in spending. How does that square, fiscally, with the $4.5 trillion extravaganza?

This is what ought to keep Democratic leaders awake at night, along with the record spike in homicides, an incoherent and chaotic policy on the southern border and the possibility that a ticking real-estate debt bomb in China could be the world's next Lehman Brothers collapse.

Instead, they're pushing for the biggest expansion of the welfare state since the 1960s, to be financed with the biggest tax increase in decades and to be passed with a three-vote edge in the House and a tiebreaker vote in the Senate on a 100 percent partisan basis. This is not what swing voters had in mind when they elected Biden on his pledge to be a unifier, a compromiser and a moderate.

And it shows: Biden began with a 61 percent approval rating among independents, according to Gallup. Eight months later, it's at 37 percent. This is another stark portent of a midterm blowout.

Would it help the cause if Democrats came up with a lower topline? Nope: It would be a classic case of falling between two stools, placating neither friends nor critics. Is it honest to claim the bill adds nothing to the national debt? ''Biden's own budget officials earlier this year estimated that his agenda would increase the national debt by nearly $1.4 trillion over the decade,'' The Associated Press reports. Does it help that Biden is now claiming that his spending plan ''costs zero dollars''? Only if you enjoy having your intelligence insulted.

Which neither of you do.

There's a way out of this standoff. Trade a clean vote in the House on infrastructure for Senate Republican support for a debt-ceiling increase, gained by putting the $3.5 trillion reconciliation bill on ice. Or simply hold a clean House vote on infrastructure and increase the debt ceiling unilaterally through reconciliation. Then disaggregate the spending bill into separate items of legislation that could be voted on à la carte, according to their merits and political appeal. Let the American people know what's in this huge legislative burrito. Maybe they'll find some of it appetizing.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/opinion/biden-infrastructure-congress.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/opinion/biden-infrastructure-congress.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 29, 2021

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[***Joe Biden Has Had Flimsy Organization. It Hasn’t Hurt Him.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC7-2K91-JBG3-62JR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2020 Friday 12:40 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1522 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck and Thomas Kaplan

**Highlight:** The less quantifiable elements of Mr. Biden’s campaign — including his association with Barack Obama, his empathy and his momentum — have outweighed his lack of organizational heft.

**Body**

The less quantifiable elements of Mr. Biden’s campaign — including his association with Barack Obama, his empathy and his momentum — have outweighed his lack of organizational heft.

[*Joseph R. Biden Jr.’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) campaign organization in key Super Tuesday states   [*was so flimsy*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) that it shocked and alarmed Democratic Party leaders. Mr. Biden had little cash for advertising on the airwaves. His message just days before the big vote was sometimes unfocused and   [*meandering*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html).

But when 14 states voted on Tuesday, none of that mattered: Mr. Biden swept to victory in 10 of them, reflecting a quickly coalescing moderate wing of the Democratic Party and a desperation among voters to start taking the fight to President Trump.

“There’s no analogous situation that I can think of in presidential politics where a candidate who was really on the brink of extinction came back and, over four days, took command of a race without benefit of media or organization,” said David Axelrod, who served as chief strategist for President Barack Obama. “It’s an unparalleled situation.”

Mr. Biden was greatly aided by [*the late endorsements of two former rivals*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., who exited the race at the beginning of the week. Mr. Biden’s   [*overwhelming victory in South Carolina*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) last Saturday, powered by African-American voters, injected a stunning dose of momentum into the campaign after losses in the first three nominating contests.

But Tuesday’s results also showed that in a matchup that was largely against Senator [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) of Vermont, the less quantifiable elements of Mr. Biden’s campaign — his association with Mr. Obama,   [*his empathy*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) and his more moderate approach to governing — outweighed his lack of organizational heft in many places.

Those operational challenges have not evaporated. Representative Emanuel Cleaver II of Missouri, a Biden supporter, said the campaign had “virtually no operation” in his state, which votes on Tuesday.

Yet as the presidential contest moves into a battle for large, delegate-rich states like Michigan, Ohio, Illinois and Florida, Mr. Biden is racing to cement his advantage with the sprawling coalition that propelled him in the past week — this time with the momentum, money and avalanche of endorsements that had eluded him throughout the race, even as his team scrambles to scale up.

Headed into the next round of contests on Tuesday, when six states including Michigan and Missouri will vote, Mr. Biden is again seeking to run up the score in heavily African-American congressional districts, build on his newfound strength with moderate suburbanites and fight Mr. Sanders for white ***working-class*** voters. He is quickly rerouting some staff to key states, uncorking new ad spending and leaning into sharper criticisms of Mr. Sanders, now his chief rival for the nomination.

Mr. Biden’s financial fortunes are rapidly changing: Since last Saturday, the day of his resounding victory in South Carolina, his campaign has raised more than $22 million in online donations — more than double its total fund-raising in [*the entire month of January*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html). A fund-raiser he attended in Los Angeles on Wednesday was moved outdoors to accommodate the number of people who wanted to come (the guest list included the actor Leonardo DiCaprio and his mother).

Mr. Biden’s surrogates have sprung into action, seeking to help him acquire additional support in upcoming key states through methods both traditional — Ms. Klobuchar deployed to Michigan for Mr. Biden — and creative: The former U.S. ambassador to Ireland [*was listed*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) as hosting an organizing event recently for Mr. Biden in the small city of Bolivar, Mo.

According to his campaign, Mr. Biden has more than 70 endorsements in Missouri, more than 50 in Florida and around 20 in Michigan. Among his newest endorsers in Michigan is Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who was named a national co-chair of his campaign.

Former Senator Bill Nelson of Florida, a Biden supporter, said the campaign had focused resources on South Carolina out of necessity. But with an eye on the March 17 contest in his own state, Mr. Nelson said, “Now I think you will see a flood of people that will be coming in and augmenting the existing staff in Florida.”

“People like a winner,” added Mr. Nelson, who has been pounding the phones, seeking to get more state legislators on board.

Still, there is limited time to build out the kind of on-the-ground infrastructure that can often make a difference in close races.

In Michigan, Mayor Mike Duggan of Detroit, another Biden supporter, said the Biden campaign was relying on volunteers, and had long made clear that it did not intend to establish a large presence of paid staff in the state.

“They flat-out said we’re not putting field resources in Michigan,” he said, noting that he agreed with their approach. “I told them we’d do the organizing with the volunteers here and we’d be ready to go on March 10, and I think we will be.”

Bill Neidhardt, a Sanders aide in Michigan, said that campaign had 25 paid staff members in the state.

“We’re down to two campaigns: one that has a grass-roots organizing infrastructure that is deployed in multiple states, including here in Michigan,” he said. “Then you have Joe Biden’s campaign, which they seem to be figuring out.”

Mississippi, Washington, Idaho and North Dakota are also holding nominating contests on Tuesday. In contrast to 2016, Washington and Idaho Democrats have now embraced primaries — not caucuses, which tend to draw only the most committed activists — a move that some Biden allies hope will allow him to cut into Mr. Sanders’s potential advantages in those states, both of which he won handily in the previous presidential race.

On Thursday, Mr. Sanders [*canceled a rally in Mississippi*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), a state with a heavily African-American Democratic electorate, redeploying instead to delegate-heavy Michigan, where he and Mr. Biden look poised for a fierce fight over the blue-collar workers that helped Mr. Sanders narrowly win the state in his 2016 presidential bid.

Mr. Biden and Mr. Sanders have criticized each other during the primary race — over Mr. Biden’s [*vote to authorize the war in Iraq*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html), for example, or Mr. Sanders’s   [*record on gun control*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) — but they now both appear willing to wage their most pointed fights to date. Mr. Sanders has   [*released ads*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) jabbing Mr. Biden over his position on trade and his past support at times for Social Security freezes — reviving   [*a fight*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) the two men had in Iowa that Mr. Sanders’s allies believe played to his advantage.

Mr. Sanders also released an ad highlighting his ties to Mr. Obama, a move that drew incredulity from some of Mr. Biden’s supporters who note not only Mr. Biden’s service as vice president under Mr. Obama, but also that Mr. Sanders [*reportedly weighed a primary challenge*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) to Mr. Obama in the 2012 election.

“I’m sorry, what?” Senator Chris Coons, Democrat of Delaware and a strong Biden supporter, said when asked about the ad. “Senator Sanders seriously considered primarying Barack Obama in 2012 and routinely criticized him and his proposals. So if this is a race between former Vice President Biden and Senator Sanders as to who has the experience and the vision that moves forward the Obama-Biden agenda, it’s undeniably Joe Biden.” Mr. Sanders has denied that he considered challenging Mr. Obama.

Mr. Sanders [*won a surprise victory*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) in Michigan in 2016 when competing against Hillary Clinton, whom he criticized over her support for trade deals like the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA. That is an issue that plays to Mr. Sanders’s strengths with white ***working-class*** voters, a constituency over which he and Mr. Biden battled intensely in Iowa, where Mr. Biden came in fourth.

Mr. Biden voted for NAFTA as a senator, giving Mr. Sanders ammunition to raise the issue of trade in this year’s primary as well.

Mr. Neidhardt promised a “precise, specific” conversation around the economy.

Mr. Biden has been endorsed by the Michigan Democratic Party Black Caucus, and party leaders in the state say he also has a growing opportunity with moderates who had gravitated to other candidates like former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg of New York, Ms. Klobuchar and Mr. Buttigieg. They also note his work on the auto industry bailout as part of the Obama administration, and his own blue-collar background, which helps him [*connect with*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) ***working-class*** voters.

Mr. Duggan, the Detroit mayor, suggested that affection for Mr. Biden would make up for the campaign’s lack of staff in his state.

“Their strategy was Nevada, South Carolina and Super Tuesday, but they got a lot of deeply loyal individuals like me, and we’ll see how the campaign performs in the next week,” he said. “But I feel confident that what you had here were people who were with Biden because they love Biden. And that’s been paying off around the country.”

PHOTO: Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. won 10 states on Super Tuesday even though he had campaigned in only half of them. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH HANER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2020

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[***Biden’s Rise Gives the Establishment One Last Chance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC1-3D91-DXY4-X335-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 5, 2020 Thursday 20:33 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 926 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** If he fouls this up, we’re doomed.

**Body**

If he fouls this up, we’re doomed.

I don’t know about you, but the election results this week filled me with more hope than I’ve felt in years. It felt like somebody turning down the volume.

The angry and putrid shouting that has marked the last four years — and that would mark a Trump vs. Sanders campaign — might actually come to an end. Suddenly we got a glimpse of a world in which we can hear each other talk, in which actual governance can happen, in which gridlock can be avoided and actual change can come.

But the results carried a more portentous message as well. For those of us who believe in our political system, it’s put up or shut up time. The establishment gets one last chance.

If [*Joe Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) wins the nomination but loses to Donald Trump in the general election, young progressives will turn on the Democratic establishment with unprecedented fury. “See? We were right again!” they’ll say. And maybe they’ll have a point.

If Biden wins the White House but doesn’t deliver real benefits for disaffected ***working-class*** Trumpians and disillusioned young Bernie Bros, then the populist uprisings of 2024 will make the populist uprisings of today look genteel by comparison. “The system is rotten to the core,” they’ll say. “It’s time to burn it all down.”

Some people are saying a Biden presidency would be a restoration or a return to normalcy. He’ll be a calming Gerald Ford after the scandal of Richard Nixon.

But I don’t see how that could be. The politics of the last four years have taught us that tens of millions of Americans feel that their institutions have completely failed them. The legitimacy of the whole system is still hanging by a thread. The core truth of a Biden administration would be bring change or reap the whirlwind.

There would be no choice but to somehow pass his agenda: a climate plan, infrastructure spending, investments in the heartland, his $750 billion education plan and health care subsidies. If disaffected voters don’t see tangible changes in their lives over the next few years, it’s not that one party or another will lose the next election. The current political order will be upended by some future Bernie/Trump figure times 10.

This week’s results carried a few more lessons:

Democrats are not just a party; they’re a community. In my years of covering politics I don’t think I’ve ever seen anything like what happened in the 48 hours after South Carolina — millions of Democrats from all around the country, from many different demographics, turning as one and arriving at a common decision.

It was like watching a flock of geese or a school of fish, seemingly leaderless, sensing some shift in conditions, sensing each other’s intuitions, and smoothly shifting direction en masse. A community is more than the sum of its parts. It is a shared sensibility and a pattern of response. This is a core Democratic strength.

Intersectionality is moderate. Campus radicals have always dreamed of building a rainbow coalition of all oppressed groups. But most black voters are less radical and more institutional than the campus radicals. They rarely prefer the same primary candidates.

If there’s any intersectionality it’s in the center. Moderate or mainstream Democrats like Biden, Clinton and Obama are the ones who put together rainbow coalitions: black, brown, white, suburban and ***working class***.

The new Democrats are coming from the right. Bernie Sanders thought he could mobilize a new mass of young progressives. That did not happen. Young voters have made up a smaller share of the electorate in the primaries so far this year than in 2016 in almost every state, including Vermont.

Meanwhile there were [*astounding turnout surges*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) in middle-class and affluent suburbs. Turnout was up by 76 percent in the Virginia suburbs around Washington, Richmond and parts of Norfolk. Turnout was up 49 percent over all in Texas. Many of these new voters must be disaffected Republicans who now consider themselves Democrats.

It’s still better to work the room than storm the barricades. Biden grew up in a political era in which politics was still about persuasion, not compulsion; building diverse coalitions, not just firing up your base. He’s been able to win over many of his former presidential rivals and cement a series of valuable alliances, especially with Jim Clyburn of South Carolina.

As Ezra Klein pointed out in Vox, Sanders tried to win over the Democratic Party by attacking the Democratic Party and treating its leaders with contempt. In fact, some Sanders surrogates are attacking Biden’s skill in building coalitions as a sign of evil elitism, as something only those nasty insiders do.

Biden’s wins this week, and his incredible polling surges in states like Florida that are soon to vote, make it likely that he will win and Sanders will lose this primary contest. But that doesn’t mean that legitimate crises that are driving the Sanders voters — or the legitimate crises that are driving Trump voters — will go away.

Their problems will still be all our problems. And if our current system can’t address them, then that system will be swept away.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/joe-biden.html).

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PHOTO: Joe Biden at a campaign event on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Biden vs. the Rip Van Winkle Caucus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PW-NC71-DXY4-X4TH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 28, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; PAUL KRUGMAN

**Length:** 903 words

**Byline:** By Paul Krugman

**Body**

Political reporting often portrays progressives as impractical and intransigent, unwilling to make the compromises needed to get things done, while centrists are realistic pragmatists. What's happening in Congress right now, however, is just the opposite.

The Democratic Party's left wing is advancing sensible, popular policies like negotiating on drug prices and cracking down on wealthy tax cheats, and has shown itself willing to make major compromises to advance President Biden's agenda. In particular, the $3.5 trillion in spending Biden is asking for over the next decade is much less than progressives originally wanted. The party's conservative wing, however, seems willing to risk blowing up its own president's prospects rather than give an inch.

What's going on? Contrary to legend, many of the balking Democrats don't come from swing districts; anyway, the Biden economic agenda is popular almost everywhere. For example, its main elements command overwhelming support in West Virginia. Furthermore, does anyone really imagine that the outcome of the midterm elections will depend on whether the eventual package, if there is one, is $3.5 trillion or $1.5 trillion?

We can, of course, invoke the usual suspects: Corporate money and wealthy donors are surely having an impact. But I was struck by something Eric Levitz of New York magazine said in a recent article on this subject, which helped clarify a point I've been groping toward. Namely, some Democrats seem to have formed their perceptions about both economics and politics during the Clinton years and haven't updated their views since.

That is, it makes a lot of sense to see Biden's problems getting his plans across the finish line as being caused by the Rip Van Winkle caucus, Democrats who checked out intellectually a couple of decades ago and haven't caught up with America as it now is.

Specifically, some Democrats still seem to believe that they can succeed economically and politically by being Republicans lite. It's doubtful whether that was ever true. But it's definitely not true now.

On the economic side, there was a widespread perception in the late 1990s that the harshness of American social policy -- our high level of inequality, our lack of a European-style social safety net -- was to a large extent vindicated by economic success. When Bill Clinton declared in 1996 that ''the era of big government is over,'' it looked as if small government was being rewarded with a booming economy. We were surging ahead technologically and outpacing the rest of the advanced world on job creation; it's hard to grasp now the sense of American triumphalism that pervaded elite opinion circa 2000.

But it was not to last. The technology-led productivity boom that began in the mid-1990s petered out a decade later. And America never did establish a durable technological lead; at this point, to take one visible measure, many European nations have faster and cheaper internet access than we do.

U.S. job creation has also lost its luster: prime-age European adults are as likely to be working as their U.S. counterparts.

Beyond economics, in the 1990s many Democrats believed that they could mollify noncollege white voters through a combination of validating rhetoric -- denouncing Sister Souljah, talking tough on crime -- and cuts in programs widely perceived to mainly benefit Black people. Clinton really did end Aid to Families With Dependent Children, the program most people meant when they talked about ''the bums on welfare,'' without providing any real replacement.

But none of it worked. If racial antagonism had been driven by perceptions of inner-city disorder, it should have faded in the face of the spectacular decline in violent crime between the early 1990s and the mid-2010s. It didn't. If this antagonism reflected the perception that many able-bodied Black men who should have been working weren't, it should have faded when the problem of prime-age men not working (and the social disruptions that appear to go along with lack of jobs) became as severe in overwhelmingly white rural areas as in inner cities. It didn't.

Instead, the voting behavior of white ***working-class*** voters seems more driven by racial resentment than ever. And such voters can't be won over by trimming back social spending; they want their racial hostility served raw. Trumpists can give them that; Democrats can't without effectively becoming Trumpists themselves.

In other words, if there was ever a time when individual Democratic members of Congress could hope to swim against the tide by positioning themselves to the right of their party, that time ended long ago. It doesn't matter how much they force Biden to scale back his ambitions; it doesn't matter how many pious statements they make about fiscal responsibility. Republicans will still portray them as socialists who want to defund the police, and the voters they're trying to pander to will believe it.

So my plea to Democratic ''moderates'' is, please wake up. We're not in 1999 anymore, and your political fortunes depend on helping Joe Biden govern effectively.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/opinion/biden-centrist-democrats.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/opinion/biden-centrist-democrats.html)

**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** September 28, 2021

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[***Labour Keeps Seat in U.K., Easing Pressure on Leader***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:632B-WT71-DXY4-X02K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 3, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 748 words

**Byline:** By Stephen Castle

**Body**

The election this week of the sister of Jo Cox, a lawmaker who was killed in 2016, was seen as a victory for Labour's leader in a region where Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives had made big inroads.

LONDON -- Britain's opposition Labour Party on Friday scored an unexpected if narrow victory in a battle for an open Parliament seat that was widely seen as a critical test for the party's leader, Keir Starmer, who has been under pressure for failing to revive the party's fortunes.

Many had expected that the Conservatives would take the seat, which Labour has held since 1997, because of the spoiler campaign of George Galloway. The victory will be a big relief for Mr. Starmer, who faced criticism in May when his party lost a by-election in Hartlepool, another former stronghold in the north of England.

That result added weight to the idea that support for Labour had collapsed in the ''red wall,'' former industrial areas of England in which Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservatives have been making big inroads.

Results announced early Friday gave the Labour candidate, Kim Leadbeater, a win of just 323 votes over her Conservative Party rival, Ryan Stephenson, after an acrimonious contest in Batley and Spen, one of Labour's traditional heartland seats in northern England.

Voting in the by-election took place on Thursday after a campaign marred by claims of intimidation, including one episode in which Ms. Leadbeater was heckled aggressively and another that led to the arrest of a man on suspicion of assault in connection with an attack on Labour supporters.

Ms. Leadbeater acknowledged that it had been ''a grueling few weeks'' but added, ''I am absolutely delighted that the people of Batley and Spen have rejected division and they voted for hope.''

Labour fought hard to retain Batley and Spen, which was represented in Parliament by Ms. Leadbeater's sister, Jo Cox, until she was murdered by a far-right fanatic in 2016.

Ms. Leadbeater's narrow path to victory was a complicated one. She was competing not only against the Conservative candidate, Mr. Stephenson, but also against Mr. Galloway, a former lawmaker and veteran left-wing campaigner who sought to divert support from Labour.

Although Labour held off the challenge from Mr. Galloway, its share of the vote in Batley and Spen was lower than in the 2019 general election.

Since the Brexit referendum in 2016, Mr. Johnson's Conservative Party has succeeded in winning over many of Labour's core voters in ***working-class*** communities in the north and middle of England.

Before the result in Batley and Spen, there had been news media speculation that Mr. Starmer would be vulnerable to a leadership challenge if Ms. Leadbeater lost, as many were expecting.

Most analysts believed that Mr. Starmer would have been safe regardless of the result, because there is no credible alternative waiting in the wings. But the victory -- narrow as it was -- will be especially welcome news for the party leaders, because the contest could have been avoided.

The by-election was triggered in May when the area's former Labour lawmaker, Tracy Brabin, was elected to another job as West Yorkshire mayor, requiring her to step down from Parliament. Mr. Starmer was accused of mismanaging the situation and putting the seat at risk by allowing her to run for the mayoral position.

Since he took the job of leader last year, Mr. Starmer, a former top prosecutor, has tried to unite the party after it was routed in 2019 parliamentary elections under the stewardship of Jeremy Corbyn, its left-wing leader at the time.

Mr. Starmer's critics have accused him of a lack of charisma and of failing to set out a convincing alternative policy agenda to that of the Conservatives.

His defenders have appealed for patience and have contended that the pandemic has made it hard for the opposition to impress voters whose attention is focused on government efforts to bring Covid-19 restrictions to an end.

In his election literature, Mr. Galloway had called on voters to abandon Labour to increase pressure on Mr. Starmer and force him out of his job.

When the count was completed early Friday, Ms. Leadbeater won 13,296 votes, Mr. Stephenson was in second place with 12,973 and Mr. Galloway third with 8,264.

Labour ''won this election against the odds,'' Mr. Starmer said. ''And we did so by showing that when we are true to our values -- decency, honesty, committed to improving lives -- then Labour can win.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/world/europe/labor-by-election-victory-batley-and-spen.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/world/europe/labor-by-election-victory-batley-and-spen.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Kim Leadbeater, the Labour candidate, in Huddersfield on Friday after winning the Batley and Spen election. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Danny Lawson/Press Association, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 3, 2021

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[***Sex and the City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647D-RN91-DXY4-X1K0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 5, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 16; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1007 words

**Byline:** By Paulina Bren

**Body**

MADAMThe Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz AgeBy Debby Applegate

Pearl to Polly, shtetl child to savvy New Yorker, Brooklyn corset factory girl to Manhattan's most notorious brothel owner: ''Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age,'' by the Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Debby Applegate, tells a fast-paced tale of radical, willful transformation.

Pearl Adler, gifted with neither height nor looks, grew up in the Russian Pale not far from Pinsk to a peripatetic tailor who considered himself a bit of a dandy. Years later, after Pearl's birth records were lost to fire and war, her parents would guess that she had been born in 1900, making her, in her father's words, a child of the 20th century. With pogroms mounting, he packed her off at 13 for the golden land of the United States, accompanied by a cousin already heading there. Mid-journey, the cousin begged off, but Pearl had the wherewithal to continue on alone.

Her father had arranged for her to live with a family in Massachusetts, but once acclimatized, she made her escape to relatives in Brownsville, N.Y. Already attracted to the seediness and pleasures of Coney Island, she was easily lured by the underworld, and by 1920 was living with a showgirl as her roommate on Manhattan's Riverside Drive (''Allrightnik's Row'' in the city's Yiddish slang, indicating you had made it). That same year Prohibition went into effect, and the party was on.

Within a few months, Pearl, now renamed Polly by her new friends, had opened her first brothel, conveniently located across from Columbia University. Speakeasies sprouted ''like mushrooms'': ''Manic, uninhibited revelry echoed everywhere, from the Bronx to Greenwich Village.'' Predictably, everyone was trying to get a piece of the action, including the vice squad, which ran a shakedown business that had Polly's bank account rising and falling like out-of-control blood pressure. (Although one might say her family, who would soon be arriving in America, did much the same; they were all too happy to take her money even as they barred her from their Seder.)

The more successful Polly became, the more hounded she was -- by the police, by Tammany Hall, by the Broadway mob. Her brothel was distinguished by good hygiene and well-selected ''girls.'' (When the Depression hit, Polly was able to turn away up to 40 young women for every one she hired -- an acceptance rate analogous to that of the Ivy League these days.) But as the business evolved, her brothel also offered less tangible services: It took on the appearance of a literary salon, with drink from the best bootleggers, food from her private cooks and good company from Polly. It became the after-hours place not only for gangsters, lowlifes and politicians, but also for the Algonquin Round Table and for writers at The New Yorker. (Dorothy Parker and Polly would chat while the men availed themselves of the services.) Here, an often unexplored exploitation haunts Applegate's narrative: Polly, who has claimed the American dream and sits sipping drinks with the celebrated Parker, is also the one who procured these young, mostly ***working-class*** women.

Having famous friends also meant that Polly became the subject of gossip columns, jokes and banter, which added to her renown. But not everything was so peachy; her gangster friends were just as likely to fleece or beat her as they were to trade laughs and cook up schemes with her. Of course, misogyny was hardly the sole purview of the underworld; the gossip columnist Walter Winchell, who used Polly's services extensively, balked when an up-and-coming bandleader fell in love with her. Winchell objected that the bandleader, who could have had any woman he desired, was dating a ''broken-down old whore and an ugly one at that.''

Replete with accounts of Polly's many court battles, newspaper headlines, mobster dealings and society gossip, ''Madam'' is a breathless tale told through extraordinary research. Indeed, the galloping pace of Applegate's book sometimes makes the reader want to pull out a white flag and wave in surrender -- begging for her to slow down. The mob violence, political corruption, social approbation and multitude of johns that Polly confronts at her ever-changing brothel locations are both impressive and unrelenting. And while Polly seems to be in the thick of the action, those who surround her often also outshine her. In the book's last pages, Applegate makes a forthright case for why Polly is worthy of a biography by noting this injustice: It was not Polly but ''her male criminal colleagues who became 20th-century cultural icons.'' ''Sex workers in general ... are dealers in illusion,'' she writes, and Americans do not like to see the curtain pulled back to reveal the mechanisms, let alone the banality, of their dreams.

Now, Applegate suggests, with the advent of social movements around sex and power, we might finally be ready. But elsewhere, she stakes Polly's claim for fame on her proximity to men who made history (Franklin Delano Roosevelt), wittily narrated it (Robert Benchley), created its soundtrack (Duke Ellington) or violently upended it (Dutch Schultz and Legs Diamond). Yet the takeaway for this reader at least is that Polly deserves our attention because her life shows how women who wish to transcend their status must become expert practitioners of chameleonism. That is also what makes Polly on some level a frustrating subject for a biography. As Applegate concedes, Polly ''hid far more of her story than she shared, even from herself.'' In other words, the very trait that made Polly Adler survive and succeed is also what makes her defiantly elusive. Applegate, armed with formidable skills, may be the biographer who can come closest to revealing her.Paulina Bren is a writer and historian who teaches at Vassar College. Her most recent book is ''The Barbizon: The Hotel That Set Women Free.''MADAMThe Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz AgeBy Debby ApplegateIllustrated. 553 pp. Doubleday. $32.50.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/books/review/madam-polly-adler-debby-applegate.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/books/review/madam-polly-adler-debby-applegate.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Polly Adler exiting a police van after being arrested in 1936. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** December 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Establishment Gets One Last Chance***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC4-YMR1-JBG3-603N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2020 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22

**Length:** 907 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

If he fouls this up, we're doomed.

I don't know about you, but the election results this week filled me with more hope than I've felt in years. It felt like somebody turning down the volume.

The angry and putrid shouting that has marked the last four years -- and that would mark a Trump vs. Sanders campaign -- might actually come to an end. Suddenly we got a glimpse of a world in which we can hear each other talk, in which actual governance can happen, in which gridlock can be avoided and actual change can come.

But the results carried a more portentous message as well. For those of us who believe in our political system, it's put up or shut up time. The establishment gets one last chance.

If Joe Biden wins the nomination but loses to Donald Trump in the general election, young progressives will turn on the Democratic establishment with unprecedented fury. ''See? We were right again!'' they'll say. And maybe they'll have a point.

If Biden wins the White House but doesn't deliver real benefits for disaffected ***working-class*** Trumpians and disillusioned young Bernie Bros, then the populist uprisings of 2024 will make the populist uprisings of today look genteel by comparison. ''The system is rotten to the core,'' they'll say. ''It's time to burn it all down.''

Some people are saying a Biden presidency would be a restoration or a return to normalcy. He'll be a calming Gerald Ford after the scandal of Richard Nixon.

But I don't see how that could be. The politics of the last four years have taught us that tens of millions of Americans feel that their institutions have completely failed them. The legitimacy of the whole system is still hanging by a thread. The core truth of a Biden administration would be bring change or reap the whirlwind.

There would be no choice but to somehow pass his agenda: a climate plan, infrastructure spending, investments in the heartland, his $750 billion education plan and health care subsidies. If disaffected voters don't see tangible changes in their lives over the next few years, it's not that one party or another will lose the next election. The current political order will be upended by some future Bernie/Trump figure times 10.

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The new Democrats are coming from the right. Bernie Sanders thought he could mobilize a new mass of young progressives. That did not happen. Young voters have made up a smaller share of the electorate in the primaries so far this year than in 2016 in almost every state, including Vermont.

Meanwhile there were astounding turnout surges in middle-class and affluent suburbs. Turnout was up by 76 percent in the Virginia suburbs around Washington, Richmond and parts of Norfolk. Turnout was up 49 percent over all in Texas. Many of these new voters must be disaffected Republicans who now consider themselves Democrats.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/opinion/joe-biden-2020.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/opinion/joe-biden-2020.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joe Biden at a campaign event on Monday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tamir Kalifa for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

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[***The Vanishing Moderate Democrat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TY-DXG1-DXY4-X2RS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 3, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 26

**Length:** 9939 words

**Byline:** By Jason Zengerle and Justin Metz

**Body**

To hear more audio stories from publications like The New York Times, download Audm for iPhone or Android.

Early last year, as Democrats were preparing to control the White House and Congress for the first time in a decade, Josh Gottheimer met with Nancy Pelosi to discuss their party's message. Sitting in the House speaker's office in the U.S. Capitol, he opened up the YouTube app on his iPhone. There was something he wanted to show her.

Gottheimer, who represents a wealthy suburban and exurban House district in northern New Jersey, was first elected to Congress in 2016; his victory over a seven-term Republican incumbent, in a district in which Donald Trump narrowly defeated Hillary Clinton, was one of the Democrats' few bright spots that year. Since his arrival in Washington, however, Gottheimer has been the cause of more headaches than celebrations for Pelosi and her leadership team.

As co-chairman of the Problem Solvers Caucus -- a group of 29 Democrats and 29 Republicans that quixotically aspires to the goal of bipartisan compromise -- he has frequently found himself at odds with his fellow Democrats on everything from foreign policy to President Biden's domestic agenda to Pelosi's leadership. In 2018, Gottheimer and eight other Problem Solver Democrats threatened to reject Pelosi's bid for speaker if she didn't concede to their demands for rules changes that would make it easier for bipartisan ideas to be considered, angering colleagues who viewed it as yet another instance of Gottheimer and his group's engaging in pointless grandstanding rather than constructive behind-the-scenes work. ''Tell me a problem they've solved,'' Representative Susan Wild, a Democrat from Pennsylvania, says.

Pelosi, however, had agreed to their demands and secured their support. Now she was willing to hear Gottheimer out about how the new Democratic majority should position itself. He pressed play and his iPhone screen filled with waving American flags as an old but familiar voice emerged, proclaiming, ''I am honored to have been given the opportunity to stand up for the values and the interests of ordinary Americans.'' The video was a television advertisement from Bill Clinton's 1996 re-election campaign. Over images of construction workers and children and police officers, a series of bold captions touted Clinton's first-term accomplishments: ''WELFARE REFORM, WORK REQUIREMENTS''; ''TAXES CUT FOR 15,000,000 FAMILIES''; ''DEATH PENALTY FOR DRUG KINGPINS.'' His promises for a second term followed: ''BAN 'COP-KILLER' BULLETS''; ''CAPITAL GAINS TAX CUT FOR HOME OWNERS''; ''BALANCE THE BUDGET FOR A GROWING ECONOMY'' ''We are safer, we are more secure, we are more prosperous,'' Clinton said. When the ad was over, Gottheimer says, he looked at Pelosi. ''This is how we won,'' he told her, ''and this is how we win again.''

In April, almost a year and a half later, Gottheimer screened the ad again, this time for me. He provided his own color commentary as it played. ''Fiscal responsibility ... jobs ... tax cuts ... he put cops in the ad!'' Gottheimer, who served as a White House speechwriter during Clinton's second term, exclaimed. When it was over, he sighed. ''Think about how different that message is,'' he said. I asked him what Pelosi's reaction was when he played it for her. Gottheimer demurred. But the answer seemed obvious. The message that Pelosi and the Senate majority leader Chuck Schumer and President Joe Biden and the rest of the Democratic leadership had chosen for their party, the message that Democrats would be carrying into the 2022 midterm elections, was not the one that Gottheimer, and the disembodied voice of Bill Clinton, had counseled.

Gottheimer and I were eating breakfast at a diner on Route 17 in Paramus, N.J. In a month, he told me, the busy state highway outside would be lined with campaign signs that read ''Josh Gottheimer for Congress: Lower Taxes, Jersey Values.'' ''I'm the only Democrat in the country who puts 'lower taxes' on his signs,'' he said. '' 'Jersey values' are about cops, firefighters, vets -- I'll get your back.'' Although the old Clinton ad wasn't his party's current message, it was certainly his. ''These are the issues that I continue to stress back home in my district,'' he said. It would not be hyperbole to say that Gottheimer runs his political life there according to Clinton's tenets.

The most immediate question for Gottheimer and other moderate Democrats is whether that will be enough come November. Midterm elections have been historically brutal for the party that controls the White House. In 2006, Republicans took a ''thumping,'' as George W. Bush described it at the time, losing 30 seats in the House, six seats in the Senate and control of both chambers. Four years later, it was the Democrats' turn to suffer a ''shellacking,'' as Barack Obama put it, with Republicans gaining 63 seats and a new majority in the House. In 2018, Democrats capitalized on resistance to Donald Trump and gained 41 seats on their way to taking back the House.

This year, with Democrats clinging to a 10-seat majority in the House (almost guaranteed to drop to nine with a special election in Nebraska on June 28), most political handicappers expect Republicans to reclaim control of the chamber easily; the only real uncertainty is just how big the Red Wave will be, with predictions about the number of seats Republicans will gain ranging from less than 20 to more than 60. (Despite the public hearings of the House committee investigating Jan. 6, most Democrats running for election are not attempting to make the effort to overturn the 2020 presidential election a referendum on Republicans.)

The bigger, more consequential question -- not just for the moderates but for all Democrats -- is whether this projected midterm wipeout is merely a cyclical occurrence or the manifestation of a much deeper and more intractable problem. Over the last decade, the Democratic Party has moved significantly to the left on almost every salient political issue. Some of these shifts in a more ambitiously progressive direction, especially as they pertain to economic issues, have largely tracked with public opinion: While socialism might not poll well with voters, Democratic proposals to raise taxes on corporations and the wealthy, increase the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour and lower the age of Medicare eligibility do.

But on social, cultural and religious issues, particularly those related to criminal justice, race, abortion and gender identity, the Democrats have taken up ideological stances that many of the college-educated voters who now make up a sizable portion of the party's base cheer but the rest of the electorate does not. ''The Democratic Party moved left,'' says Will Marshall, the president and founder of the Progressive Policy Institute, a moderate Democratic think tank, ''but the country as a whole hasn't.''

Republicans have sought to exploit this gap by waging an aggressive culture war against Democrats. Christopher Rufo, the conservative activist and frequent Fox News guest who has turned critical race theory into a right-wing cudgel, wrote on Twitter last year that he intended to ''put all of the various cultural insanities under that brand category.'' More recently, he has attacked Democrats for, he charged, attempting to indoctrinate school children with ''trans ideology.'' Rick Scott, the Florida senator who heads the Republicans' Senate campaign arm, told reporters in June, ''The election is going to be about inflation, critical race theory, funding the police -- that's what it's going to be about.'' The result, fair or not, is that the Democratic Party is now perceived by a growing segment of American voters as espousing the furthest left position possible on many of the country's most fraught and most divisive issues.

''There's a sense among voters that Democrats are too focused on social issues,'' says Brian Stryker, a Democratic pollster, ''and those are more left-wing social issues that people think they're too focused on.'' In May, CNN asked 1,007 American voters for their opinions on the country's two major political parties. After four years of Trump in the White House, an insurrection and unsuccessful attempt to overturn a presidential election and now a Republican Party that can be fairly described as a cult of personality and is moving further right on many of the same social issues, 46 percent of those surveyed considered the G.O.P. to be ''too extreme.'' But 48 percent of them viewed the Democratic Party the same way.

All of which has occasioned not just the normal midterm agita but something closer to an existential crisis among moderate Democrats. While some of them remain reluctant to publicly concede the reality that the Democratic Party has indeed shifted left -- either out of fear of angering their fellow Democrats or validating Republican attacks -- they will readily acknowledge that voters perceive the party as having drifted out of the mainstream. And they are convinced that this is threatening their political survival. ''There's absolutely no doubt in my mind that the Democratic Party has a problem as a toxic brand,'' says Max Rose, a moderate New York Democrat who lost re-election to his House seat in Staten Island in 2020 -- his Republican opponent characterized Rose's attendance at a George Floyd protest march as anti-police -- and is running to reclaim the seat this year. ''There's a perception that the party is not on the side of working people, that it's not on the side of the middle class.''

That perception has penetrated even the immediate families of Democratic politicians. ''My own mother-in-law, a Republican, believes I'm some sort of unicorn because I can put sentences together and I'm not rabid and left-leaning,'' says Chrissy Houlahan, a moderate Democratic congresswoman who represents a swing district in the swing state of Pennsylvania. ''I believe the national Democratic Party is where I am. I don't believe that the way people perceive the national Democratic Party is where I am.''

But the Democrats' leftward trend, whether real or perceived, is resoundingly popular with, and often reinforced by, the party's staff members and activists and especially its donors, who fund a slew of nonprofits and super PACs that relentlessly push the progressive line. In America's very blue and very online precincts, performative positioning is often accepted as a substitute for the compromises that can be necessary to secure legislation -- whether it's Schumer and Pelosi donning kente cloth and kneeling in the Capitol to demonstrate solidarity with Black Lives Matter protesters in lieu of actual police reform or Biden traveling to Atlanta to attack Republicans as supporters of ''Jim Crow 2.0'' in a speech on behalf of voting rights legislation that had no chance of passage.

The problem, says Lis Smith, a Democratic communications strategist who most recently worked for Pete Buttigieg's 2020 presidential campaign, is that ''in today's world, what happens on Twitter or in a D-plus-40 district doesn't stay there. It travels to every race across the country.'' And it inherently limits the appeal of Democrats in those races. ''If we become a party of the elite-elites, there death awaits,'' says Representative Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, who heads the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (D.C.C.C.), the House Democrats' campaign arm, pointing to the influence of college activists. ''We'll all agree with each other right into extinction.''

The Democrats most at risk of extinction this November are Gottheimer and his fellow House moderates, who typically represent the sorts of swing districts where being painted as an identitarian socialist is the political kiss of death. ''We are, almost by definition, the low-hanging fruit in every election,'' says Representative Dean Phillips, a Minnesota Democrat and member of the Problem Solvers. Although Biden won Gottheimer's district by more than five points in 2020, and the district got even bluer under New Jersey's newly drawn congressional maps so that Democrats now have a seven-point edge there, the D.C.C.C. has put him on its ''Frontline'' list of vulnerable incumbents. Of the 37 Frontliners, the overwhelming majority belong to the Problem Solvers or one of the other two groups for moderate House Democrats: the New Democrat Coalition and the Blue Dog Coalition. And then there are the two dozen or so moderate House Democrats who have decided not to run at all in 2022, quitting before they could be fired.

It's enough to drive Gottheimer, 47, to frustration -- and to send him searching nearly three decades back in time for answers. In Congress, he has gone out of his way to differentiate himself from his more liberal Democratic colleagues, whom he has privately derided as ''the herbal tea party.'' The enmity has been mutual. After The Intercept reported the ''herbal tea party'' insult in 2019, the progressive New York congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez retweeted a link to the article and wrote, ''What's funny is that there \*are\* Dems that do act like the Tea Party -- but they're conservative.'' It was not the first or last time Gottheimer found himself at the bottom of an online pile-on. Two years ago, his clashes with liberals earned him a left-wing primary challenger who branded him ''Trump's favorite Democrat.'' Gottheimer won by 33 points. ''The social media Democrats are not the Democrats back home,'' he told me during another conversation in his congressional office. ''Those aren't my constituents.''

But now, he complained, ''the far right is trying to do everything they can to equate many of us to the socialist left,'' and he's worried his constituents will start to believe it. The challenge for Gottheimer and his fellow moderates, however, is not just to define what they are not, but what they actually are. While there is a growing group of Democrats who believe that their party needs to become more moderate, it's not clear that any of them agree on -- or, in some cases, even know -- what it means to be a moderate Democrat anymore.

In January 1989, Al From invited Bill Galston to breakfast at La Colline, a French restaurant on Capitol Hill. From was a former congressional staff member who, four years earlier, co-founded the Democratic Leadership Council (D.L.C.), a group of mostly Southern and Western Democrats who were trying to remake the party in their moderate image. They called themselves the New Democrats.

Galston was a University of Maryland public-policy professor who moonlighted as an adviser to Democratic presidential campaigns -- in 1988, working for Al Gore's ill-fated campaign. The previous November, Michael Dukakis lost to George H.W. Bush by 8 percentage points and 315 electoral votes, the Democrats' third straight landslide presidential defeat. At La Colline, From asked Galston what was wrong with their party. Democrats, Galston answered, were in denial -- focusing on the chimeras of higher turnout and better fund-raising when, in fact, it was their ''unacceptably liberal'' positions that was the problem. By not grappling with that fact, Galston told From, Democrats were engaging in ''the politics of evasion.''

From commissioned Galston and the political scientist Elaine Kamarck to write up the argument for the D.L.C.'s new think tank, the Progressive Policy Institute, which published ''The Politics of Evasion'' that September. Galston and Kamarck did not mince words. ''Too many Americans have come to see the party as inattentive to their economic interests, indifferent if not hostile to their moral sentiments and ineffective in defense of their national security,'' they wrote. The Democratic Party was ''increasingly dominated by minority groups and white elites -- a coalition viewed by the middle class as unsympathetic to its interests and its values.'' Unless Democrats convinced those middle-class voters (who at that time were predominantly white) that they were tough on crime, trustworthy on foreign policy and disciplined about government spending, they would continue to wander the political wilderness.

In the past, the New Democrats shied away from outright conflict with the party's liberal wing -- refusing to return fire, for instance, when Jesse Jackson dubbed the D.L.C. ''Democrats for the Leisure Class.'' But ''The Politics of Evasion'' counseled that internecine fighting was good: ''Only conflict and controversy over basic economic, social and defense issues are likely to attract the attention needed to convince the public that the party still has something to offer the great middle of the American electorate.'' Bill Clinton, who as Arkansas governor became the D.L.C. chairman in 1990, took that message to heart in his 1992 presidential campaign.

That summer, shortly after he cinched the Democratic nomination, Clinton gave a speech to Jackson's Rainbow Coalition group -- in which he attacked the group for also hosting a relatively obscure rapper named Sister Souljah, who in the wake of that year's Los Angeles riots said in an interview, ''If Black people kill Black people every day, why not have a week and kill white people?'' Clinton told the Rainbow Coalition that ''if you took the words 'white' and 'Black' and reversed them, you might think David Duke was giving that speech.'' Jackson was furious and called on Clinton to apologize -- exactly the response Clinton was hoping for. The Black syndicated columnist Clarence Page later wrote that by picking the fight, Clinton ''impressed swing voters, particularly white suburbanites, with a confident independence from Jackson that other Democratic presidential candidates had not shown.'' A loudly performed repudiation of a putative far-left extremist would come to be known as a ''Sister Souljah moment.''

Clinton ran for president as a factional candidate, against the Republicans but also against his party's liberal wing, so that when he won, he remade the Democratic Party in his own -- and the D.L.C.'s -- image. In 1995, midway through Clinton's first term, 23 moderate House Democrats formed the Blue Dog Caucus to, in their words, ''represent the middle of the partisan spectrum.'' By 2010, halfway through Barack Obama's first term, the Blue Dogs had grown to 54 members. ''To my surprise, 'The Politics of Evasion' had some impact,'' Galston recently told me. ''With the election of Bill Clinton, this little insurgency within the Democratic Party succeeded.'' He paused. ''Temporarily.''

This February, more than three decades after their original salvo, Galston and Kamarck, now both senior fellows at the Brookings Institution, published ''The New Politics of Evasion.'' Once again, they argued Democrats have swerved too far to the left: ''A substantial portion of the Democratic Party has convinced itself that Americans are ready for a political revolution that transforms every aspect of their lives. This assumption has crashed into a stubborn reality: Most Americans want evolutionary, not revolutionary, change.'' Once again, they argued that Democrats have ignored the political salience of cultural issues to their detriment: ''For Americans across the political spectrum, social, cultural and religious issues are real and -- in many cases -- more important to them than economic considerations. These issues reflect their deepest convictions and shape their identity.''

But unlike three decades ago, Galston and Kamarck were actually a little late to the fight. In the past few years, a growing and increasingly vocal cohort of strategists, policy wonks and intellectuals has been arguing that Democrats have overreached on social and cultural issues and that, as a result, the party has become unable to appeal to voters without college degrees -- and, increasingly, not just white voters in that group but Hispanic, Asian American and Black voters too. From 2012 to 2020, the support of nonwhite voters without college degrees for the Democratic presidential candidate decreased by 10 percentage points. Much as in the early 1990s, the most vibrant and urgent discussion in Democratic circles currently revolves around why and how the party needs to steer itself back to the center.

''For Democrats to win, we have to cater a lot more to moderates,'' Sean McElwee told me recently at an Australian coffee shop in Washington's Logan Circle neighborhood. Just 29 years old, with a baby face that makes him appear even younger, McElwee runs Data for Progress, a left-leaning polling firm and think tank that in only four years has come to occupy a central place in the Democratic Party firmament. Its ascent is especially remarkable considering where the firm -- and McElwee -- started.

He burst onto the political scene early in Donald Trump's presidency as a Resistance Twitter personality who popularized the slogan ''Abolish ICE'' and hosted a weekly East Village happy hour for New York's left-wing activists and writers. He started Data for Progress in 2018 with the express intent of driving the Democratic Party to the left. As a self-proclaimed socialist, McElwee's early activism revolved around helping far-left candidates win Democratic primaries in safe blue districts. He was an adviser to the left-wing political group Justice Democrats, which fueled the rise of Ocasio-Cortez, as well as Ayanna Pressley, Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, a.k.a. the Squad. He liked to call himself an ''Overton window mover.'' (The term refers to a reframing of what is politically possible.)

But during the 2020 presidential primaries, just when practically every Democratic candidate except Joe Biden was jumping through that window by promising to abolish ICE and provide Medicare for all and eliminate student debt, McElwee himself started favoring what he calls ''a more pragmatic approach.'' The reason? While he personally still supported many of these left-wing policy proposals, Data for Progress's polling showed that they weren't actually popular with voters -- or at least not with the ***working-class***, non-college-educated voters Democrats need to win outside those safe blue districts.

McElwee concluded that if Democrats ever want to accomplish their progressive goals, they need to get elected first -- and the way to do that is to do a lot of polling to determine the popularity of various policy proposals. Then, when talking to voters, Democratic candidates should emphasize the popular ideas and de-emphasize the unpopular ones, even if that means emphasizing smaller, more incremental, more moderate policies. ''I'm now just interested in a fundamentally different set of tactics and tools than I was six or seven years ago,'' McElwee told me.

The electoral theory to which McElwee now subscribes has come to be known as ''popularism.'' Its most prominent proponent is David Shor, one of McElwee's best friends. A 30-year-old data analyst, Shor crunched numbers for Obama's 2012 re-election campaign and later went to work for the progressive data firm Civis Analytics. In 2020, during the widespread protests after the murder of George Floyd, he tweeted, ''Post-MLK-assassination race riots reduced Democratic vote share in surrounding counties by 2 percent, which was enough to tip the 1968 election to Nixon,'' citing a study by the Black political scientist Omar Wasow, and noted that nonviolence was more politically effective. Online activists were furious, with some branding his tweet racist, and after a pressure campaign from outside and inside the firm, Civis fired him -- making Shor a political martyr for those who believed the Democratic Party and progressive institutions had become too beholden to far-left activists and liberal political staff members.

Now free to speak his mind, Shor co-founded the data-analytics firm Blue Rose Research and began tweeting more and giving lengthy interviews that expanded on his theory. ''I think the core problem with the Democratic Party is that the people who run and staff the Democratic Party are much more educated and ideologically liberal and they live in cities, and ultimately our candidate pool reflects that,'' he told The Times's Ezra Klein last October. ''If you look inside the Democratic Party, there are three times more moderate or conservative nonwhite people than very liberal white people, but very liberal white people are infinitely more represented. That's morally bad, but it also means eventually they'll leave.''

Joining Shor and McElwee in the effort to propagate popularism are a host of other liberal-but-tacking-to-the-center writers and thinkers. Ruy Teixeira, a political scientist and co-author of the influential 2002 book ''The Emerging Democratic Majority,'' writes for a Substack newsletter called ''The Liberal Patriot,'' publishing missives on ''The Democrats' Common Sense Problem,'' ''The Democrats' ***Working Class*** Voter Problem'' and ''The Bankruptcy of the Democratic Party Left.'' Matthew Yglesias, a prodigious pundit who co-founded Vox in 2014 before leaving in 2020 because he felt hemmed in by the ''young-college-graduate bubble'' at the website, now writes his own Substack newsletter, ''Slow Boring.'' ''Part of what we're doing here is rediscovering old ideas,'' Yglesias told me. ''I sometimes use the phrase 'the wisdom of the ancients.' None of these popularism ideas are particularly original or say anything that people haven't said for a long time. They just became unfashionable briefly.''

Writing in The Nation last October, Elie Mystal accused Shor and his comrades of counseling Democrats to ''figure out what the racists want and give it to them.'' The popularists, Mystal continued, ''would have us believe that by not addressing Black concerns, by refusing to deliver on promises to fix the election system, the immigration system and the police system, Democrats are actually helping themselves attract white voters and counterintuitively, shoring up support from non-college-educated Black people.''

Other popularism critics question the wisdom of relying on polls to develop a ''popular'' agenda at a time when political polling has never been more unreliable. They also point out that popularism's most prominent preachers are New York- and Washington-based college-educated white guys themselves, whose evidence for what ***working-class*** voters want is, the Johns Hopkins University political scientist Daniel Schlozman says, ''either survey data or the limited interactions that fancy people have with not-fancy people.'' Instead of trying to win over voters who most likely aren't winnable, the liberal critique of popularism holds, Democrats should instead redouble their efforts to bring Black and Hispanic voters, as well as college-educated white voters, to the polls. ''Overpowering Republicans with enthusiasm and turnout is the only way to beat them,'' Mystal wrote, ''because trying to appease them is both morally intolerable and strategically foolish.''

Popularists argue that Democrats have already tried and failed to win elections with the enthusiasm-and-turnout model. ''The other side gets to vote too,'' Teixeira wrote in January, ''and the very stark choices favored by those on the left may mobilize the other side just as much -- maybe more! -- than the left's side.'' (A recent review of 400 million voting records by the political scientist Michael Barber and the public-policy scholar John B. Holbein found that ''minority citizens, young people and those who support the Democratic Party are much less likely to vote than whites, older citizens and Republican Party supporters.'') Over a recent lunch at a Chinese-Korean restaurant near Dupont Circle in Washington, Teixeira held out hope that after November, the wisdom of the popularists' case will be even more apparent. ''We're probably going to have a very rough midterms, and the appetite for change among Democrats will grow,'' he said. ''Defeat tends to concentrate a party's mind.''

No matter how likely the prospect of humiliating defeat, it's a job requirement of the D.C.C.C. chairman to exude pugnacious confidence. As even his harshest critics would concede, Sean Patrick Maloney, the first openly gay person to hold the post, has a knack for that part of the job. ''Sean makes me think of the old adage about Irishmen,'' says Representative Matt Cartwright of Pennsylvania, the only Democrat who is running for re-election to win in a Trump district in 2016, 2018 and 2020 and one of three Frontliners from the Keystone State. ''They see two people fighting, and they ask, 'Is this a private fight or can anybody get in?'''

Now in his sixth term representing a congressional district in the Hudson Valley, Maloney, 55, angled to run the House Democratic campaign arm for years: In 2017, he conducted an autopsy of the group's poor performance in the previous year's election; in 2018, he ran for its chairmanship before abandoning the race because of a medical emergency. That Maloney, a close ally of Pelosi's, was finally elected D.C.C.C. chairman in late 2020, just in time to preside over the Democratic debacle that's shaping up to be the 2022 midterms, can make him seem like the dog that caught the car -- an analogy that he naturally rejected. ''You're not the first person who's suggested that,'' he said. ''But I like that people are underestimating us.''

Maloney was enjoying himself -- sipping the remnants of a soda from Shake Shack, gesturing to the three aides monitoring our conversation -- when we talked in the middle of March in the D.C.C.C.'s new Washington headquarters, where cubicle name plates provide both the job title and preferred pronouns of the mostly Gen Z employees.

There was no denying the political headwinds Democrats were facing, but Maloney's exuberance at the time didn't seem entirely irrational: The D.C.C.C. was finishing up a record-breaking fund-raising quarter that would ultimately bring in north of $50 million -- $11.5 million more than its Republican counterpart raised during the same stretch. Maloney pointed to the State of the Union address Biden gave earlier that month -- ''the first time in a long time the American people got to see, without a filter, the guy they actually voted for'' -- and the job Biden was doing marshaling international support for Ukraine -- ''the most impressive presidential performance since the first Gulf War.'' He believed both would improve Biden's languishing support, which in turn would redound to the Democrats' benefit in November. (Since then, Biden's approval rating has dipped below 40 percent and the number of House seats Democrats are predicted to lose has increased.)

More than money and polls, what was fueling Maloney's swagger that afternoon was maps. At the start of the redistricting process that followed the 2020 census, Republicans appeared to hold the upper hand, with total control of the process in 19 states. Indeed, some election experts predicted that the G.O.P. would be able to retake the House in 2022 based solely on gains from newly redrawn congressional maps. But working closely with Democratic officials in the handful of states where they controlled redistricting -- including Illinois, Maryland and New Mexico -- Maloney and the D.C.C.C. were able to engineer Democratic gains through aggressive gerrymandering of their own. Maloney's most audacious move was in his home state of New York. There, Democratic legislators went around an independent redistricting commission and approved a heavily gerrymandered map. Their party gained an advantage in 22 out of 26 House districts, halving the number of safe Republican seats from eight to four.

When I met with Maloney at the D.C.C.C., it looked as if Democrats had not just fought Republicans to a draw in the redistricting battle but had actually gained a few seats. ''We beat 'em,'' Maloney crowed. Of course, one driver of the political polarization that Maloney and other moderate Democrats denounce is the sort of aggressive gerrymandering that creates so many safe seats and so few competitive ones: In 2022, fewer than 40 seats out of 435 are considered competitive -- in other words, seats in districts that Biden or Trump won by 5 percent or less in 2020.

''Competitive districts marginalize ideological extremism and foster moderation in Congress,'' Richard H. Pildes, a New York University law professor, has written. ''Safe seats foster extremism.'' Given that reality, I asked Maloney if he had any mixed feelings about the victory, considering the Democrats achieved it with such extreme gerrymanders -- noting, of course, that Republicans would have done the same thing if given the opportunity. ''They did have the opportunity and they [expletive] it up,'' he shot back. ''That's what beating them means.''

But the beatdown would prove ephemeral. Later that month, a Maryland judge threw out the state's congressional map, calling it an ''extreme partisan gerrymander.'' A week after that, a judge in New York ruled that state's new map unconstitutional. In May, the New York judge approved a new congressional map, drawn by a Carnegie Mellon political scientist, that undid all of the Democratic gains by creating what experts deemed 15 safely Democratic seats, five safely Republican seats and six tossups. Adding to New York Democrats' misery, the new map either eliminated or drastically altered the districts of at least six Democratic incumbents.

One of them was Maloney. An hour after the new, court-ordered maps were released, he announced on Twitter that he was switching from the Hudson Valley district he has represented since 2013 to a neighboring, now bluer district rooted in Westchester County but extending north to Putnam County, where he lives. (Members of Congress are not required to live in the district they represent.) The only problem? Much of the district he was moving to is currently represented by his Democratic colleague Mondaire Jones. The prospect of the Democrats' midterms chief forcing a member-on-member primary -- much less a member-on-member primary involving a Black freshman incumbent like Jones -- did not go over well with many House Democrats. Suddenly, all the internecine Democratic tensions that were Maloney's job to resolve, or at the very least elide, were focused squarely on him.

''Sean Patrick Maloney did not even give me a heads up before he went on Twitter to make that announcement,'' Jones told Politico. ''And I think that tells you everything you need to know about Sean Patrick Maloney.'' Representative Ritchie Torres of New York, a Black freshman member like Jones, complained about the ''thinly veiled racism'' of Maloney's maneuverings. Others noted the presumption of Maloney, the man tasked with protecting the Democrats' House majority, creating an open seat and giving Republicans a better opportunity to win his current district this fall. Ocasio-Cortez called on Maloney to step down as D.C.C.C. chairman if he wound up in a primary versus Jones.

In the end, Jones switched from his Westchester district to a new one miles away in New York City. But that didn't completely defuse the situation. Alessandra Biaggi, a progressive New York state senator from Westchester, decided to challenge Maloney in the August primary, securing the endorsement of Ocasio-Cortez. Biaggi attacked Maloney not just as ''an establishment, corporatist'' Democrat but for putting his own political fortunes above those of the Democratic Party's. ''What hurt the party was having the head of the campaign arm not stay in his district,'' she told reporters, ''not maximize the number of seats New York can have to hold the majority.''

''This is so counterproductive,'' Jim Messina, Obama's 2012 campaign manager, wrote on Twitter about Ocasio-Cortez's support of Biaggi's primary challenge to Maloney. ''The Supreme Court is about to outlaw abortion. We could lose both houses. So we are going to focus our time running against each other. Now we're primarying committed progressives because ... why? If we lose the House it's because of dumb [expletive] like this.''

With their majority or their own re-elections in doubt, many House Democrats are already heading for the exits in a pre-midterm exodus. So far, 33 House Democrats have announced that they will not compete for their seats in November. Some are leaving to run for other offices, but most are retiring. And while some Democratic retirees represent solidly blue districts and will almost certainly be replaced by other Democrats, many of them hold the sort of purple -- or even red -- seats that Democrats have little chance of keeping unless they have an incumbent running.

In the middle of March, the mood was funereal in the office of Stephanie Murphy, a Democratic congresswoman from Florida who announced last December that she would not be running again for her purple Orlando-area seat. She had just watched the Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky give a video address to a joint session of Congress, during which he shared footage of Ukrainian women and children packing bags and weeping as they said goodbye to their husbands and fathers who were staying to fight the Russians. Murphy, whose family escaped Vietnam by boat when she was an infant, wiped away tears. ''I'm a little emotional about it,'' she explained. ''Those images have been hard for me to watch.''

As Murphy reflected on her time in Congress, her emotions seemed no less raw. She was first elected to the House in 2016, defeating a 12-term Republican incumbent whose district had become more Democratic after the state Supreme Court made lawmakers redraw Florida's congressional lines. But it was hardly blue and Murphy won by hewing to the center on fiscal issues and foreign policy.

Once in Washington, she joined the Blue Dogs. In the group's early years, most of its members were older white men from the South who were not just fiscal conservatives but cultural ones as well -- firm in their opposition to gun control, abortion and gay people serving in the military. In 2018, when Murphy, an Asian American woman who just turned 40, became the group's co-chairwoman, it was a sign of how even the Blue Dogs had changed amid the Democratic Party's leftward march. ''I'd love for the world to stop using 'conservative Democrat' to define Blue Dogs,'' Murphy told The Washington Post. ''Because I am pro-choice, I am unabashedly pro-L.G.B.T.Q., I am pro-gun-safety.'' (In addition to Murphy, the Blue Dogs also now have two Black and four Hispanic members.)

Murphy preferred to describe herself as a moderate; her main areas of disagreement with her fellow House Democrats were about national security and pocketbook issues (she supported a law that toughened penalties for deported immigrants who try to re-enter the United States and another that allows new businesses to deduct more of their start-up expenses). For her first two years in Congress, with Trump as president and Democrats in the minority, she was able to stake out moderate positions with little pushback from members of her caucus. But after 2018, when Democrats took back the House, her moderation became a sore point.

Things came to a head last August. After the Senate passed a bipartisan $1 trillion infrastructure bill, the House Progressive Caucus, led by Representative Pramila Jayapal of Washington, announced that a majority of its 96 members would not vote for the bill until the Senate passed Biden's $3.5 trillion Build Back Better social spending package, which hinged on the support of two moderate Democratic senators, Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona. Pelosi agreed not to hold a House vote on the infrastructure bill until the Senate passed Build Back Better.

Murphy was one of about a dozen or so moderate Democrats in the House who urged Pelosi to hold a vote on the infrastructure bill right away. The most aggressive was Gottheimer. He led a group -- dubbed the Gottheimer Nine by Capitol Hill reporters -- who threatened not to vote for a budget resolution intended to pave the way for Build Back Better and eventually extracted from Pelosi a promise to schedule a House vote on the infrastructure bill in late September, regardless of whether Build Back Better had passed the Senate at that point. When the deadline that Pelosi agreed to came and went without a vote, Gottheimer attacked her in a statement for breaching ''her firm, public commitment.''

Murphy was less public in her agitation but no less passionate. ''Parts of the Biden agenda have been delivered in a bipartisan way,'' she says she recalled thinking, ''and when it hits the House, it's like: 'Oh, no, let's not take the win here. Let's make sure that we try to shove as many progressive pipe dreams''' -- she was referring to Build Back Better -- '' 'as we can into this pragmatic piece of legislation to basically sink it.''' She became the target of intensive lobbying from Pelosi and her leadership team and even from Biden himself. In an August phone call, the president -- who had moved in a steadily more progressive direction after winning his party's nomination as a moderate -- told her that if she opposed the budget resolution paving the way for Build Back Better, on the grounds that the House should vote for the infrastructure bill first, then she was opposing his entire agenda. Murphy says the call ended abruptly. ''The White House's approach has been to do things on a partisan basis and try to bludgeon their own members into submission,'' she told me. (''They had a good conversation in which the president made his case, and Representative Murphy voted in favor of the resolution in August,'' Andrew Bates, a White House spokesman, says.)

In mid-November, after months of negotiations and public dithering, the House finally passed the infrastructure bill. A couple of weeks later, Gottheimer, Murphy and other moderate Democrats helped the House pass a $1.8 trillion version of Build Back Better, only to watch Manchin torpedo the bill in the Senate the following month. Pelosi's allies insisted that the delay on infrastructure was irrelevant. ''I don't think there's one voter in a swing district who gives a [expletive] whether infrastructure got passed on a Tuesday or a Thursday,'' Maloney told me. ''They're not reading Punchbowl'' -- the Capitol Hill-focused newsletter by and for people who think Politico is too broad in its coverage -- ''every day and following the ins and outs of Gottheimer this and Pramila that.''

But many other moderate Democrats viewed its passage, coming as late as it did, as a Pyrrhic victory at best. ''Not pushing the infrastructure bill in the House immediately was the biggest mistake of Biden's term because it essentially said a couple things,'' Al From argues. ''One, it said progressives still drive the Democratic Party even though he beat them in the primaries. Second, it said he really doesn't mean this bipartisan thing, because when push comes to shove, he's going to let the most partisan people in his party lead his course.''

Almost as disconcerting from Murphy's perspective was a flood of negative ads that not just conservative groups but also outside liberal groups began running against her in her Florida district. ''You would have thought it was October of the 'on' year,'' Murphy told me, referring to election years. ''For all that Democrats rail about the super PACs, I would say that there are parts of our party that have very effectively used super PACs as a tool against their own Democratic members to ensure party unity. And so a moderate member these days takes incoming in equal proportion from the left and from the right.''

Murphy told me that the negative advertising against her and other moderates, including New York's Kathleen Rice, who is retiring, and Maine's Jared Golden, who is a Frontliner, ''takes money to repair,'' and she maintained that in a world where online small-dollar donations are the coin of the realm, money can be difficult for moderates to raise. ''I'm a member who has been repeatedly named as one of the most effective and bipartisan members on the Hill,'' Murphy, who serves on the House Jan. 6 committee, said. ''Nobody knows who I am.'' Colleagues she deemed far less effective legislators, meanwhile, had Twitter and Facebook followings in the millions while hers were stuck in the mid-five figures. ''Social media platforms provide folks the ability to focus more on making statements than making law,'' she said. ''The crazier things you say, the more money you raise. The more antagonistic you are to the other party, the more money you raise.''

This has put Murphy and her fellow moderates in a bind. They tend to represent or run in competitive districts, which require a lot of campaign money but also punish extremism. This year, Henry Cuellar, a Blue Dog from South Texas who is the only remaining anti-abortion Democrat in the House, faced a progressive challenger in his district's Democratic primary who outraised him by more than $1 million; in the end, Cuellar won the primary in May by fewer than 300 votes. The South Carolina congressman James Clyburn, the House majority whip and the highest-ranking Black member of Congress, had traveled to Texas to campaign for Cuellar, angering liberal Democrats like Ocasio-Cortez, who attacked senior Democrats who supported Cuellar for ''an utter failure of leadership.'' Clyburn backed Cuellar, he explained, because he believes Cuellar provides the Democrats their best chance to win in November in a district that, like many in South Texas, has been moving toward the G.O.P. ''Cuellar could not get elected in my district, but I could not get elected in his district,'' Clyburn told me. ''Our job is to try to reconcile those differences.'' He added: ''It doesn't mean you occupy the same space. You are under the same umbrella.''

But the Blue Dogs' share of the space under that umbrella is shrinking. In 2010, the Blue Dogs had 54 members. Today that number stands at 19. Of that group, Murphy is one of three who are leaving Congress on their own volition; two more lost their primaries. Six of the Blue Dogs who will be on the ballot in November are Frontliners. All of which means that come January, there could be fewer than a dozen Blue Dogs left in the House.

Making matters worse, Murphy and some of her fellow moderates believe that the Democrats' own House campaign arm is working against them. Last summer, during the height of the impasse over the infrastructure bill and Build Back Better, Maloney or members of his D.C.C.C. staff reached out to several centrist representatives to warn that the Democrats' majority would be in jeopardy if they thwarted Biden's legislative priorities. Some of these centrists, who face tough re-election campaigns, interpreted the outreach as a not-so-veiled threat that their own fund-raising help from the party would be at risk if they didn't get in line. ''You want your political arm to be focused on politics, not policy,'' Murphy told me. ''My belief is that the D.C.C.C. has one job and one job alone: to protect incumbents and expand the majority. And becoming an extension of leadership, and working against members that you're supposed to protect, runs crosswise with your sole mission.''

Until 2016, the D.C.C.C. chair was appointed by the House Democratic leader every two years. But after their party's poor performance that November, House Democrats made the D.C.C.C. an elected position, throwing open the selection process to the entire caucus. Murphy argues that changed both the nature of the job and the type of politician who seeks it. ''It usually means that person has aspirations to continue in Democratic leadership,'' she said, ''and in order to secure a position in Democratic leadership, you have to be able to secure the progressive left support. I think that is in conflict with your objective as D.C.C.C. chair, which is to protect incumbents and the majority and the center-left members who deliver you the majority.'' (Other moderate Democrats defend Maloney. ''Part of what the D.C.C.C. has done, under Chairman Maloney's leadership, is to really focus on empowering those of us who know our districts best to do what we need to do,'' the Nevada congressman Steven Horsford, a Problem Solver and a Frontliner, told me.)

When I put Murphy's criticism to Maloney, he bristled. Being elected rather than appointed ''means you're responsive to the caucus,'' he argued. ''I have to earn it every day with members of the Democratic caucus, all of whom have concerns about their own elections, their new districts, their fund-raising, their dues.'' As for Murphy's claim that Maloney and the D.C.C.C. were not sufficiently attuned to the needs of moderate members, Maloney got personal. ''Those of us who are going to stay in this fight and defend this majority appreciate the service and points of view of our colleagues who are walking out the door,'' he said. ''And just to put a finer point on it, my district is a lot tougher than that person's you mentioned. When Hillary Clinton was winning Stephanie Murphy's district by seven, she was losing mine by two. In other words, I inhabit the concerns that she's expressing. So if there's one person who I think would get that balance right, it would be a person whose own seat depends on it -- and that's me.''

Susan Wild was elected to her eastern Pennsylvania district in the Democratic wave of 2018, replacing the retiring moderate Republican Charlie Dent -- who had represented the district for 13 years and whose departure from Congress was viewed as a sign of just how inhospitable the G.O.P. had become for moderates. Dent was known for crossing the aisle to work with Democrats, especially during Trump's presidency, when he clashed with his fellow Republicans on their attempts to repeal Obamacare and impose a travel ban, and Wild, who sometimes voted for Dent, has tried to model her congressional career after his. ''I think voters here are very, very motivated by people who they consider to be independent of their party,'' Wild told me. ''That was the case with Charlie, and that's the way I think I'm perceived.''

Wild, a former lawyer, was eating a lunch of crab asparagus bisque and blackened tuna roll topped with lobster salad at an upscale bistro in Bethlehem's intermittently gentrifying downtown during Congress's Easter recess. She continued, ''People look at me as a 64-year-old woman who was a lawyer and represented a lot of corporations and hospitals over the years, and they're like, 'Yeah, I'm pretty sure she's not a socialist.''' (She has since turned 65.) She is unequivocal in her support of abortion rights and gay rights and says concerns that critical race theory is being taught in schools are, in her estimation, ''completely cooked up.'' But she talks about these culture-war issues only when asked. Instead, she prefers to focus on her support of business.

''I'm the biggest cheerleader there is for the industries in our district,'' she said, ''including industries that sometimes come under attack from some quarters for reasons that aren't necessarily legitimate.'' She noted her support for local cement companies -- which environmentalists criticize for their carbon emissions -- as well as for an Allentown manufacturer that's being sued by 35 people who accuse it of emitting a toxic gas that caused their cancers. ''The fact of the matter is, the legal process will probably take care of it before any kind of regulatory process will,'' she said of the case. ''But the main thing, again, for me, is being willing to be pro-business.''

Wild is not unusual among moderate Democrats in promoting an economic agenda that champions the interests of industry, Wall Street and the affluent. Although Josh Gottheimer spends a lot of time jousting with the Squad, his signature issue is raising or eliminating the cap on the state and local tax deduction -- not exactly a pressing concern of ***working-class*** voters. (Relatedly, Gottheimer doesn't need to worry about appealing to small-dollar donors. A favorite of Wall Street donors, he currently has $13 million in his campaign war chest.)

And yet, for all their criticism that Democrats have gone too far to the left on social and cultural issues, moderate Democrats rarely confront that drift head-on. Instead, they do battle with a caricature. They say that they don't want to defund the police -- but at this point, not many liberals want to, either.

Moderate Democrats' primary aim on culture-war issues is to try not to offend and to offer something to both sides of the fight. Chrissy Houlahan, the Pennsylvania congresswoman who represents Philadelphia's northern suburbs, told me her own story from the summer of 2020, when she participated in a protest march following the murder of George Floyd. ''The police were side by side with us on their bikes,'' she recalled. ''This is a community that's very unified behind and supportive of our police.''

What most moderate Democrats refuse to do is pick the sorts of big fights the popularists are itching for. ''It's more small-ball stuff,'' Sean McElwee complains. ''We need better moderates.'' He points to Joe Manchin as an example. ''Manchin's moderation, in my view, makes a lot of sense,'' McElwee says. ''People who vote for Republicans are not like, 'I'm voting for Republicans because local companies in West Virginia just need the right tax breaks.' No, they're like: 'I believe that government spending is too big. Too many people don't work. And social change in this country is happening too quickly.' And I don't agree with those things, but that's what those voters believe. And Manchin's the only one who really speaks to those broad ideological concerns.'' What's more, Manchin doesn't just speak to those concerns, he votes on them -- witness his sinking of Build Back Better. ''It's not just values,'' McElwee says. ''To win these races, there's going to have to be some policy as well.''

McElwee was born the same year Bill Clinton was elected president, but Ruy Teixeira, 70, was there when moderates remade the Democratic Party three decades ago. ''The thing about moderates today is I don't think they have a worldview,'' Teixeira says. ''They're just reacting to what A.O.C. and the Democratic left are doing. But what's their alternative? I don't think they have an alternative. 'Don't do dumb stuff' is not a worldview.'' Perhaps one day in the future, maybe as soon as November, moderate Democrats will refashion their worldviews according to Teixeira's and Yglesias's Substacks and McElwee's and Shor's tweets the way Clinton and a previous generation of moderate Democrats once based theirs on ''The Politics of Evasion.'' But that day has yet to arrive.

In the meantime, for all their paeans to kitchen-table issues and support for first responders, the moderate Democrats running for re-election are finding a chillier reception in the communities that ushered them into office -- and their party into the majority -- four years ago. Susan Wild's Lehigh Valley congressional seat, which was already considered a swing district when she won it in 2018 and 2020, became redder under the new congressional maps drawn by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and is now ''about as competitive and centrist a district as you're going to find in American politics,'' says Chris Borick, a political analyst at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa. The Cook Political Report recently moved it from ''Tossup'' to ''Lean R'' (for Republican). In Washington, Wild shares an apartment with another Frontliner, Cindy Axne of Iowa, who was also elected in the Democratic wave of 2018. ''For the longest time before we had our new maps, I would listen to Cindy on the phone with people, saying, 'I'm in the toughest district in the country, blah, blah, blah,''' Wild told me. ''But now even she says, 'Susan and I might be in just about the same situation.''' (The Cook Political Report also recently moved Axne's district from ''Tossup'' to ''Lean R.'')

But Wild insisted that they would both buck the national trend. ''I think Cindy and I are still roommates next year,'' she said. ''Cindy can talk fertilizer with the best of them.'' As for her own political prospects, Wild continued: ''I will win this race based on the fact that my district knows me, the fact that we've been out there working our tails off and have gotten a lot of things done. We've actually gotten things accomplished for constituents that probably never would have voted for me in 2018, who are now pretty satisfied with some work we've done for them.''

One morning during the Easter recess, Wild put her theory to the test at an Allentown fire station. She held up a poster-size check bearing her congressional logo that was made out to the Allentown Fire Department for $129,593; the memo line explained it was for a new emergency-operations center. The money was part of nearly $10 million in earmarks -- or, as they're now called, ''Community Project Funding'' -- that Wild had secured for her district in the $1.5 trillion federal spending bill the House passed the previous month. ''Our community is going to be safer and more protected,'' Wild said, presenting the check to Allentown's mayor and fire chief, ''thanks to this funding.''

Among the small crowd of reporters, firefighters and elected officials who had gathered to watch Wild's presentation was Daryl Hendricks, a jut-jawed man with a thick mustache who is a member of Allentown's City Council. Before going into politics, Hendricks spent 36 years as an Allentown police officer; now he chaired the City Council's public-safety committee. ''This is near and dear to my heart,'' he told me, nodding to the rescue trucks and firefighters.

But Hendricks's warm feelings did not extend toward Wild. ''I think she's having a tough time,'' he said. ''I think all Democrats are.'' Hendricks was a Democrat himself. He'd been one since he was 18, he said, when he was told that the Democratic Party was ''the ***working-class*** party'' and the Republican Party was ''the party of the rich.'' ''So there was no question what I was going to be,'' he said. But he felt that, in recent years, the Democratic Party had lost its way.

''Look what's going on in the country today,'' he said. ''It started with the border. I think it's the most pressing problem we're facing today.'' He continued: ''Let's get an immigration policy in place. What other countries allow what we do? It's crazy.'' The economy wasn't any better. ''They're all complaining that they didn't pass the Build Back Better bill. How bad are we now with inflation?'' He didn't believe the Democrats had any solutions. ''I think the policies are just bad.''

Standing in the fire station as the people around us talked excitedly about the new emergency-operations center to come, I asked Hendricks, whose anger had given way to resignation, if he thought Wild could do enough in the cities and towns of her district to offset these larger and more profound problems facing the country. ''No,'' he answered, shaking his head. ''It's a matter of the national atmosphere right now.'' Did he think he was going to have a new congressperson next January? Hendricks didn't hesitate. ''I do.''

Jason Zengerle is a contributing writer for the magazine. He last wrote about the rise of the Tucker Carlson politician. He is also working on a book about Tucker Carlson and conservative media.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUSTIN METZ) (MM26-MM27

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**Load-Date:** July 3, 2022

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[***Labour Holds On to U.K. Parliament Seat, Easing Pressure on Its Leader***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6324-D1S1-DXY4-X4TN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 2, 2021 Friday 16:54 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 774 words

**Byline:** Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** The election this week of the sister of Jo Cox, a lawmaker who was killed in 2016, was seen as a victory for Labour’s leader in a region where Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Conservatives had made big inroads.

**Body**

The election this week of the sister of Jo Cox, a lawmaker who was killed in 2016, was seen as a victory for Labour’s leader in a region where Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Conservatives had made big inroads.

LONDON — Britain’s opposition Labour Party on Friday scored an unexpected if narrow victory in a battle for an open Parliament seat that was widely seen as a critical test for the party’s leader, [*Keir Starmer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/world/europe/keir-starmer.html), who has been under pressure for failing to revive the party’s fortunes.

Many had expected that the Conservatives would take the seat, which Labour has held since 1997, because of the spoiler campaign of George Galloway. The victory will be a big relief for Mr. Starmer, who faced criticism in May when [*his party lost a by-election in Hartlepool*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/world/europe/uk-boris-johnson-conservatives-election.html), another former stronghold in the north of England.

That result added weight to the idea that support for Labour had collapsed in [*the “red wall,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/13/world/europe/uk-election-labour-redwall.html) former industrial areas of England in which Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Conservatives have been making big inroads.

Results announced early Friday gave the Labour candidate, Kim Leadbeater, a win of just 323 votes over her Conservative Party rival, Ryan Stephenson, after an acrimonious contest in Batley and Spen, one of Labour’s traditional heartland seats in northern England.

Voting in the by-election took place on Thursday after a campaign marred by claims of intimidation, including one episode in which Ms. Leadbeater was heckled aggressively and another that led to the arrest of a man on suspicion of assault in connection with an attack on Labour supporters.

Ms. Leadbeater acknowledged that it had been “a grueling few weeks” but added, “I am absolutely delighted that the people of Batley and Spen have rejected division and they voted for hope.”

Labour fought hard to retain Batley and Spen, which was represented in [*Parliament*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/18/world/europe/david-amess-attack-parliament.html) by Ms. Leadbeater’s sister, [*Jo Cox*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/17/world/europe/jo-cox-british-mp.html), until she was murdered by a far-right fanatic in 2016.

Ms. Leadbeater’s narrow path to victory was a complicated one. She was competing not only against the Conservative candidate, Mr. Stephenson, but also against Mr. Galloway, a former lawmaker and veteran left-wing campaigner who sought to divert support from Labour.

Although Labour held off the challenge from Mr. Galloway, its share of the vote in Batley and Spen was lower than in the 2019 general election.

Since [*the Brexit referendum in 2016*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/brexit-uk-eu-explained.html), Mr. Johnson’s Conservative Party has succeeded in winning over many of Labour’s core voters in ***working-class*** communities in the north and middle of England.

Before the result in Batley and Spen, there had been news media speculation that Mr. Starmer would be vulnerable to a leadership challenge if Ms. Leadbeater lost, as many were expecting.

Most analysts believed that Mr. Starmer would have been safe regardless of the result, because there is no credible alternative waiting in the wings. But the victory — narrow as it was — will be especially welcome news for the party leaders, because the contest could have been avoided.

The by-election was triggered in May when the area’s former Labour lawmaker, Tracy Brabin, was elected to another job as West Yorkshire mayor, requiring her to step down from Parliament. Mr. Starmer was accused of mismanaging the situation and putting the seat at risk by allowing her to run for the mayoral position.

Since he took the job of leader last year, Mr. Starmer, a former top prosecutor, has tried to unite the party after it was routed in 2019 parliamentary elections under the stewardship of Jeremy Corbyn, its left-wing leader at the time.

Mr. Starmer’s critics have accused him of a lack of charisma and of failing to set out a convincing alternative policy agenda to that of the Conservatives.

His defenders have appealed for patience and have contended that the pandemic has made it hard for the opposition to impress voters whose attention is focused on government efforts to bring Covid-19 restrictions to an end.

In his election literature, Mr. Galloway had called on voters to abandon Labour to increase pressure on Mr. Starmer and force him out of his job.

When the count was completed early Friday, Ms. Leadbeater won 13,296 votes, Mr. Stephenson was in second place with 12,973 and Mr. Galloway third with 8,264.

Labour “won this election against the odds,” Mr. Starmer said. “And we did so by showing that when we are true to our values — decency, honesty, committed to improving lives — then Labour can win.”

PHOTO: Kim Leadbeater, the Labour candidate, in Huddersfield on Friday after winning the Batley and Spen election. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Danny Lawson/Press Association, via Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 18, 2021

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[***Man Behind the Maps: New York's Most Unexpected Power Broker***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65JR-G6X1-DXY4-X3P4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 29, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1614 words

**Byline:** By Jesse McKinley

**Body**

Jonathan Cervas, a former bartender from Las Vegas, radically redrew New York's House district lines, forcing some Democratic incumbents to scramble for new seats.

He is a postdoctoral fellow from Pittsburgh, a bartender turned political mapmaker. Now, Jonathan Cervas is suddenly New York's most unforeseen power broker.

Last month, a New York State judge chose Mr. Cervas to create new district maps in New York for the House and State Senate, after maps approved by state Democratic leaders were declared unconstitutional.

Mr. Cervas's new maps radically reshaped several districts, scrambling the future of the state's political establishment for the next decade. Republicans were quietly pleased, and some anti-gerrymandering groups praised his work. But Democrats, who saw several potential pickups in the House of Representatives potentially evaporate, were outraged.

Mr. Cervas's decisions -- the rationale for which he outlined in a lengthy explanation released early Saturday -- have already caused vicious infighting and prospective primaries between some incumbent Democrats, including one pitting Representatives Jerrold Nadler and Carolyn Maloney against each other in Manhattan.

For his part, Mr. Cervas, 37, insists he was just doing his job, the importance of which he says has been exaggerated by the fact that the state's changes came so late in the 2022 election cycle.

''People have made a narrative how the House of Representatives is going to be determined by one man who is from Pennsylvania; nothing could be further from the truth, '' he said in a lengthy interview this week, adding that ''people still have to run'' for office.

''I serve the court, I serve democracy. That's it,'' he added. ''If people want to make me important, so be it, but I just stick with my moral principles and things I've learned and apply the law as its written.''

That said, the impact of Mr. Cervas's circumscription has already been profound, creating the likelihood of highly competitive general-election campaigns from Long Island to upstate New York. Some races in the New York State Senate, where Democrats hold a comfortable majority, have also been upended by new lines.

Representative Hakeem Jeffries, who represents parts of Brooklyn and Queens, was particularly galled by the congressional changes, likening the new lines to ''Jim Crow'' laws -- which restricted Black involvement in voting and other aspects of society -- and skewering Mr. Cervas's work as having ''degraded the Black and Latino populations in five New York City-based congressional districts.''

''The unelected, out-of-town special master did a terrible job, produced an unfair map that did great violence to Black and Latino communities throughout the city, and unnecessarily detonated the most Jewish district in America,'' said Mr. Jeffries, who is chairman of the House Democratic Caucus and the second-highest-ranking Black lawmaker in Congress. ''That's problematic and that cannot be excused or explained in any fair or rational fashion.''

Mr. Cervas said that his map ''fully reflected'' how many of New York's largest minority populations -- including Black, Latino, and Asian groups -- are ''geographically concentrated.''

As for Mr. Cervas's political beliefs, they are somewhat hard to divine. He describes his political leanings as ''pro-democracy,'' rather than professing allegiance to any party, though he adds that belief happens ''to align more closely with one party than another.'' He is registered as an independent in Pennsylvania, where he lives, but he says he recently voted in a Republican primary there in hopes of electing moderate members of that party.

What's more, he says he hates politics, preferring institutions and policy to electoral battles.

''I like governance,'' Mr. Cervas said. ''I don't really like the bickering, the animosities, the games. Those types of things are uninteresting to me.''

Mr. Cervas was appointed as a so-called special master by Justice Patrick F. McAllister of State Supreme Court in Steuben County, who ordered new maps drawn up after a successful lawsuit from Republicans. Justice McAllister, a Republican, found that Democratic lawmakers in Albany had adopted lines that were ''unconstitutionally drawn with political bias.''

Mr. Cervas's was appointed in mid-April, after Nate Persily, a Stanford law professor who helped draw New York's current congressional map in 2012, turned down Justice McAllister.

His previous work had been as an assistant on more limited redistricting cases in Georgia, Virginia and Utah. Last year, however, Mr. Cervas was hired for a statewide project, as part of a redistricting commission in Pennsylvania, where the chairman, Mark Nordenberg, said he proved invaluable as a redistricting specialist, as well as having ''a deep knowledge of the law'' and, of course, ''technical, mapping skills.''

''He approached everything we did in a fair and nonpartisan fashion,'' said Mr. Nordenberg, the former chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, noting he ''would hire him again if I had the opportunity.''

That said, Mr. Cervas had never been a special master, particularly on such a tight deadline: about five weeks to deliver the final maps, including and incorporating revisions. He worked with several assistants and solicited comments from the public, both online and in a single, in-person hearing in Steuben County, about 275 miles from New York City.

And while the remoteness of that location made court appearances cumbersome, some anti-gerrymandering advocates made the trip to voice support for the new maps.

''I have to say I was pleasantly surprised,'' said Jerry Vattamala, the director of the Democracy Program at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, which was part of a coalition lobbying for more representation for people of color in New York City, adding that Mr. Cervas seemed responsive to the thousands of comments he received. ''So the six-hour drive, I guess, was worth it.''

In some ways, Mr. Cervas seems destined to have played an outsize role in Democratic woe: He was born, outside Pittsburgh, on Election Day in 1984, when Ronald Reagan humiliated the party's nominee, Walter Mondale, winning a second term. His upbringing -- in two swing states -- was ***working-class***: His father was a field service representative for Whittle Communications, his mother worked at Kmart.

The family moved to Las Vegas in the early 1990s, and Mr. Cervas became interested in politics, eventually studying the topic at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and graduating with a degree in political science. He supported himself by working in a movie theater at a casino and eventually tending bar, a job he said helped him learn how to listen to divergent opinions.

''It's actually an education on how to be moderate,'' he said. ''When people say things that are inflammatory, you have to not take it too personally. ''

If there was a turning point in the road for Mr. Cervas, it may have come nearly a decade ago at a rock concert in Anaheim, Calif.

Mr. Cervas, still bartending, had traveled across state lines to see the Killers, staying near the University of California at Irvine.

''I saw it,'' he said of the university. ''And I really liked it.''

He applied and was accepted to graduate school, where he would build out the roots of what has become a career-long obsession with redistricting and the effects of gerrymandering.

He began studying with Bernard N. Grofman, a noted political scientist and redistricting expert at Cal-Irvine who ''changed my life,'' according to Mr. Cervas. In particular, Mr. Grofman encouraged Mr. Cervas's interest in gerrymandering as well as geographic information systems, sophisticated mapping software that can incorporate reams of data.

Mr. Grofman recalls a hard-working student, likening him to a knowledge-soaking sponge who could map ''at least three times faster'' than his professor.

Mr. Cervas became a research assistant for Mr. Grofman, who was appointed special master on a series of cases, including one involving the Navajo Nation in Utah, which sued over school board and the county commission districts. The federal courts found those districts unconstitutional, and the subsequent remapping seems to have affirmed Mr. Cervas's commitment to his work.

''We drew lines that empowered the Navajo Native Americans,'' he said. ''Nothing felt as great as that moment when I had a direct impact on people's lives. And that continues on every one of these cases.''

Indeed, there is no doubt Mr. Cervas's work in New York -- the nation's fourth largest state, with some 20 million people -- will affect lives, and political careers, as well. He says he's been surprised by the attention paid to his lines, if a little disappointed by the concerns over the electoral consequences.

''Everyone was focused on the horse-race politics, and nobody was focused on how clean our map was,'' he said.

Mr. Cervas says he's still an optimist about the nation's democratic processes and believes that most Americans, like himself, are opposed to ''the nefarious nature of gerrymandering.''

''It's pretty much universal that the public is against these things,'' he said. ''I think people would rather win fair and square.''

For his part, Mr. Grofman says that he feels the critiques of Mr. Cervas have missed how difficult it can be sometimes to account for various criteria like equal population and representation, contiguity and compactness.

''There's like 10 different things you have to balance,'' he said. ''You can't do everything that everybody wants.''

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/28/nyregion/jonathan-cervas-redistricting-maps-ny.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/28/nyregion/jonathan-cervas-redistricting-maps-ny.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Jonathan Cervas, one of the nation's most influential political mapmakers, has radically reshaped several districts in New York. Right, his bookshelf at Carnegie Mellon, where he is a postdoctoral fellow. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROSS MANTLE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 29, 2022

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[***Who Wants to Be Mayor of New York City?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XS-WY31-DXY4-X00Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 5, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 22

**Length:** 1443 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Katie Glueck, Jeffery C. Mays, Dana Rubinstein, Umi Syam and Eden Weingart

**Body**

Eric Adams, 60 DEM 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 he 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.''

Maya Wiley, 57 DEM 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 a Black woman as mayor. 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.

Andrew Yang, 46 DEM 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 his moving his family out of the city during the pandemic and the workplace culture at his presidential campaign and businesses.

Scott M. Stringer, 60 DEM City comptroller; former Manhattan borough president Mr. Stringer has worked in government for years and has suggested that a 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 voters are eager to elect Black, Latino and female candidates in the New York area.

Raymond J. McGuire, 64 DEM 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 was to create 500,000 good-paying jobs, but progressive voters may be wary of any candidate linked to Wall Street.

Shaun Donovan, 55 DEM 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.

Carlos Menchaca, 40 DEM City Council member in Brooklyn Mr. Menchaca is a progressive councilman who helped defeat a rezoning proposal to expand the Industry City complex in Sunset Park, Brooklyn. He supports the ''defund the police'' movement, is an avid cyclist, and has helped create the municipal identification cards known as IDNYC.

Dianne Morales, 53 DEM 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.

Kathryn Garcia, 50 DEM Former city sanitation commissioner Ms. Garcia is running as an experienced manager who can lead the city during a crisis. She oversaw the city's massive trash operation and is respected by many in city government. As part of the de Blasio administration, she helped distribute millions of meals to hungry New Yorkers during the pandemic.

Loree Sutton, 61 DEM Retired Army brigadier general; former head of the city's Department of Veterans' Services Ms. Sutton is a centrist who has not run for office before. She says her leadership experience makes her the best person to help the city recover from the pandemic. She helped reduce homelessness among veterans and wants to address the city's broader homelessness crisis.

Paperboy Prince, 28 DEM 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 Velazquez.

Sara Tirschwell, 55 REP Former Wall Street executive She rose to high positions at financial firms like TCW, the giant asset-management company, and filed a prominent sexual harassment complaint against her boss. Ms. Tirschwell is running as a moderate and believes Democrats have moved too far to the left. She wants to reduce burdensome regulations and increase funding for the City University of New York.

Barbara Kavovit, 55 DEM Founder of a construction firm Ms. Kavovit is best known for her appearances on the television show ''The Real Housewives of New York City.'' She is more conservative than some Democrats in the race; she does not want to cut the police budget and has said that Michael R. Bloomberg was her favorite mayor.

Fernando Mateo, 63 REP 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.

Isaac Wright Jr., 59 DEM Lawyer Mr. Wright was wrongfully convicted on drug charges in 1991. The ABC television show ''For Life'' is based on his story, and he is a producer on the show, along with the rapper 50 Cent. He is calling for city control of the subway and desegregating public schools.

Art Chang, 57 DEM Former managing director at JPMorgan Chase He ran a voter outreach program and wants to create universal daycare for all children from age 1, to serve ''a city of people who primarily live on the edge.''

Joycelyn Taylor, 54 DEM 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.

Aaron Foldenauer, 45 DEM 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.

William Pepitone, 53 REP Former New York City police officer He wants to combat ''anarchy'' in the city by returning to the ''broken windows'' policing strategy that was first widely used in the 1990s, to target minor violations in an effort to prevent serious crimes. He is a nephew of Joe Pepitone, the colorful ex-New York Yankee.

Christopher Krietchman, 40 IND Health and wellness leader A ''futurist'' and former bodybuilder, he once ran a meal delivery program. He wants to improve the city by combating greed and ''white male privilege,'' and allowing New Yorkers to ''rent to own'' a home.

Quanda Francis, 40 DEM Former New York City crime analyst She was a crime analyst for the New York Police Department who has talked about the struggles she faced when she dropped out of high school. She wants to focus on maternal health for women of color after she almost died in childbirth.

Edward Cullen, 34 DEM Entrepreneur A founder of the Harlem Tech Summit, he issued a 110-day plan to help the city rebound from the pandemic, with a focus on public-private partnerships.

Christine Quinn, 54 DEM The former City Council speaker lost her bid for mayor to Mayor Bill de Blasio in the 2013 Democratic primary and is mulling a second run.

Max Rose, 34 DEM After dropping out of the race in January, Mr. Rose, a former congressman, took a job with the Biden administration.

Zach Iscol, 42 DEM A Marine veteran and nonprofit executive, Mr. Iscol dropped out of the race in January to run for city comptroller.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/nyregion/who-wants-to-be-mayor-of-new-york-city.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/04/nyregion/who-wants-to-be-mayor-of-new-york-city.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2021

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[***Biden Versus the Rip Van Winkle Caucus; Paul Krugman***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63PS-9VR1-JBG3-63P9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 27, 2021 Monday 14:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 909 words

**Byline:** Paul Krugman

**Highlight:** Do centrists realize that 2021 isn’t 1999?

**Body**

Political reporting often portrays progressives as impractical and intransigent, unwilling to make the compromises needed to get things done, while centrists are realistic pragmatists. What’s happening in Congress right now, however, is just the opposite.

The Democratic Party’s left wing is advancing sensible, popular policies like negotiating on drug prices and cracking down on wealthy tax cheats, and has shown itself willing to make major compromises to advance President Biden’s agenda. In particular, the $3.5 trillion in spending Biden is asking for over the next decade is [*much less than progressives originally wanted*](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/rep-jayapal-on-progressive-priorities-compromise-on-reconciliation-and-infrastructure). The party’s conservative wing, however, seems willing to risk blowing up its own president’s prospects rather than give an inch.

What’s going on? Contrary to legend, many of the balking Democrats [*don’t come from swing districts*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/09/why-are-there-so-many-democrats-to-joe-bidens-right.html); anyway, the Biden economic agenda is popular almost everywhere. For example, its main elements command overwhelming support in [*West Virginia*](https://www.filesforprogress.org/memos/bbb-wv.pdf). Furthermore, does anyone really imagine that the outcome of the midterm elections will depend on whether the eventual package, if there is one, is $3.5 trillion or $1.5 trillion?

We can, of course, invoke the usual suspects: Corporate money and wealthy donors are surely having an impact. But I was struck by something Eric Levitz of New York magazine said in a [*recent article*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/09/why-are-there-so-many-democrats-to-joe-bidens-right.html) on this subject, which helped clarify a point I’ve been groping toward. Namely, some Democrats seem to have formed their perceptions about both economics and politics during the Clinton years and haven’t updated their views since.

That is, it makes a lot of sense to see Biden’s problems getting his plans across the finish line as being caused by the Rip Van Winkle caucus, Democrats who checked out intellectually a couple of decades ago and haven’t caught up with America as it now is.

Specifically, some Democrats still seem to believe that they can succeed economically and politically by being Republicans lite. It’s doubtful whether that was ever true. But it’s definitely not true now.

On the economic side, there was a widespread perception in the late 1990s that the harshness of American social policy — our high level of inequality, our lack of a European-style social safety net — was to a large extent vindicated by economic success. When Bill Clinton declared in 1996 that “[*the era of big government is over*](https://clintonwhitehouse4.archives.gov/WH/New/other/sotu.html),” it looked as if small government was being rewarded with a booming economy. We were surging ahead technologically and outpacing the rest of the advanced world on job creation; it’s hard to grasp now the sense of American triumphalism that pervaded elite opinion circa 2000.

But it was not to last. The technology-led productivity boom that began in the mid-1990s [*petered out*](https://voxeu.org/article/why-ict-revolution-failed-boost-european-productivity-growth) a decade later. And America never did establish a durable technological lead; at this point, to take one visible measure, many European nations have [*faster*](https://goingdigital.oecd.org/indicator/10) and [*cheaper*](https://www.newamerica.org/oti/reports/cost-connectivity-2020/global-findings/) internet access than we do.

U.S. job creation has also lost its luster: [*prime-age European adults*](https://www.newamerica.org/oti/reports/cost-connectivity-2020/global-findings/) are as likely to be working as their U.S. counterparts.

Beyond economics, in the 1990s many Democrats believed that they could mollify noncollege white voters through a combination of validating rhetoric — denouncing Sister Souljah, talking tough on crime — and cuts in programs widely perceived to mainly benefit Black people. Clinton really did end [*Aid to*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/02/welfare-reform-tanf-medicaid-food-stamps/552299/)Families With Dependent Children, the program most people meant when they talked about “the bums on welfare,” without providing any real replacement.

But none of it worked. If racial antagonism had been driven by perceptions of inner-city disorder, it should have faded in the face of the [*spectacular decline*](https://www.disastercenter.com/crime/uscrime.htm) in violent crime between the early 1990s and the mid-2010s. It didn’t. If this antagonism reflected the perception that many able-bodied Black men who should have been working weren’t, it should have faded when the problem of prime-age men not working (and the social disruptions that appear to go along with lack of jobs) became as severe in [*overwhelmingly white rural areas*](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AustinEtAl_Text.pdf#page=18) as in inner cities. It didn’t.

Instead, the voting behavior of white ***working-class*** voters seems more driven by [*racial resentment*](https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/can-democrats-win-back-the-white-working-class/) than ever. And such voters can’t be won over by trimming back social spending; they want their racial hostility served raw. Trumpists can give them that; Democrats can’t without effectively becoming Trumpists themselves.

In other words, if there was ever a time when individual Democratic members of Congress could hope to swim against the tide by positioning themselves to the right of their party, that time ended long ago. It doesn’t matter how much they force Biden to scale back his ambitions; it doesn’t matter how many pious statements they make about fiscal responsibility. Republicans will still portray them as socialists who want to defund the police, and the voters they’re trying to pander to will believe it.

So my plea to Democratic “moderates” is, please wake up. We’re not in 1999 anymore, and your political fortunes depend on helping Joe Biden govern effectively.

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 Al Drago for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 28, 2021

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[***How a Mapmaker Became New York’s Most Unexpected Power Broker***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65JG-Y6N1-DXY4-X2M1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 28, 2022 Saturday 11:04 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1643 words

**Byline:** Jesse McKinley

**Highlight:** Jonathan Cervas, a former bartender from Las Vegas, radically redrew New York’s House district lines, forcing some Democratic incumbents to scramble for new seats.

**Body**

Jonathan Cervas, a former bartender from Las Vegas, radically redrew New York’s House district lines, forcing some Democratic incumbents to scramble for new seats.

He is a postdoctoral fellow from Pittsburgh, a bartender turned political mapmaker. Now, Jonathan Cervas is suddenly New York’s most unforeseen power broker.

Last month, a New York State judge chose Mr. Cervas to create new district maps in New York for the House and State Senate, after maps [*approved by state Democratic leaders*](https://wskg.org/new-york-legislature-approves-new-congressional-maps/) were declared unconstitutional.

Mr. Cervas’s new maps radically reshaped several districts, scrambling the future of the state’s political establishment for the next decade. Republicans were quietly pleased, and some anti-gerrymandering groups praised his work. But Democrats, who saw several potential pickups in [*the House of Representatives*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/16/nyregion/ny-redistricting-congressional-map.html) potentially evaporate, were outraged.

Mr. Cervas’s decisions — the rationale for which he outlined in [*a lengthy explanation released early Saturday*](https://iapps.courts.state.ny.us/nyscef/ViewDocument?docIndex=/lFG/XXdjY08ES/1iAco1A==) — have already caused [*vicious infighting*](https://www.lohud.com/story/news/2022/05/25/sean-patrick-maloney-and-alessandra-biaggi-face-off-hudson-valley/9900709002/) and prospective primaries between some incumbent Democrats, including one pitting Representatives Jerrold Nadler and Carolyn Maloney against each other in Manhattan.

For his part, Mr. Cervas, 37, insists he was just doing his job, the importance of which he says has been exaggerated by the fact that the state’s changes came so late in the 2022 election cycle.

“People have made a narrative how the House of Representatives is going to be determined by one man who is from Pennsylvania; nothing could be further from the truth, ” he said in a lengthy interview this week, adding that “people still have to run” for office.

“I serve the court, I serve democracy. That’s it,” he added. “If people want to make me important, so be it, but I just stick with my moral principles and things I’ve learned and apply the law as its written.”

That said, the impact of Mr. Cervas’s circumscription has already been profound, creating the likelihood of highly competitive general-election campaigns from Long Island to upstate New York. Some races in [*the New York State Senate*](https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/politics/2022/05/16/court-appointed-master-releases-new-state-senate-lines), where Democrats hold a comfortable majority, have also been upended by new lines.

Representative [*Hakeem Jeffries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/19/nyregion/hakeem-jeffries-jim-crow-redistricting.html), who represents parts of Brooklyn and Queens, was particularly galled by the congressional changes, likening the new lines to [*“Jim Crow” laws*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=igXi3PAatR4) — which restricted Black involvement in voting and other aspects of society — and skewering Mr. Cervas’s work as having “degraded the Black and Latino populations in five New York City-based congressional districts.”

“The unelected, out-of-town special master did a terrible job, produced an unfair map that did great violence to Black and Latino communities throughout the city, and unnecessarily detonated the most Jewish district in America,” said Mr. Jeffries, who is [*chairman of the House Democratic Caucus*](https://jeffries.house.gov/about/) and the second-highest-ranking Black lawmaker in Congress. “That’s problematic and that cannot be excused or explained in any fair or rational fashion.”

Mr. Cervas said that his map “fully reflected” how many of New York’s largest minority populations — including Black, Latino, and Asian groups — are “geographically concentrated.”

As for Mr. Cervas’s political beliefs, they are somewhat hard to divine. He describes his political leanings as “pro-democracy,” rather than professing allegiance to any party, though he adds that belief happens “to align more closely with one party than another.” He is registered as an independent in Pennsylvania, where he lives, but he says he recently voted in a Republican primary there in hopes of electing moderate members of that party.

What’s more, he says he hates politics, preferring institutions and policy to electoral battles.

“I like governance,” Mr. Cervas said. “I don’t really like the bickering, the animosities, the games. Those types of things are uninteresting to me.”

Mr. Cervas was appointed as a so-called special master by Justice Patrick F. McAllister of State Supreme Court in Steuben County, who ordered new maps drawn up [*after a successful lawsuit from Republicans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/nyregion/judge-new-york-redistricting-gerrymandering.html). Justice McAllister, a Republican, found that Democratic lawmakers in Albany had adopted lines that were “unconstitutionally drawn with political bias.”

Mr. Cervas&#39;s was [*appointed in mid-April*](https://www.cmu.edu/ips/news-and-events/articles/jonathan-cervas-named-special-master-new-york-state-redistricting-congressional-maps.html), after Nate Persily, a Stanford law professor who helped draw New York’s current congressional map in 2012, turned down Justice McAllister.

His previous work had been as an assistant on more limited redistricting cases in Georgia, Virginia and Utah. Last year, however, Mr. Cervas was hired for a statewide project, as part of [*a redistricting commission in Pennsylvania*](https://www.cmu.edu/ips/news-and-events/jonathan-cervas-pa-reapportionment-commission.html), where the chairman, Mark Nordenberg, said he proved invaluable as a redistricting specialist, as well as having “a deep knowledge of the law” and, of course, “technical, mapping skills.”

“He approached everything we did in a fair and nonpartisan fashion,” said Mr. Nordenberg, the former chancellor of the University of Pittsburgh, noting he “would hire him again if I had the opportunity.”

That said, Mr. Cervas had never been a special master, particularly on such a tight deadline: about five weeks to deliver the final maps, including and incorporating revisions. He worked with several assistants and solicited comments from the public, both online and in a single, in-person hearing in Steuben County, about 275 miles from New York City.

And while the remoteness of that location made court appearances cumbersome, some anti-gerrymandering advocates made the trip to voice support for the new maps.

“I have to say I was pleasantly surprised,” said Jerry Vattamala, the director of the Democracy Program at the Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund, which was [*part of a coalition lobbying for more representation for people of color*](https://www.aaldef.org/press-release/unity-map-coalition-releases-congressional-plan-for-new-york-city/) in New York City, adding that Mr. Cervas seemed responsive to the thousands of comments he received. “So the six-hour drive, I guess, was worth it.”

In some ways, Mr. Cervas seems destined to have played an outsize role in Democratic woe: He was born, outside Pittsburgh, on Election Day in 1984, when Ronald Reagan [*humiliated the party’s nominee, Walter Mondale, winning a second term*](https://www.nytimes.com/1984/11/07/politics/reagan-wins-by-a-landslide-sweeping-at-least-48-states-gop-gains.html). His upbringing — in two swing states — was ***working-class***: His father was a field service representative for Whittle Communications, his mother worked at Kmart.

The family moved to Las Vegas in the early 1990s, and Mr. Cervas became interested in politics, eventually studying the topic at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and graduating with a degree in political science. He supported himself by working in a movie theater at a casino and eventually tending bar, a job he said helped him learn how to listen to divergent opinions.

“It’s actually an education on how to be moderate,” he said. “When people say things that are inflammatory, you have to not take it too personally. ”

If there was a turning point in the road for Mr. Cervas, it may have come nearly a decade ago at [*a rock concert in Anaheim, Calif*](https://www.setlist.fm/setlist/the-killers/2013/honda-center-anaheim-ca-23d81087.html).

Mr. Cervas, still bartending, had traveled across state lines to see the Killers, staying near the University of California at Irvine.

“I saw it,” he said of the university. “And I really liked it.”

He applied and was accepted to graduate school, where he would build out the roots of what has become a career-long obsession with redistricting and the effects of gerrymandering.

He began studying with Bernard N. Grofman, a noted political scientist and redistricting expert at Cal-Irvine who “changed my life,” according to Mr. Cervas. In particular, Mr. Grofman encouraged Mr. Cervas’s interest in gerrymandering as well as geographic information systems, sophisticated mapping software that can incorporate reams of data.

Mr. Grofman recalls a hard-working student, likening him to a knowledge-soaking sponge who could map “at least three times faster” than his professor.

Mr. Cervas became a research assistant for Mr. Grofman, who was appointed special master on a series of cases, including [*one involving the Navajo Nation in Utah*](https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/ca10/18-4005/18-4005-2019-07-16.html), which sued over school board and the county commission districts. The federal courts found those districts unconstitutional, and the subsequent remapping seems to have affirmed Mr. Cervas’s commitment to his work.

“We drew lines that empowered the Navajo Native Americans,” he said. “Nothing felt as great as that moment when I had a direct impact on people’s lives. And that continues on every one of these cases.”

Indeed, there is no doubt Mr. Cervas’s work in New York — the nation’s fourth largest state, with some 20 million people — will affect lives, and political careers, as well. He says he’s been surprised by the attention paid to his lines, if a little disappointed by the concerns over the electoral consequences.

“Everyone was focused on the horse-race politics, and nobody was focused on how clean our map was,” he said.

Mr. Cervas says he’s still an optimist about the nation’s democratic processes and believes that most Americans, like himself, are opposed to “the nefarious nature of gerrymandering.”

“It’s pretty much universal that the public is against these things,” he said. “I think people would rather win fair and square.”

For his part, Mr. Grofman says that he feels the critiques of Mr. Cervas have missed how difficult it can be sometimes to account for various criteria like equal population and representation, contiguity and compactness.

“There’s like 10 different things you have to balance,” he said. “You can’t do everything that everybody wants.”

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

PHOTOS: Jonathan Cervas, one of the nation’s most influential political mapmakers, has radically reshaped several districts in New York. Right, his bookshelf at Carnegie Mellon, where he is a postdoctoral fellow. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROSS MANTLE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 22, 2023

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[***Your Advice for the Class of 2020; On Politics With Lisa Lerer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YYD-TF31-JBG3-632B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 21, 2020 Thursday 19:20 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1623 words

**Byline:** Lisa Lerer

**Highlight:** We asked On Politics readers — alumni and new graduates — for guidance on navigating our politics.

**Body**

We asked On Politics readers — alumni and new graduates — for guidance on navigating our politics.

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.

[*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) to get On Politics in your inbox every weekday.

Members of the class of 2020, unable to celebrate together at school, have been watching virtual graduation speeches instead from the likes of Barack Obama, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Oprah Winfrey. Shouldn’t they get advice from On Politics readers, too?

Earlier this week, we asked for your (political) advice to graduates entering the world in this extraordinary moment. You offered plenty of thoughts for how to connect at a time when we are all so far apart, divided by physical distance and partisan disagreement.

Here’s some of what you had to say:

As you graduate, the generation before you passes you a baton that is dirty and battered, that points to an unclear path for the future. But we ask of you this: Clear away the dirt from the baton, make it your own and forge a new path, knowing that you and your peers will, ultimately, generate solutions, and that we will love and support you along the way.

— Lucy Bartnick, Wayne, N.J.

Have convictions, and be passionate in them. But also be compassionate toward those who disagree. Concessions are inevitable; do your best to make them equitable. And don’t put your identity in your political affiliation — there are other places in which to find community and value.

— Brian Hawkins, Columbus, Ohio

Seek to engage in meaningful political discussions even when they feel daunting or potentially uncomfortable. Talk to your relative who has different opinions from you, talk to the friend who “isn’t into politics,” talk to someone running for local office who you don’t know yet. Foster empathy and kindness. Be open to changing someone’s mind but don’t let that be your agenda; be open to having your mind changed too. It will be these talks that keep the fabric of our democracy intact.

— Norah Hogan, Brooklyn

Vote! If you don’t use your voice, it won’t be heard. Whatever you believe, you need to vote for it. You’ve been given a chance every two years to make a difference at the national and state level, as well as locally. Don’t miss this opportunity (there are lots of people who hope you do).

— A. LaBan, Chicago

Don’t let the intimidation of people with more experience stop you from finding your voice. Experience is incredibly useful, but so are new perspectives. Sometimes there are people who have been in their position for so long that they aren’t as in touch with how the younger generation is thinking or what we believe in. Don’t belittle their experience or think that it’s unimportant — but at the same time, never let anyone convince you that your viewpoints don’t matter too.

— Rowan Bienes, master of science in forensic psychology, Arizona State University

The world we are about to enter into is fractured. Old divisions, old prejudices, old tensions flare alongside this pandemic. But we know that these fractures are neither the world’s destiny nor its potential. Each of us will find a way to make something beautiful out of the different worlds we enter as we leave this shared one. I know I am so looking forward to seeing you all in person someday soon and hearing about them.

— Mrinalini Sisodia Wadhwa, valedictorian at the American Embassy School in New Delhi

(Submissions were edited and condensed. Thanks to Isabella Grullón Paz for compiling them.)

Trump has talked a lot about Michigan. Today, he visited.

For weeks, President Trump and Gov. Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan [*have criticized each other*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) for their respective handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

But today a truce of sorts was forged as Mr. Trump headed to Michigan to visit a Ford manufacturing plant in Ypsilanti that has been temporarily transformed to create ventilators to help with Covid-19 treatment.

Ms. Whitmer, a Democrat who [*has been mentioned by Joe Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) as a possible running mate, spoke with Mr. Trump on the phone this morning, though she didn’t attend the event at the Ford plant. She said after the call that she hoped Mr. Trump would grant her request to declare a state of emergency for the mid-Michigan communities of Midland and Sanford, which were   [*devastated by flooding this week*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics).

And Mr. Trump obliged. “The governor and I had a great conversation this morning,” he said during the visit. “We signed an emergency declaration quickly.”

Outside the plant, those signs of collegiality disappeared. Several hundred people turned out to show their devotion to Mr. Trump, but their anger at Ms. Whitmer and the way she has handled the coronavirus crisis almost overshadowed their enthusiasm for the president.

Gene Dixon, a retired steel executive from Bloomfield Hills, carried a sign with a single word: “Shamdemic.” He has attended several of the rallies at the state Capitol in Lansing to protest Ms. Whitmer’s stay-at-home order, which she imposed on March 23 but has started to relax in the last couple of weeks.

“I saw landscapers who couldn’t work,” he said. “These are regular people, working people. It’s not right.” (Ms. Whitmer gave landscapers the green light to go back to work two weeks ago.)

Denise O’Connell, 59, of Hartland, a retired I.T. worker for an Ann Arbor hospital, has seen Mr. Trump several times, but didn’t want to miss the opportunity to show her support, especially now during the coronavirus pandemic.

“We’ve got a tyrannical wench running our state,” she said of Ms. Whitmer. “It hurts me that so many people just think Trump is a bad guy, and all he wants is what’s good for America. I think he was elected to lead at this particular time. It’s divine intervention.”

Not all in Ypsilanti were fans of Mr. Trump. A handful of people waved signs with slogans like “Trump Lied. 92,000 people died,” and a dozen cars with anti-Trump sentiments painted on their windows cruised the streets surrounding the manufacturing plant. One driver included this thought in white paint: “Whitmer = My Governor. Trump = Not my president.”

A poll released Wednesday [*by the Detroit Regional Chamber*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) showed that 64 percent of likely Michigan voters approved of Ms. Whitmer’s handling of the coronavirus crisis — up from 57 percent in April — while 43 percent approved of the job Mr. Trump was doing.

Mr. Trump’s approval rating in the state has been at virtually the same level over the last three and a half years, said Richard Czuba of the Glengariff Group, which conducted the poll. “No matter what the president does, he seems to have these exact numbers,” he said.

Ms. Whitmer said Wednesday that she wished the president would tone down his rhetoric and help address the twin problems of Covid-19 and flooding in the state.

She was especially distressed by Mr. Trump’s [*threat to withhold unspecified federal funding from Michigan*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) after Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson announced she would send absentee ballot applications to all of Michigan’s 7.7 million registered voters. Mr. Trump backed off after realizing that Ms. Benson was sending applications and not the actual ballots.

“To see rhetoric like that is disheartening,” Ms. Whitmer said. “We’ve got to take politics out of this.”

(Pro tip from your On Politics editor, a native Michigander: Ypsilanti starts with “ip,” not “yip.”)

From Opinion: Class warfare, but in which direction?

In the Covid-19 crisis, and so in politics, it’s [*the Exposed versus the Remote*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics), says the Times columnist Bret Stephens. “The 2020 election will hinge on who decisively wins the vote of the Exposed,” those whose jobs or lives have been put on the line, he writes. “For the Remote, an image on the news of cars forming long lines at food banks is disconcerting. For the Exposed, that image is — or may very soon be — the rear bumper in front of you.”

Those making the decisions that most affect the Exposed — namely, in favor of the lockdown policies that result in job losses — are the Remote. And the Remote also decide how exposed the Exposed will be, placing them under the rubric of “essential workers.” Stephens quotes Peggy Noonan’s [*2016 column*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics) in The Wall Street Journal, “Trump and the Rise of the Unprotected”: “The protected make public policy. The unprotected live in it.”

The Times columnist [*Michelle Goldberg disagrees*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics). “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,” she argues.

According to Goldberg, “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 reopening “has significant elite support,” she says. “And many of those who face exposure as they’re ordered back to work are rightly angry and terrified.”

That might be where Stephens and Goldberg find union — that those making the decisions that most affect the ***working class*** are rarely of the ***working class***, as Noonan suggested in 2016. Stephens concludes: “Those who think the world can be run by remote control will have their folly exposed to failure by those who know it can’t.”

— Adam Rubenstein

… Seriously

Gov. Andrew Cuomo as a pandemic sex symbol? If you’re on board, this underwear is for you. [*Also available in Newsom and Fauci.*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/on-politics)

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2020

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[***1. Make a List 2. Shop for Groceries 3. Take Out a Loan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:668R-XCC1-JBG3-645J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 31, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Dining In, Dining Out / Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1843 words

**Byline:** By Priya Krishna

**Body**

Josh Roberts didn't think twice about taking out a loan to pay for groceries. It was early in the pandemic, and he was making $16.50 an hour working for a technology company in Cincinnati while supporting his sister and her girlfriend.

''We were just not making enough to live,'' he said.

So he started buying groceries online using a virtual credit card from Klarna, a ''buy now, pay later'' service that allowed him to break payments into smaller installments that could be made over several weeks, with no interest.

Soon Mr. Roberts, 30, was regularly spending beyond his means on food -- chicken breasts, bananas, chips, cereal. He fell behind on payments, and ended up owing more than $1,000 to Klarna, an estimated $100 of it in late fees. He already had about $11,000 in student debt, and another $2,000 in unpaid medical bills.

''I don't want to be in debt for a carrot,'' he said. ''But you have got to do what you've got to do.''

When pay-later services like Klarna, which was founded in Sweden, arrived in the United States about a decade ago, they were largely used for one-time, discretionary purchases like concert tickets and high-end clothing. But as inflation mounts, Americans are increasingly turning to them to finance something much more mundane and essential: what they eat.

And there are signs that the use of these services for repeated, everyday expenses like groceries and restaurant meals is pushing some users, particularly younger people who are already overextended, deeper into debt.

''If you are not financially literate, it is easy to abuse it and say, 'I will just keep using it, it is free money,''' said Mr. Roberts, who has paid off his debt to Klarna and no longer uses the app.

Pay-later companies say their products are a convenient tool -- like layaway plans or credit cards -- to help consumers manage their finances in tough times. The services, with breezy names like Zip, Zilch and Affirm, are easy to use, with well-designed apps, websites, virtual credit cards and widgets. Shoppers can apply for them in a checkout line and be approved in minutes.

Unlike credit cards, most of the services don't charge interest or require applicants to undergo extensive credit checks. There is usually a processing fee for each purchase, typically paid by the merchant.

Pay-later companies are already commonplace in countries like South Korea and Australia. Buoyed by inflation and the rise in e-commerce, they have quickly gained a foothold in the United States, where $45.9 billion in pay-later transactions were made online in 2021, up from $15.3 billion the year before, according to GlobalData, a data analytics company.

Food, which accounted for about 6 percent of those purchases, appears to be an important part of the growth. In the last year, Zip, a company based in Sydney, Australia, says it has seen 95 percent growth in U.S. grocery purchases, and 64 percent in restaurant transactions. Klarna reports that more than half of the top 100 items its app users are currently buying from national retailers are grocery or household items. Zilch, says groceries and dining out account for 38 percent of its transactions.

Philip Belamant, the founder of Zilch, said consumers don't balk at swiping a credit card to buy lunch or coffee. So why shouldn't they use a pay-later plan, with no interest, for those purchases?

''Why would you take a line of credit out to buy a sandwich?'' by using a credit card, he said. ''You are doing it today and paying 20 percent interest on it.''

But critics of services like Zilch say their ease of use can lull shoppers into thinking they can take on more debt with no consequences.

''Buy-now-pay-later companies have really insidiously and ingeniously kind of like marketed themselves and advertised themselves as, 'I am just your friend, I am just here to help you out,''' said Jathan Sadowski, the author of ''Too Smart: How Digital Capitalism Is Extracting Data, Controlling Our Lives and Taking Over the World.''

A pay-later purchase is essentially a loan, he said, with its own pitfalls. Some services charge late fees that can exceed the interest charges on credit cards, according to a March report by Consumer Reports. Companies aren't always transparent about the terms of using the service, and missed payments can hurt users' credit scores.

Pay-later users tend to be economically vulnerable. A July report by the financial services company Fitch Ratings found that they carry more debt than the general population, and that more than 41 percent of applicants have a poor credit history.

The report showed that delinquency rates for some pay-later services more than doubled from June 2021 to last March -- from 1.7 percent to 4.1 percent at Afterpay, for example -- while delinquency rates for major credit cards remained unchanged, at roughly 1.4 percent.

Pay-later services are less regulated than other forms of credit, and it is unclear exactly how many Americans are using them. The federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau monitors firms that offer the loans, and in December opened an inquiry into the business practices of five companies.

But Consumer Reports says many pay-later arrangements are designed to circumvent the Truth in Lending Act, which means they aren't subject to the same disclosure protections as credit cards.

Some credit agencies include pay-later data in their reports, and others are working toward that goal.

So a seemingly trivial decision like paying for chips using a pay-later service can end up seriously harming one's financial health, Mr. Sadowski said. ''Because I used one of these loan services to buy groceries, that might in the future impact my ability to buy a car, get a job, rent an apartment -- all the things that use our credit score to assess and judge our worth in society.''

Some of the companies pointed out that most payments are made on time. At Afterpay, 98 percent of its payments in the first quarter of 2022 didn't incur a late fee, said Alex Fisher, the company's head of North American sales. And the service doesn't allow new purchases by anyone who has missed a payment.

For consumers who keep up with payments, the services can be a boon as food prices soar.

''My husband and I have good jobs, we are able to pay for the things we want to pay for,'' said Ambar Valdez, who works for Medicare in San Antonio. But her grocery bills have almost doubled.

Thanks to services like Klarna and Afterpay, ''I don't have to worry about groceries, and that is great,'' said Ms. Valdez, 30. ''I can focus on my light bill, my phone bill, my internet.''

Jessie Blum, 39, an instructional designer in Rutherford, N.J., didn't need convincing to use a pay-later system for her everyday food purchases.

''If I wanted to pick up a coffee on the way home from somewhere and I didn't have any money in my coffee or eat-out budget, I would push it to next month's budget,'' she said.

Others said it takes some effort to juggle multiple payment plans. Noelle Platt, 27, a stay-at-home mother of one in Kerry, N.C., uses Zip and Sezzle to buy groceries . The number of payments can pile up, she said. ''We had a whole bunch going at once for some reason. It was stressful planning them out.'' But she has been able to manage for now.

She first used the services at the start of the pandemic, when her husband lost his job at a coffee and tea warehouse. As the price of groceries has risen, she still relies on them.

Hannah Brown, a hair stylist in Phoenix, said her paycheck varies from week to week, so she finds it easier to pay for food in installments. But because she pays less up front, she'll spend double what she normally would on takeout meals.

''It doesn't feel like I just spent $80,'' said Ms. Brown, 32, adding, ''I can't say it is a healthy habit.''

Many of her co-workers use pay-later services, she said; several have defaulted on payments, and they aren't the ones who use the loans for clothing. They use them to buy food.

Chris Browning a financial analyst who hosts the podcast ''Popcorn Finance,'' said the growing use of the loans for something as basic as food, he said, signals a weak social safety net. Some states have recently ended or scaled back food-stamp benefits, even though more than 23 million Americans reported being sometimes or often food insecure in June, according to census data.

Without programs to meet people's essential needs, ''something needs to come in to fill the gap,'' Mr. Browning said. ''And when it is based on consumerism and capitalism, this is what fills the gap: companies coming in to make these purchases more attainable, even if there are downsides.''

Mike Taiano, a senior banking analyst for Fitch Ratings. said that what especially concerns him about pay-later loans is that consumers are often encouraged to link their credit cards to the service.

''It potentially creates a cycle-of-debt issue, where consumers are paying off one type of debt with another type of debt,'' and end up paying high interest rates on their credit cards, he said.

Many of the pay-later food purchases have been groceries. But restaurants are edging into that territory. The San Francisco-based payments company Block, Inc. completed its acquisition of Afterpay in January. Restaurants are one of the largest clienteles for Square, Block's retail technology company, and Afterpay has been added to those businesses' point-of-sale systems.

Broad Street Oyster Company, a restaurant in Malibu, Calif., has offered Afterpay for a year, and the owner, Christopher Tompkins said 5 percent of online customers use it.

That may not sound like much, he said, but the average pay-later transaction is 40 percent higher than the average online order, and twice as much as an average in-person order.

Afterpay currently gives Mr. Tompkins a temporary discount on its processing fee. When that discount expires, he said, he might reconsider using the service.

Dennis Cantwell and Monica Wong discovered that their San Francisco restaurant, Palm City Wines, offered a pay-later option when they saw a viral tweet in late June by a customer who joked about paying for a $19 hoagie in installments. The option had come with Palm City's point-of-sale system; Mr. Cantwell said he missed an email telling him how to opt out.

The restaurant no longer offers Afterpay. If it did, Mr. Cantwell said, he would have to raise the price of small menu items by $2 to pay the processing fees.

A hoagie, he said, is ''an old-school ***working-class*** item,'' he added. Financing one? ''It seems so bizarre.''

Or maybe it's not so far-fetched. Mr. Roberts, the grocery customer who got caught up in late fees, said he would rather shop for food at a dollar store than use a pay-later service.

Would he use one to eat out? ''Maybe,'' he said. ''For a really nice meal.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/29/dining/buy-now-pay-later-loans-groceries.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/29/dining/buy-now-pay-later-loans-groceries.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Josh Roberts, who used to buy groceries with a pay-later app, visiting a store in Washington State. (D1)

Through the Klarna app on his phone, Josh Roberts is able to consider the selection of groceries that he might buy. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHONA KASINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Ambar Valdez, who has a steady income, said pay-later services helped her worry less about being able to afford other expenses. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH HUSKIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Philip Belamant, the founder of Zilch, suggested using pay-later services for everyday purchases because there was no interest. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER FLUDE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Christopher Tompkins offers his customers a pay-later option at his restaurant, Broad Street Oyster Company, in Malibu, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON ZAUCHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D4)

**Load-Date:** August 31, 2022

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[***His Life Was Too Boring for a Memoir. So He Wrote Ireland’s.; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650R-3PM1-JBG3-600J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 15, 2022 Tuesday 10:39 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1220 words

**Byline:** Colum McCann

**Highlight:** In “We Don’t Know Ourselves,” Fintan O’Toole reckons with a life spent in a wildly changing homeland.

**Body**

WE DON’T KNOW OURSELVES

A Personal History of Modern Ireland

By Fintan O’Toole

[ This book was named one of the Book Review’s 10 best books of 2022. [*See the full list*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/29/books/best-books-2022.html). ]

“To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the task of the artist now,” declared Samuel Beckett in a 1961 interview. The Irish playwright was talking about the “buzzing confusion” of the day, suggesting that the job of the writer is to find a shape into which the chaos can fit.

Perhaps we have always lived in ages of dubiety, but Beckett’s quote is particularly apt in describing the last 60 years. We have stepped into the eye of a technological and moral storm that has been moving at exponential rates. News is in doubt. Truth is in doubt. Memory is in doubt. Journalism, criticism and fiction also.

One of the many triumphs of Fintan O’Toole’s “We Don’t Know Ourselves” is that he manages to find a form that accommodates the spectacular changes that have occurred in Ireland over the past six decades, which happens to be his life span. “My life is too boring for a memoir,” he writes in the afterword, “and there is no shortage of modern Irish history.” The subtitle of the book is “A Personal History of Modern Ireland.” Indeed, it is not a memoir, nor is it an absolute history, nor is it entirely a personal reflection or a crepuscular credo. It is, in fact, all of these things helixed together: his life, his country, his thoughts, his misgivings, his anger, his pride, his doubt, all of them belonging, eventually, to us.

It is impossible to say where things begin or end, but O’Toole takes the year of his birth, 1958, as the launching pad for an Ireland that would turn itself inside out several times over the course of his lifetime. He attributes the beginning of change to a 250-page document written by the Irish economist T. K. Whitaker, who thought it was a good idea for an Ireland utterly lacking in self-confidence “to shut the door on the past,” and open the country economically and culturally to the rest of the world.

And so began the opening and closing of a battery of doors, not least those that led to the almost unimaginable fall from grace of the Roman Catholic Church, the reform of Irish education, the flare-up and eventual quenching of violence in Northern Ireland, a transformation of the Irish economy and a wild shakeout of the national soul.

O’Toole, an agile cultural commentator, considers himself to be a representative of the blank slate on which the experiment of change was undertaken, but it’s a tribute to him that he maintains his humility, his sharpness and his enlightened distrust. The Irish — mea culpa — have always been willfully ambiguous, unbearably self-conscious and, as O’Toole puts it, riddled with the “known unknowns.” We have experienced decades of half-apertures, of which we have been neither entirely in nor out. But O’Toole manages to navigate the astonishing transformation of a valley of squinting windows into something far more kaleidoscopic.

The book begins, much like the era it represents, a little precariously. Instead of the focused burn that we come to find, the opening is a bit shaky, unconfident, more historical litany than the complete focus we begin to exult in later on. But O’Toole quickly settles down and makes a pact with his reader: I will open up a little panel of my life, which will open, in turn, another. He starts to develop a narrative swagger as compelling as any novel’s. His ***working-class*** Dublin background — his father, Sammy, was a bus conductor and his mother, Mary, worked in a cigarette factory — opens onto a sort of narrative everywhere. The tiny grows epic. The local becomes universal. We skip from year to year, from story to story, from tile-piece to an eventual mosaic.

“The transformation of Ireland over the last 60 years has sometimes felt as if a new world had landed from outer space on top of an old one,” O’Toole writes.

An Ireland of available divorce. An Ireland of gay marriage. An Ireland without bomb blasts. An Ireland finally capable of admitting to the ongoing psychoses, passivity and prejudices that still bind it today, even as it becomes, as O’Toole puts it, “one of the most globalized economies in the world.”

In one chapter, titled “The Killer Chord,” O’Toole is 12 years old and spending the summer of 1970 learning Irish in the Gaeltacht. He unwittingly releases a drift of pigs from a house and later comes across an elegant jumble sale of a man who wields his walking stick like a “conductor’s baton.” The man guides the pigs home with utter assurance and panache. At Mass the next morning, O’Toole sees the same man conducting the choir, and he finds that “the melody was like a meandering river, slow and serene, yet utterly implacable.” The man, it turns out, was the musical genius Seán Ó Riada, who at the time was revolutionizing Irish music from within. O’Toole uses this marvelous cameo to indicate his realization that “the desire for connection was given meaning by the reality that there was still something to connect to, traditions of music and singing and storytelling and language that had their own highly distinctive texture.”

And so it is that O’Toole attributes a distinctive focus, both personal and political, to each unfolding year. The Irish Army in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1961. The entry of the Republic into Europe in 1973. The hunger strikes of 1981. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998. The “grandiose delusions” of the Celtic Tiger in 2008.

O’Toole writes brilliantly and compellingly of the dark times, but he is graceful enough to know that there is humor and light in the cracks. There is a touch of Eduardo Galeano in the way he can settle on a telling phrase. “Being European was the ultimate way of not being British.” “The idea of disappearance hung over the place.” “The violence was strangely weightless.” “There was nothing as simple, or as stable, as mere hypocrisy.” “The Irish economy was most like Humpty Dumpty — bloated, fragile, sitting smugly at a great height and headed for a fall.”

But the real accomplishment of this book is that it achieves a conscious form of history-telling, a personal hybrid that feels distinctly honest and humble at the same time. O’Toole has not invented the form, but he comes close to perfecting it. He embraces the contradictions and the confusion. In the process, he weaves the flag rather than waving it. Near the conclusion of the book, he intones: “What is possible now, and was entirely impossible when I was born, is this: to accept the unknown without being so terrified of it that you have to take refuge in fabrications of absolute conviction.”

The book has no epigraph but if it had, it might belong to James Joyce’s “Ulysses,” itself now a century old: “Every life is in many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-love, but always meeting ourselves.”

Colum McCann is the National Book Award-winning author of several works of fiction, including “Dancer,” “Let the Great World Spin” and “Apeirogon.” He is a founder of the global nonprofit Narrative 4. WE DON’T KNOW OURSELVES A Personal History of Modern Ireland By Fintan O’Toole Illustrated. 624 pp. Liveright. $32.

PHOTO: Fintan O’Toole (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENSON RUSSELL) (BR17)

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2022

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[***Subway Killing Threatens New York System's Fragile Recovery***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65J2-NF61-DXY4-X4XC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 26, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1442 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Ana Ley, Ashley Wong and Patrick McGeehan

**Body**

The subway is at a critical moment as transit officials struggle to bring back riders, to shore up the system's finances and to address fears over safety.

Transit officials in New York City celebrated a major milestone last week: The subway system logged 3.6 million trips in a single day, a pandemic-era record.

Three days later, a Goldman Sachs employee on his way to brunch was fatally shot on the Q train in an unprovoked attack.

The killing was the latest in a series of violent episodes -- including a shooting on a train in Brooklyn that injured at least 23 people in April and the fatal shoving of a woman at Times Square station in January -- that have made subway riders worried about their safety at a fraught moment for the transit system.

Ridership fell early in the pandemic, and some riders are still worried about being on crowded trains next to people without masks; many commuters have not returned to offices or are coming only a few times a week; and the system has suffered huge revenue losses and could run out of federal pandemic funding after 2023.

The shooting this week was a significant setback in the city's campaign to bring workers back to offices in Manhattan, Mayor Eric Adams said. And the victim, Daniel Enriquez, was exactly the type of worker he was trying to persuade to return to the subway.

''The call is to come back to work, and the subway system being safe is a major driver to doing that,'' Mr. Adams said at a news conference on Monday. ''When you have an incident like this, it sends a chilling impact. There's no getting around that.''

Two years into the pandemic, less than 65 percent of ridership is back, with many riders who are using the subway living in ***working-class*** neighborhoods -- New Yorkers who do not have a choice to stay home or splurge on a taxi.

The mounting pressures facing the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the state-run agency that operates the transit system, are now threatening to fundamentally alter the subway, which has long been considered the city's great equalizer, where New Yorkers from disparate backgrounds ride the train together.

The subway is still overwhelmingly safe. While direct comparisons are challenging, far more people are killed on New York's City's streets than on the subway. Traffic deaths have soared in the city during the pandemic to 273 last year, the highest level in eight years.

And the system is much less dangerous than in the 1980s and 1990s when robberies were common. In 1990, there were 26 murders on the subway.

Still, records show, violent crimes have increased since the pandemic began. There were, on average, about two murders per year in the five years before the pandemic, compared with six murders in 2020, eight in 2021 and four already this year.

Adding to concerns: Those figures increased even as ridership fell during the pandemic.

Richard Ravitch, the former M.T.A. chairman credited with turning the subway around in the 1980s, said it could take years for ridership to rebound to its prepandemic levels. He said he worries about his 15-year-old grandson, who takes the subway to school.

''Every time I hear about a shooting on the subway, I feel like calling my son and saying, 'I'll pay for an Uber,''' he said, though he noted that his grandson usually turns down the offer.

In surveys, transit riders and employers have repeatedly said that subway safety was a top concern. About 31 percent of employers said that reducing the presence of homeless and mentally ill people on streets and subways would be the most effective way to get employees to return to the office, according to a survey by the Partnership for New York City, an influential business group.

The city announced on Tuesday that, since February, it had persuaded nearly 1,400 homeless people living in the subway to go to shelters. It did not say how many stayed in shelters, a number that is typically smaller: In January, two-thirds of those who went from subways to shelters left by the end of the month.

At the same time, fears over the coronavirus have not gone away. About 79 percent of subway riders who had not returned to trains said that social-distancing concerns were among the top factors keeping them away, according to a customer survey conducted last fall.

Michelle Lim, 39, lives in Manhattan and stopped taking the subway for nearly two years during the pandemic. She and her husband started biking or walking everywhere and bought Citi Bike memberships.

''I started going distances that I previously would have never thought were bikeable,'' she said.

Ms. Lim, who is Asian, said she was also nervous about the possibility of violence on the subway, especially given the rise in random attacks on Asian residents.

''You can't get sucker punched on a bike,'' she said.

The M.T.A. is also facing a potential existential crisis after huge revenue losses during the pandemic. An infusion of state and federal money helped the agency stave off a deficit that is expected to reach $2 billion in 2026.

But its largest funding source is money collected from customers. Once government pandemic aid runs out, transit officials could face pressure to raise fares or to cut service. Subway leaders worry about setting off a ''transit death spiral,'' where cuts to service make transit a less convenient option for the public, prompting further drops in ridership.

Although subway ridership is up sharply this year compared with 2021 -- about 64 percent more people used the subway from Jan. 1 through May 19 compared with the same time period last year -- the M.T.A. counted fewer trips than it had projected for this year. Transit officials have blamed the slump, in part, on the Omicron variant and its subvariants, which dealt a blow to the city's recovery.

Subway service is often unreliable too, and riders sometimes wait 15 minutes between trains. Only about 82 percent of weekday trains were on time in April, down from about 91 percent last April.

As Hosea Roxbury, 57, waited for a B train at the 86th Street Station in Manhattan this week, he said that reports of violence made him nervous and noted that there were no police officers in the station. Over the last year, he started standing as far away from the platform edge as possible.

''It's sad that you have to really think twice before getting on the subway,'' Mr. Roxbury said.

Bonnie Hefferman, 29, said that she rarely takes the train after 9 p.m. anymore. Instead, she said she has been walking and biking more, or opting to stay home instead of going out.

''It's rough,'' she said. ''It's very different compared to prepandemic.''

Danny Pearlstein, policy director for Riders Alliance, a transportation advocacy group, said that despite valid concerns about a rise in crime on the subways, people would return to the system because it is still the most efficient and inexpensive way to get around the city.

''Riders are much more in danger from cars and trucks on the way to the subway than on the trains,'' he added.

Mr. Adams, a Democrat who ran for mayor on a public safety message, has said that he would work to make the subway safer by redeploying police officers where they are needed and by installing mobile gun detectors in stations. Mr. Adams has urged corporate executives like Jamie Dimon of JPMorgan Chase to ride the subway to show that it is safe.

''We're telling our corporate leaders: 'Hey, get on the train!''' Mr. Adams said in an interview with The Financial Times before the Q train shooting on Sunday. ''We need to advertise that New York is back.''

At a news conference on Tuesday to announce an arrest in the fatal shooting, Janno Lieber, the M.T.A.'s chief executive, thanked the mayor for sending more police officers onto trains and platforms.

''Over time, I believe that we will help with the mayor and the police commissioner's strategy to restore riders' sense of safety which has been so harmed, so eroded by this terrible incident and to restore confidence in the safety of mass transit,'' he said.

Robert Paaswell, a professor at City College and former executive director of the Chicago Transit Authority, said the subway shooting might scare off some riders for a few days, but the effect would not be likely to last long.

In New York City now, ''everybody's a little nervous,'' he said.

''One of the things that would help is a more visible police presence in the subways,'' he said. ''They have to make it clear to the public that this is a one-time, random, rare event and they're doing everything possible to prevent it.''

Andy Newman contributed reporting.Andy Newman contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/25/nyregion/nyc-subway-safety.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/25/nyregion/nyc-subway-safety.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Despite logging 3.6 million trips in a single day last week, a pandemic-era record, less than 65 percent of ridership is back, and the M.T.A. counted fewer trips than it had planned for this year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRES KUDACKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2022

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[***At 100, the ‘Just William’ Books Are an Icon of British Childhood; Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658V-0K91-JBG3-628B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 22, 2022 Friday 22:54 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1441 words

**Byline:** Saskia Solomon

**Highlight:** Richmal Crompton’s prototypical schoolboy has survived war, upheaval, changing tastes and a new world. He’s still just 11.

**Body**

Where to begin with William Brown? The stubbornly disheveled, snub-nosed 11-year-old protagonist of the writer Richmal Crompton’s wildly popular “Just William” stories, 100 this year, is an astutely rendered portrait of a 1920s British schoolboy. His antics — broken drawing-room windows, midnight feasts, theft — have captured the imagination of millions over the decades, the stories adapted for radio, stage and television.

As with many British millennials, my introduction to William, at age 7, came via the “Just William” audiobook, which my mother had chanced upon at a secondhand sale. My family was immediately hooked by the gleefully eventful, frenetic stories, frequently convulsing with laughter. “Just William” soundtracked our every car journey, and I’d often fall asleep with it churning away on my Walkman, dreaming of joining William’s gang, the Outlaws.

But more than anything, I longed to be William. A self-styled scoundrel, William runs riot through the family home, antagonizing his older siblings, Robert and Ethel, and exasperating Mr. and Mrs. Brown, who wonder, out loud, how best to tame him. No family function is safe when William is present — but his absence is also cause for concern. There’s always the sneaking suspicion he’s up to no good.

As a British child growing up in France, I’d say it was these stories, along with a heavy dose of Enid Blyton, that were to blame for my skewed idea of “Englishness.” When we moved home, my 12-year-old self was greatly confused: Where were the shillings, and why weren’t people saying “Bob’s your uncle” anymore? To say I was disappointed would be an understatement.

For many, mention of “Just William” summons a nostalgic pastoral of interwar childhood: one of twirling maypoles on somnolent village greens, vicarages frequented by well-meaning, nosy parishioners, games of conkers and knock-down ginger played till dusk. The reality, of course, is that few readers will have experienced such quaint youths: the carefree, sugarcoated gleam of a vanished Britain. As a friend of mine puts it, the freedoms enjoyed by William in a safe and bucolic universe contrasted starkly with the realities of her own childhood: “You could go to the fields or the fair by yourself. There wasn’t so much parental control.”

It’s a childhood that now feels alien, the stories brimming with action: The boys vex stray cats, make “licorice water,” sling homemade catapults, walk for miles across fields and through hedgerows, climb trees, fall into ditches, and draw the ire of their schoolmasters, sweet-shop owners and local farmers, and sometimes all at once. It’s worth noting here that the “Just” of “Just William,” the title of Crompton’s first official book of William stories, published in 1922, is not a nod to his moral character, but rather a kind of shrug: Take him or leave him, he won’t change.

‘I often refer to him as my Frankenstein monster,’ Crompton said in a 1968 radio interview. ‘I’ve tried to get rid of him, but he’s quite impossible to get rid of.’

The mischief isn’t born of malice: It’s most often a product of benign misunderstanding. And yet, in a world of Blyton books, filled with “well-to-do” children embarking on heroic countryside adventures, or slumming it at boarding school, the William stories could feel outrageous, even dangerous. The author’s ambiguous name, especially in the series’ early years, added the exciting implication for some female readers — normally limited to more moralistic fare — that these were “boys’ books.”

Perhaps this appealed to Crompton herself. A vicar’s daughter and lifelong Conservative, Crompton was born in Lancashire in 1890, to a comfortable, middle-class household. She taught classics in an all-girls school until the age of 32, when she contracted polio. The illness left her disabled, and, forced to abandon teaching, she turned to writing. Over the next 50 years, Crompton would publish more than 300 “Just William” stories as well as 40 novels for adults (none of which has proved as lasting a literary legacy). She was halfway through her 359th story at the time of her death, in 1969.

Of course, William has not made it to the 21st century unscathed. One story, “William and the Nasties” (1935), was deemed to have antisemitic undertones (although intended as an allegory of fascism) and has been withdrawn from reprints. Certain turns of phrase, and incidences of “blacking up” and playing “Cowboys and Indians,” as well as treatment of animals, have been reviewed by the books’ publisher, Macmillan.

And yet, William has escaped the full opprobrium of many of his nostalgic contemporaries. Perhaps some of this longevity is due to Crompton’s decision to adapt the stories to the period. Rather than preserving the narrative in a kind of literary aspic, the cast moves with the times. Fashions and slang change; the domestic setup morphs. In the first books the Brown household is large, boasting stables and a summer house. There’s a maid, a cook and a nanny. By the ’50s only the maid remains, the house having shrunk to a modest semi. A television suddenly appears.

Even today, the “Just William” enthusiasm shows no sign of letting up, with 12 million copies sold, translations in more than 20 languages and five new William stories broadcast on BBC Radio 4 last December. New parents nostalgically purchase the books for their offspring, or discover the joys of William through them. Some view the books as collectors’ items, and scour yard sales for memorabilia[*.*](https://www.justwilliamsociety.co.uk/)

One attraction is the stories’ relative difficulty. Rather than pandering to the young reader, the text is challenging, peppered with such daunting words as “ignominious.” (This is no accident: Crompton, who set out as a writer of serious fiction, had not particularly targeted William to child readers.)

Crompton was known for her mastery of dialogue. For loquacious William, Crompton employs a kind of “royal cockney” — an affectation of ***working-class*** speech. He mangles the ends of words: He’s “right’n wron’s”; “it’s not” becomes “s’not.” William’s speech differs sharply from that of his siblings: Haughty Ethel performs a kind of saintly enunciation, while the ever-lovelorn Robert is sometimes so overcome he cannot speak. Violet Elizabeth Bott, the lisping village girl who always wants “in” with the boys’ plans, threatens to “thcream and thcream till I’m thick.” Mr. Brown, meanwhile, is all exclamation: “William!”

Martin Jarvis, the actor who voiced the highly popular “Just William” audiobooks — who is William to several generations — feels Crompton’s mastery of nuance underlies the series’ more obvious nostalgic appeal. “She showed incredible psychology and understanding of not only how an 11-year-old boy just after the First World War might be, but also how the adults around him would act. The picture she paints of just about every form of adult from that time is incredibly accurate.”

For Jarvis, William continues to exert influence. He even sees elements of William’s character in the current prime minister — William’s hair is, after all, “like a neglected lawn.” (Although Crompton also gives William a slight air of compunction, ending the Boris comparisons.)

As is the case for many successful children’s authors, Crompton occasionally chafed at the constraints of association with a single character. While she published scores of novels for adults, none of her characters proved quite as beloved as William. “I often refer to him as my Frankenstein monster,” Crompton said in a 1968 radio interview with the BBC. “I’ve tried to get rid of him, but he’s quite impossible to get rid of.” After all, as she concedes, “there is something rather appealing about him.”

In her lifetime, the resolutely British stories found a global readership, most notably in Germany, the Netherlands and India, where “Just William” has long figured in elementary school English classes. This amused Crompton no end: “I don’t think William would have approved at all, of his adventures being turned into a school textbook.”

Reading the books anew, I’m comforted by the familiarity of William, the Outlaws and the Browns in their world of village fetes, overcast summers and amateur theater. From a time overshadowed by wars, poverty and fascism, the child’s-eye view on life remains steadfastly joyful.

I’ve grown up, but in this crucial aspect of life the stories remain stubbornly fixed: Though William celebrates countless birthdays and Christmases, he never ages.

He may have turned 100, but unlike his readers, William will always be “just” 11.

PHOTO: William Brown plays pirate. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM ADVERTISING ARCHIVE/COURTESY EVERETT COLLECTION)

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2022

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[***What Does ‘Vex Money’ Do to Love?; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6648-TYN1-JBG3-61B3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 10, 2022 Wednesday 17:51 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1745 words

**Byline:** Naomi Jackson

**Highlight:** We Black women and girls must protect ourselves. Still, I wish I could relax into the plush comfort of a relationship.

**Body**

Vex money. Noun. Origin: Anglophone Caribbean. Meaning: money stashed on your person or in a secret place (a brassiere, a bank account, your grandmother’s Bible, your sneakers). To be spent only in case of emergency brought upon by a once stable situation suddenly becoming vexed — usually but not always because of a man. See: the need for a swift exit in response to the threat of sexual assault. See also: the dissolution of a relationship, the loss of a job or being displaced from your home. Related to but not the same as the threat often uttered by an Afro-Caribbean woman: “Don’t get me vex.” Or “She/he/they get me vex, get me on my nerves.”

I can’t remember a time when I didn’t know about vex money. I heard the phrase, like many things whispered by my mothers and grandmothers and aunties, when I was a little girl, but I wasn’t sure what it was. As a child, I dared not ask too many questions about it, for fear of being labeled “fast” or its cousin “too nuff.” To insert yourself into big people’s conversations was to welcome admonishment, a turned shoulder, a ferrying back out into the world of children where you belonged.

I grew up in New York City in the 1980s and ’90s, splitting time between my West Indian parents, who divorced when I was young. In my Afro-Caribbean immigrant community, there were many married couples around, but I sensed tension within them. Few seemed truly happy to me. There were whispers about outside women and illegitimate children, clucked tongues about men who gambled away both their own earnings and their family’s savings. I was taught that it was preferable to remain married even in the face of profound betrayal. But I also came to understand that staying married didn’t mean foolishly depending on a man who was unable or unwilling to provide for his family.

I saw women demand that their husbands hand over their paychecks before they went out to spend money on booze, betting and more. Others devotedly saved money through “susu,” an informal savings club. Some stashed money in secret bank accounts or carried substantial amounts of cash in their purses to keep it out of reach of their spouses.

Even as a child, I wondered about how these whispers about terrible husbands seemed to echo harmful stereotypes about Black men. They didn’t jibe with the father that I knew and loved — an honest, reliable provider who cooked dinner, shopped for groceries and changed his schedule to be more available for his children.

But even he reinforced a similar message. My father drilled home the idea that my sister and I should never wait on a man to provide for us financially. He fiercely encouraged us to attain advanced degrees (he had bachelor’s and master’s degrees and wanted even more for us both), take up meaningful careers, save our money, invest in property and more. In the words of Billie Holiday, “God bless the child that’s got his own.” In the words of a friend with an upbringing similar to mine, the Columbia University historian Natasha Lightfoot, “You are your own safety net.”

When I was in high school, my father and stepmother bought a home in South Brooklyn — a comfortable three-bedroom home that felt palatial compared with the apartments we lived in before. We were one of the first Black families to buy a house on our block; our presence seemed to prompt the white flight of our neighbors. As homeowners, my family was part of the Black middle class, but I always felt the tenuous nature of our success.

My community believed in the gospels of education and work. They held fast to their faith in the American dream and in meritocracy and to the myth of West Indian exceptionalism. Opportunities and advancement were always available, these gospels proclaimed, to people who were willing and able to work hard. Some members of my community wrongly believed that personal failings and a lack of ambition, rather than structural racism and a history of enslavement, were what held back the progress of other Black Americans.

The spring after my 14th birthday, my stepmother took me to get working papers at an office in Downtown Brooklyn lorded over by a legendarily cranky woman. I spent the previous summers with my family in Barbados, where my mother is from, and in Antigua, where my dad is from. Those carefree days of counting mosquito bites, telling ghost stories, playing video games, sucking flavored ice out of plastic bags sold by our neighbors and trading the penance of Sunday church service for the promise of Sunday beach afternoons came to a swift end with my coming-of-age as a worker.

My first job was through New York City’s Summer Youth Employment Program. I was paid minimum wage, $4.25 an hour, to answer phones at a legal nonprofit, make copies and stay out of the way. My weekly paycheck was around $92 after taxes. With the roughly $1,000 I earned that summer, I bought myself a green Tommy Hilfiger jacket, an orange Nautica coat and Timberland boots. Other girls in our neighborhood wore clothes that were gifts from the guys they dated, but I was never allowed to accept gifts or money from anyone outside our family, especially not boys. My parents were keenly aware of the ways that boys and men might try to use money to control their girls.

Being a chubby, nerdy and occasionally self-righteous teenager meant that I didn’t have to refuse many gifts. I was 17 by the time I went on my first date. The unlucky young man, a classmate from middle school whose name I’ve forgotten, invited me to a movie at the mall. My date knew that my stoic West Indian father would not appreciate his honking the horn to signal that I should meet him outside, so he came to the door and made polite, awkward conversation in our kitchen. Before I left that night, I stashed a $20 bill in my bra — some vex money of my own. I wanted to make sure that I had carfare home in case he tried any funny business that separated me from my purse, or my dignity.

Stashing money in your bra when meeting a relatively unfamiliar young man for a first date still strikes me as a reasonable, harmless precaution. But as I got older, I began to see that the idea of vex money had an uncomfortable hold on me.

I met my husband in Harlem in the winter of 2017. Just before we got married, we moved into an apartment I bought in Brooklyn 11 years earlier, a modest studio. To afford it, I had cobbled together my savings, resources from first-time home-buyer programs and a $200 gift from my parents for the inspection. I felt protective and proprietary about the apartment, which had been both a sanctuary and a point of pride for me over the years. I bristled as he bought new cutlery and plates, as he insisted on buying new bedding, even though there were perfectly good sheets and comforters I’d handpicked over the years. I tried to make more physical and emotional space for him, but I struggled to consider the apartment ours. I felt afraid to commit to the full intimacy of our bond, lest he prove unreliable.

The self-sufficiency of West Indian women and their suspicion of others, particularly men, are bound up together. For many of us, marriage is a worthy ideal to aspire to, but a truly wise woman doesn’t count on it. She has to know how she’d make a way for herself and her children should a relationship go south. Part and parcel of this is making sure that you always work and hold back something for yourself. Vex money is the manifestation of our unwillingness to trust.

I rarely borrow even $20 from my husband or my friends because I hate feeling indebted to anyone. I still keep cash on hand at all times, even as it falls out of fashion. I am wary of unfamiliar people and the world at large, and I still believe that having a bit of cash to “keep my pocket alive,” as my friend’s grandmother often said, is a safeguard against the dangers of being Black and a woman — though I know it’s not enough. Often in my marriage I have argued for making a purchase by insisting that I’m using “my own money” to pay for it. I know that these disagreements open fissures between us that cannot be easily repaired.

There is something tragic about living like this, with one foot out the door of intimate relationships. But it is the only way I know how to live, a coping mechanism that helps me feel vulnerable enough to remain in a committed relationship but safe enough to know that staying isn’t my only option.

Every woman, every person, should have at least this: the ability to leave the table when, in the words of Nina Simone, “love’s no longer being served.” So many Americans do not have the resources to respond to emergencies, as we often live one missed paycheck or medical problem away from financial ruin. The Black middle class, which was always small, has struggled even more in recent years in response to factors like predatory lending, gentrification, the Covid pandemic. The overturning of Roe v. Wade will have devastating consequences for poor and ***working-class*** women who need abortions but don’t have the money to travel to a clinic out of state.

Now as ever, [*safety*](https://www.city-journal.org/surge-in-violent-crime-against-nyc-women) is in short supply for Black women and [*girls.*](https://www.dayoneny.org/statistics) We must protect ourselves. Still, I wish I could relax into the plush comfort of a relationship; perhaps one day I won’t feel the need for vex money.

Recently, as I walked in the park with my son on a perfect Brooklyn day, I thought of my grandmothers, my beloved Ruth Jackson and Oriel Brewster. The women in my family were stalwart. I laughed remembering how they stashed money around their houses, ready to hide it from a burglar or offer it to a grandchild. I wondered whether it was vex money that had allowed Oriel to walk away from a marriage that was less than ideal. On that sunny day, I was glad to push those heavier thoughts aside as I looked in my purse for a few dollars to buy a cherry mango ice for me and my son. As we shared our first taste of summer, I allowed myself to appreciate the sweetness of a bit of cash to keep your pocket alive.

Naomi Jackson is the author of “The Star Side of Bird Hill” and an assistant professor of English and creative writing at Rutgers University, Newark.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Antoine Cossé FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 13, 2022

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[***The Vanishing Moderate Democrat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TB-27X1-DXY4-X43F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 29, 2022 Wednesday 12:45 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 9848 words

**Byline:** Jason Zengerle and Justin Metz

**Highlight:** Their positions are popular. So why are they going extinct?

**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=vanishing_moderate_democrat_zengerle).

Early last year, as Democrats were preparing to control the White House and Congress for the first time in a decade, Josh Gottheimer met with Nancy Pelosi to discuss their party’s message. Sitting in the House speaker’s office in the U.S. Capitol, he opened up the YouTube app on his iPhone. There was something he wanted to show her.

[*Gottheimer, who represents a wealthy suburban*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/nyregion/new-jersey-house-race.html) and exurban House district in northern New Jersey, was first elected to Congress in 2016; his victory over a seven-term Republican incumbent, in a district in which Donald Trump narrowly defeated Hillary Clinton, was one of the Democrats’ few bright spots that year. Since his arrival in Washington, however, Gottheimer has been the cause of more headaches than celebrations for Pelosi and her leadership team.

As co-chairman of the Problem Solvers Caucus — a group of 29 Democrats and 29 Republicans that quixotically aspires to the goal of bipartisan compromise — he has frequently found himself at odds with his fellow Democrats on everything from foreign policy to President Biden’s domestic agenda to Pelosi’s leadership. In 2018, Gottheimer and eight other Problem Solver Democrats threatened to reject Pelosi’s bid for speaker if she didn’t concede to their demands for rules changes that would make it easier for bipartisan ideas to be considered, angering colleagues who viewed it as yet another instance of Gottheimer and his group’s engaging in pointless grandstanding rather than constructive behind-the-scenes work. “Tell me a problem they’ve solved,” Representative Susan Wild, a Democrat from Pennsylvania, says.

Pelosi, however, had [*agreed to their demands and secured their support.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/28/us/politics/pelosi-democrat-speaker-nomination.html) Now she was willing to hear Gottheimer out about how the new Democratic majority should position itself. He pressed play and his iPhone screen filled with waving American flags as an old but familiar voice emerged, proclaiming, “I am honored to have been given the opportunity to stand up for the values and the interests of ordinary Americans.” The video was a television advertisement from [*Bill Clinton’s 1996 re-election campaign*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pt-LDpxS5iQ&amp;ab_channel=JimHeathChannel). Over images of construction workers and children and police officers, a series of bold captions touted Clinton’s first-term accomplishments: “WELFARE REFORM, WORK REQUIREMENTS”; “TAXES CUT FOR 15,000,000 FAMILIES”; “DEATH PENALTY FOR DRUG KINGPINS.” His promises for a second term followed: “BAN ‘COP-KILLER’ BULLETS”; “CAPITAL GAINS TAX CUT FOR HOME OWNERS”; “BALANCE THE BUDGET FOR A GROWING ECONOMY” “We are safer, we are more secure, we are more prosperous,” Clinton said. When the ad was over, Gottheimer says, he looked at Pelosi. “This is how we won,” he told her, “and this is how we win again.”

In April, almost a year and a half later, Gottheimer screened the ad again, this time for me. He provided his own color commentary as it played. “Fiscal responsibility ... jobs ... tax cuts ... he put cops in the ad!” Gottheimer, who served as a White House speechwriter during Clinton’s second term, exclaimed. When it was over, he sighed. “Think about how different that message is,” he said. I asked him what Pelosi’s reaction was when he played it for her. Gottheimer demurred. But the answer seemed obvious. The message that Pelosi and the Senate majority leader Chuck Schumer and President Joe Biden and the rest of the Democratic leadership had chosen for their party, the message that Democrats would be carrying into the [*2022 midterm elections,*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/2022-midterm-elections) was not the one that Gottheimer, and the disembodied voice of Bill Clinton, had counseled.

Gottheimer and I were eating breakfast at a diner on Route 17 in Paramus, N.J. In a month, he told me, the busy state highway outside would be lined with campaign signs that read “Josh Gottheimer for Congress: Lower Taxes, Jersey Values.” “I’m the only Democrat in the country who puts ‘lower taxes’ on his signs,” he said. “ ‘Jersey values’ are about cops, firefighters, vets — I’ll get your back.” Although the old Clinton ad wasn’t his party’s current message, it was certainly his. “These are the issues that I continue to stress back home in my district,” he said. It would not be hyperbole to say that Gottheimer runs his political life there according to Clinton’s tenets.

The most immediate question for Gottheimer and other moderate Democrats is whether that will be enough come November. Midterm elections have been historically brutal for the party that controls the White House. In 2006, Republicans took a “thumping,” as George W. Bush described it at the time, losing 30 seats in the House, six seats in the Senate and control of both chambers. Four years later, it was the Democrats’ turn to suffer a “shellacking,” as Barack Obama put it, with Republicans gaining 63 seats and a new majority in the House. In 2018, Democrats capitalized on resistance to Donald Trump and [*gained 41 seats on their way to taking back the House.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/06/us/politics/midterm-elections-results.html)

This year, with Democrats clinging to a 10-seat majority in the House (almost guaranteed to drop to nine with a special election in Nebraska on June 28), most political handicappers expect Republicans to reclaim control of the chamber easily; the only real uncertainty is just how big the Red Wave will be, with predictions about the number of seats Republicans will gain ranging from less than 20 to more than 60. (Despite the [*public hearings of the House committee investigating Jan. 6*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/jan-6-committee), most Democrats running for election are not attempting to make the effort to overturn the 2020 presidential election a referendum on Republicans.)

The bigger, more consequential question — not just for the moderates but for all Democrats — is whether this projected midterm wipeout is merely a cyclical occurrence or the manifestation of a much deeper and more intractable problem. Over the last decade, the Democratic Party has moved significantly to the left on almost every salient political issue. Some of these shifts in a more ambitiously progressive direction, especially as they pertain to economic issues, have largely tracked with public opinion: While socialism might not poll well with voters, Democratic proposals to raise taxes on corporations and the wealthy, increase the federal minimum wage to $15 an hour and lower the age of Medicare eligibility do.

But on social, cultural and religious issues, particularly [*those related to criminal justice,*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/12/06/u-s-public-divided-over-whether-people-convicted-of-crimes-spend-too-much-or-too-little-time-in-prison/) [*race,*](https://www.umass.edu/news/article/umass-amherstwcvb-poll-finds-nearly-half) [*abortion*](https://apnews.com/article/only-on-ap-us-supreme-court-abortion-religion-health-2c569aa7934233af8e00bef4520a8fa8) and [*gender identity,*](https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2022/06/28/americans-complex-views-on-gender-identity-and-transgender-issues/) the Democrats have taken up ideological stances that many of the college-educated voters who now make up a sizable portion of the party’s base cheer but the rest of the electorate does not. “The Democratic Party moved left,” says Will Marshall, the president and founder of the Progressive Policy Institute, a moderate Democratic think tank, “but the country as a whole hasn’t.”

Republicans have sought to exploit this gap by waging an aggressive culture war against Democrats. Christopher Rufo, the conservative activist and frequent Fox News guest who has turned critical race theory into a right-wing cudgel, wrote on Twitter last year that he intended to “put all of the various cultural insanities under that brand category.” More recently, he has attacked Democrats for, he charged, attempting to indoctrinate school children with “trans ideology.” Rick Scott, the Florida senator who heads the Republicans’ Senate campaign arm, told reporters in June, “The election is going to be about inflation, critical race theory, funding the police — that’s what it’s going to be about.” The result, fair or not, is that the Democratic Party is now perceived by a growing segment of American voters as espousing the furthest left position possible on many of the country’s most fraught and most divisive issues.

“There’s a sense among voters that Democrats are too focused on social issues,” says Brian Stryker, a Democratic pollster, “and those are more left-wing social issues that people think they’re too focused on.” In May, [*CNN asked 1,007 American voters for their opinions on the country’s two major political parties.*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/06/politics/cnn-poll-abortion-midterms-roe-v-wade/index.html) After four years of Trump in the White House, an insurrection and unsuccessful attempt to overturn a presidential election and now a Republican Party that can be fairly described as a cult of personality and is moving further right on many of the same social issues, 46 percent of those surveyed considered the G.O.P. to be “too extreme.” But 48 percent of them viewed the Democratic Party the same way.

All of which has occasioned not just the normal midterm agita but something closer to an existential crisis among moderate Democrats. While some of them remain reluctant to publicly concede the reality that the Democratic Party has indeed shifted left — either out of fear of angering their fellow Democrats or validating Republican attacks — they will readily acknowledge that voters perceive the party as having drifted out of the mainstream. And they are convinced that this is threatening their political survival. “There’s absolutely no doubt in my mind that the Democratic Party has a problem as a toxic brand,” says [*Max Rose, a moderate New York Democrat who lost re-election to his House seat in Staten Island in 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/nyregion/max-rose-congress-malliotakis.html) — his Republican opponent characterized Rose’s attendance at a George Floyd protest march as anti-police — and is running to reclaim the seat this year. “There’s a perception that the party is not on the side of working people, that it’s not on the side of the middle class.”

That perception has penetrated even the immediate families of Democratic politicians. “My own mother-in-law, a Republican, believes I’m some sort of unicorn because I can put sentences together and I’m not rabid and left-leaning,” says Chrissy Houlahan, a moderate Democratic congresswoman who represents a swing district in the swing state of Pennsylvania. “I believe the national Democratic Party is where I am. I don’t believe that the way people perceive the national Democratic Party is where I am.”

But the Democrats’ leftward trend, whether real or perceived, is resoundingly popular with, and often reinforced by, the party’s staff members and activists and especially its donors, who fund a slew of nonprofits and super PACs that relentlessly push the progressive line. In America’s very blue and very online precincts, performative positioning is often accepted as a substitute for the compromises that can be necessary to secure legislation — whether it’s [*Schumer and Pelosi donning kente cloth and kneeling in the Capitol to demonstrate solidarity with Black Lives Matter protesters*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/08/politics/democrats-criticized-kente-cloth-trnd/index.html) in lieu of actual police reform or Biden traveling to Atlanta to attack Republicans as supporters of [*“Jim Crow 2.0”*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2022/01/11/remarks-by-president-biden-on-protecting-the-right-to-vote/) in a speech on behalf of voting rights legislation that had no chance of passage.

The problem, says Lis Smith, a Democratic communications strategist who most recently worked for [*Pete Buttigieg’s 2020 presidential campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/pete-buttigieg.html), is that “in today’s world, what happens on Twitter or in a D-plus-40 district doesn’t stay there. It travels to every race across the country.” And it inherently limits the appeal of Democrats in those races. “If we become a party of the elite-elites, there death awaits,” says Representative Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, who heads the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (D.C.C.C.), the House Democrats’ campaign arm, pointing to the influence of college activists. “We’ll all agree with each other right into extinction.”

The Democrats most at risk of extinction this November are Gottheimer and his fellow House moderates, who typically represent the sorts of swing districts where being painted as an identitarian socialist is the political kiss of death. “We are, almost by definition, the low-hanging fruit in every election,” says Representative Dean Phillips, a Minnesota Democrat and member of the Problem Solvers. Although Biden won Gottheimer’s district by more than five points in 2020, and the district got even bluer under New Jersey’s newly drawn congressional maps so that Democrats now have a seven-point edge there, the D.C.C.C. has put him on its “Frontline” list of vulnerable incumbents. Of the 37 Frontliners, the overwhelming majority belong to the Problem Solvers or one of the other two groups for moderate House Democrats: the New Democrat Coalition and the Blue Dog Coalition. And then there are the two dozen or so moderate House Democrats who have decided not to run at all in 2022, quitting before they could be fired.

It’s enough to drive Gottheimer, 47, to frustration — and to send him searching nearly three decades back in time for answers. In Congress, he has gone out of his way to differentiate himself from his more liberal Democratic colleagues, whom he has privately derided as “the herbal tea party.” The enmity has been mutual. After The Intercept reported the “herbal tea party” insult in 2019, the progressive New York congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez retweeted a link to the article and wrote, “What’s funny is that there \*are\* Dems that do act like the Tea Party — but they’re conservative.” It was not the first or last time Gottheimer found himself at the bottom of an online pile-on. Two years ago, his clashes with liberals earned him a left-wing primary challenger who branded him “Trump’s favorite Democrat.” Gottheimer won by 33 points. “The social media Democrats are not the Democrats back home,” he told me during another conversation in his congressional office. “Those aren’t my constituents.”

But now, he complained, “the far right is trying to do everything they can to equate many of us to the socialist left,” and he’s worried his constituents will start to believe it. The challenge for Gottheimer and his fellow moderates, however, is not just to define what they are not, but what they actually are. While there is a growing group of Democrats who believe that their party needs to become more moderate, it’s not clear that any of them agree on — or, in some cases, even know — what it means to be a moderate Democrat anymore.

In January 1989, Al From invited Bill Galston to breakfast at La Colline, a French restaurant on Capitol Hill. From was a former congressional staff member who, four years earlier, co-founded the Democratic Leadership Council (D.L.C.), a group of mostly Southern and Western Democrats who were trying to remake the party in their moderate image. They called themselves the New Democrats.

Galston was a University of Maryland public-policy professor who moonlighted as an adviser to Democratic presidential campaigns — in 1988, working for Al Gore’s ill-fated campaign. The previous November, Michael Dukakis lost to George H.W. Bush by 8 percentage points and 315 electoral votes, the Democrats’ third straight landslide presidential defeat. At La Colline, From asked Galston what was wrong with their party. Democrats, Galston answered, were in denial — focusing on the chimeras of higher turnout and better fund-raising when, in fact, it was their “unacceptably liberal” positions that was the problem. By not grappling with that fact, Galston told From, Democrats were engaging in “the politics of evasion.”

From commissioned Galston and the political scientist Elaine Kamarck to write up the argument for the D.L.C.’s new think tank, the Progressive Policy Institute, which published “The Politics of Evasion” that September. Galston and Kamarck did not mince words. “Too many Americans have come to see the party as inattentive to their economic interests, indifferent if not hostile to their moral sentiments and ineffective in defense of their national security,” they wrote. The Democratic Party was “increasingly dominated by minority groups and white elites — a coalition viewed by the middle class as unsympathetic to its interests and its values.” Unless Democrats convinced those middle-class voters (who at that time were predominantly white) that they were tough on crime, trustworthy on foreign policy and disciplined about government spending, they would continue to wander the political wilderness.

In the past, the New Democrats shied away from outright conflict with the party’s liberal wing — refusing to return fire, for instance, when Jesse Jackson dubbed the D.L.C. “Democrats for the Leisure Class.” But “The Politics of Evasion” counseled that internecine fighting was good: “Only conflict and controversy over basic economic, social and defense issues are likely to attract the attention needed to convince the public that the party still has something to offer the great middle of the American electorate.” Bill Clinton, who as Arkansas governor became the D.L.C. chairman in 1990, took that message to heart in his 1992 presidential campaign.

That summer, shortly after he cinched the Democratic nomination, Clinton gave a speech to Jackson’s Rainbow Coalition group — in which he attacked the group for also hosting a relatively obscure rapper named Sister Souljah, who in the wake of that year’s Los Angeles riots said in an interview, “If Black people kill Black people every day, why not have a week and kill white people?” Clinton told the Rainbow Coalition that “if you took the words ‘white’ and ‘Black’ and reversed them, you might think David Duke was giving that speech.” Jackson was furious and called on Clinton to apologize — exactly the response Clinton was hoping for. The Black syndicated columnist Clarence Page later wrote that by picking the fight, Clinton “impressed swing voters, particularly white suburbanites, with a confident independence from Jackson that other Democratic presidential candidates had not shown.” A loudly performed repudiation of a putative far-left extremist would come to be known as a “Sister Souljah moment.”

Clinton ran for president as a factional candidate, against the Republicans but also against his party’s liberal wing, so that when he won, he remade the Democratic Party in his own — and the D.L.C.’s — image. In 1995, midway through Clinton’s first term, 23 moderate House Democrats formed the Blue Dog Caucus to, in their words, “represent the middle of the partisan spectrum.” By 2010, halfway through Barack Obama’s first term, the Blue Dogs had grown to 54 members. “To my surprise, ‘The Politics of Evasion’ had some impact,” Galston recently told me. “With the election of Bill Clinton, this little insurgency within the Democratic Party succeeded.” He paused. “Temporarily.”

This February, more than three decades after their original salvo, Galston and Kamarck, now both senior fellows at the Brookings Institution, published “The New Politics of Evasion.” Once again, they argued Democrats have swerved too far to the left: “A substantial portion of the Democratic Party has convinced itself that Americans are ready for a political revolution that transforms every aspect of their lives. This assumption has crashed into a stubborn reality: Most Americans want evolutionary, not revolutionary, change.” Once again, they argued that Democrats have ignored the political salience of cultural issues to their detriment: “For Americans across the political spectrum, social, cultural and religious issues are real and — in many cases — more important to them than economic considerations. These issues reflect their deepest convictions and shape their identity.”

But unlike three decades ago, Galston and Kamarck were actually a little late to the fight. In the past few years, a growing and increasingly vocal cohort of strategists, policy wonks and intellectuals has been arguing that Democrats have overreached on social and cultural issues and that, as a result, the party has become unable to appeal to voters without college degrees — and, increasingly, not just white voters in that group but Hispanic, Asian American and Black voters too. From 2012 to 2020, the support of nonwhite voters without college degrees for the Democratic presidential candidate decreased by 10 percentage points. Much as in the early 1990s, the most vibrant and urgent discussion in Democratic circles currently revolves around why and how the party needs to steer itself back to the center.

“For Democrats to win, we have to cater a lot more to moderates,” Sean McElwee told me recently at an Australian coffee shop in Washington’s Logan Circle neighborhood. Just 29 years old, with a baby face that makes him appear even younger, McElwee runs Data for Progress, a left-leaning polling firm and think tank that in only four years has come to occupy a central place in the Democratic Party firmament. Its ascent is especially remarkable considering where the firm — and McElwee — started.

He burst onto the political scene early in Donald Trump’s presidency as a Resistance Twitter personality who popularized the slogan “Abolish ICE” and hosted a weekly East Village happy hour for New York’s left-wing activists and writers. He started Data for Progress in 2018 with the express intent of driving the Democratic Party to the left. As a self-proclaimed socialist, McElwee’s early activism revolved around helping far-left candidates win Democratic primaries in safe blue districts. He was an adviser to the left-wing political group Justice Democrats, which fueled the rise of Ocasio-Cortez, as well as Ayanna Pressley, Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib, a.k.a. the Squad. He liked to call himself an “Overton window mover.” (The term refers to a reframing of what is politically possible.)

But during the 2020 presidential primaries, just when practically every Democratic candidate except Joe Biden was jumping through that window by promising to abolish ICE and provide Medicare for all and eliminate student debt, McElwee himself started favoring what he calls “a more pragmatic approach.” The reason? While he personally still supported many of these left-wing policy proposals, Data for Progress’s polling showed that they weren’t actually popular with voters — or at least not with the ***working-class***, non-college-educated voters Democrats need to win outside those safe blue districts.

McElwee concluded that if Democrats ever want to accomplish their progressive goals, they need to get elected first — and the way to do that is to do a lot of polling to determine the popularity of various policy proposals. Then, when talking to voters, Democratic candidates should emphasize the popular ideas and de-emphasize the unpopular ones, even if that means emphasizing smaller, more incremental, more moderate policies. “I’m now just interested in a fundamentally different set of tactics and tools than I was six or seven years ago,” McElwee told me.

The electoral theory to which McElwee now subscribes has come to be known as “popularism.” Its most prominent proponent is David Shor, one of McElwee’s best friends. A 30-year-old data analyst, Shor crunched numbers for Obama’s 2012 re-election campaign and later went to work for the progressive data firm Civis Analytics. In 2020, during the widespread [*protests after the murder of George Floyd*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/george-floyd-protests-timeline.html), he tweeted, “Post-MLK-assassination race riots reduced Democratic vote share in surrounding counties by 2 percent, which was enough to tip the 1968 election to Nixon,” citing a study by the Black political scientist Omar Wasow, and noted that nonviolence was more politically effective. Online activists were furious, with some branding his tweet racist, and after a pressure campaign from outside and inside the firm, Civis fired him — making Shor a political martyr for those who believed the Democratic Party and progressive institutions had become too beholden to far-left activists and liberal political staff members.

Now free to speak his mind, Shor co-founded the data-analytics firm Blue Rose Research and began tweeting more and giving lengthy interviews that expanded on his theory. “I think the core problem with the Democratic Party is that the people who run and staff the Democratic Party are much more educated and ideologically liberal and they live in cities, and ultimately our candidate pool reflects that,” [*he told The Times’s Ezra Klein last October.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/opinion/democrats-david-shor-education-polarization.html) “If you look inside the Democratic Party, there are three times more moderate or conservative nonwhite people than very liberal white people, but very liberal white people are infinitely more represented. That’s morally bad, but it also means eventually they’ll leave.”

Joining Shor and McElwee in the effort to propagate popularism are a host of other liberal-but-tacking-to-the-center writers and thinkers. Ruy Teixeira, a political scientist and co-author of the influential 2002 book “The Emerging Democratic Majority,” writes for a Substack newsletter called [*“The Liberal Patriot,”*](https://theliberalpatriot.substack.com/) publishing missives on “The Democrats’ Common Sense Problem,” “The Democrats’ ***Working Class*** Voter Problem” and “The Bankruptcy of the Democratic Party Left.” Matthew Yglesias, a prodigious pundit who co-founded Vox in 2014 before leaving in 2020 because he felt hemmed in by the “young-college-graduate bubble” at the website, now writes his own Substack newsletter, [*“Slow Boring.”*](https://www.slowboring.com/) “Part of what we’re doing here is rediscovering old ideas,” Yglesias told me. “I sometimes use the phrase ‘the wisdom of the ancients.’ None of these popularism ideas are particularly original or say anything that people haven’t said for a long time. They just became unfashionable briefly.”

Writing in The Nation last October, [*Elie Mystal accused Shor and his comrades of counseling Democrats*](https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/democrats-election-shor/) to “figure out what the racists want and give it to them.” The popularists, Mystal continued, “would have us believe that by not addressing Black concerns, by refusing to deliver on promises to fix the election system, the immigration system and the police system, Democrats are actually helping themselves attract white voters and counterintuitively, shoring up support from non-college-educated Black people.”

Other popularism critics question the wisdom of relying on polls to develop a “popular” agenda at a time when political polling has never been more unreliable. They also point out that popularism’s most prominent preachers are New York- and Washington-based college-educated white guys themselves, whose evidence for what ***working-class*** voters want is, the Johns Hopkins University political scientist Daniel Schlozman says, “either survey data or the limited interactions that fancy people have with not-fancy people.” Instead of trying to win over voters who most likely aren’t winnable, the liberal critique of popularism holds, Democrats should instead redouble their efforts to bring Black and Hispanic voters, as well as college-educated white voters, to the polls. “Overpowering Republicans with enthusiasm and turnout is the only way to beat them,” Mystal wrote, “because trying to appease them is both morally intolerable and strategically foolish.”

Popularists argue that Democrats have already tried and failed to win elections with the enthusiasm-and-turnout model. “The other side gets to vote too,” Teixeira wrote in January, “and the very stark choices favored by those on the left may mobilize the other side just as much — maybe more! — than the left’s side.” (A recent review of 400 million voting records by the political scientist Michael Barber and the public-policy scholar John B. Holbein found that “minority citizens, young people and those who support the Democratic Party are much less likely to vote than whites, older citizens and Republican Party supporters.”) Over a recent lunch at a Chinese-Korean restaurant near Dupont Circle in Washington, Teixeira held out hope that after November, the wisdom of the popularists’ case will be even more apparent. “We’re probably going to have a very rough midterms, and the appetite for change among Democrats will grow,” he said. “Defeat tends to concentrate a party’s mind.”

No matter how likely the prospect of humiliating defeat, it’s a job requirement of the D.C.C.C. chairman to exude pugnacious confidence. As even his harshest critics would concede, Sean Patrick Maloney, the first openly gay person to hold the post, has a knack for that part of the job. “Sean makes me think of the old adage about Irishmen,” says Representative Matt Cartwright of Pennsylvania, the only Democrat who is running for re-election to win in a Trump district in 2016, 2018 and 2020 and one of three Frontliners from the Keystone State. “They see two people fighting, and they ask, ‘Is this a private fight or can anybody get in?’”

Now in his sixth term representing a congressional district in the Hudson Valley, Maloney, 55, angled to run the House Democratic campaign arm for years: In 2017, he conducted an autopsy of the group’s poor performance in the previous year’s election; in 2018, he ran for its chairmanship before abandoning the race because of a medical emergency. That Maloney, a close ally of Pelosi’s, was finally elected D.C.C.C. chairman in late 2020, just in time to preside over the Democratic debacle that’s shaping up to be the 2022 midterms, can make him seem like the dog that caught the car — an analogy that he naturally rejected. “You’re not the first person who’s suggested that,” he said. “But I like that people are underestimating us.”

Maloney was enjoying himself — sipping the remnants of a soda from Shake Shack, gesturing to the three aides monitoring our conversation — when we talked in the middle of March in the D.C.C.C.’s new Washington headquarters, where cubicle name plates provide both the job title and preferred pronouns of the mostly Gen Z employees.

There was no denying the political headwinds Democrats were facing, but Maloney’s exuberance at the time didn’t seem entirely irrational: The D.C.C.C. was finishing up a record-breaking fund-raising quarter that would ultimately bring in north of $50 million — $11.5 million more than its Republican counterpart raised during the same stretch. Maloney pointed to the State of the Union address Biden gave earlier that month — “the first time in a long time the American people got to see, without a filter, the guy they actually voted for” — and the job Biden was doing marshaling international support for Ukraine — “the most impressive presidential performance since the first Gulf War.” He believed both would improve Biden’s languishing support, which in turn would redound to the Democrats’ benefit in November. (Since then, Biden’s approval rating has dipped below 40 percent and the number of House seats Democrats are predicted to lose has increased.)

More than money and polls, what was fueling Maloney’s swagger that afternoon was maps. At the start of the redistricting process that followed the 2020 census, Republicans appeared to hold the upper hand, with total control of the process in 19 states. Indeed, some election experts predicted that the G.O.P. would be able to retake the House in 2022 based solely on gains from newly redrawn congressional maps. But working closely with Democratic officials in the handful of states where they controlled redistricting — including Illinois, Maryland and New Mexico — Maloney and the D.C.C.C. were able to engineer Democratic gains through aggressive gerrymandering of their own. Maloney’s most audacious move was in his home state of New York. There, Democratic legislators went around an independent redistricting commission and approved a heavily gerrymandered map. Their party gained an advantage in 22 out of 26 House districts, halving the number of safe Republican seats from eight to four.

When I met with Maloney at the D.C.C.C., it looked as if Democrats had not just fought Republicans to a draw in the redistricting battle but had actually gained a few seats. “We beat ’em,” Maloney crowed. Of course, one driver of the political polarization that Maloney and other moderate Democrats denounce is the sort of aggressive gerrymandering that creates so many safe seats and so few competitive ones: In 2022, fewer than 40 seats out of 435 are considered competitive — in other words, seats in districts that Biden or Trump won by 5 percent or less in 2020.

“Competitive districts marginalize ideological extremism and foster moderation in Congress,” Richard H. Pildes, a New York University law professor, has written. “Safe seats foster extremism.” Given that reality, I asked Maloney if he had any mixed feelings about the victory, considering the Democrats achieved it with such extreme gerrymanders — noting, of course, that Republicans would have done the same thing if given the opportunity. “They did have the opportunity and they [expletive] it up,” he shot back. “That’s what beating them means.”

But the beatdown would prove ephemeral. Later that month, a Maryland judge threw out the state’s congressional map, calling it an “extreme partisan gerrymander.” A week after that, a judge in New York ruled that state’s new map unconstitutional. In May, [*the New York judge approved a new congressional map,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/nyregion/redistrict-map-nadler-maloney.html) drawn by a Carnegie Mellon political scientist, that undid all of the Democratic gains by creating what experts deemed 15 safely Democratic seats, five safely Republican seats and six tossups. Adding to New York Democrats’ misery, the new map either eliminated or drastically altered the districts of at least six Democratic incumbents.

One of them was Maloney. An hour after the new, court-ordered maps were released, he announced on Twitter that he was switching from the Hudson Valley district he has represented since 2013 to a neighboring, now bluer district rooted in Westchester County but extending north to Putnam County, where he lives. (Members of Congress are not required to live in the district they represent.) The only problem? Much of the district he was moving to is currently represented by his Democratic colleague Mondaire Jones. The prospect of the Democrats’ midterms chief forcing a member-on-member primary — much less a member-on-member primary involving a Black freshman incumbent like Jones — did not go over well with many House Democrats. Suddenly, all the internecine Democratic tensions that were Maloney’s job to resolve, or at the very least elide, were focused squarely on him.

“Sean Patrick Maloney did not even give me a heads up before he went on Twitter to make that announcement,” [*Jones told Politico.*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/19/ocasio-cortez-calls-on-maloney-to-resign-dccc-chairmanship-if-he-primaries-colleague-00033811) “And I think that tells you everything you need to know about Sean Patrick Maloney.” Representative Ritchie Torres of New York, a Black freshman member like Jones, complained about the “thinly veiled racism” of Maloney’s maneuverings. Others noted the presumption of Maloney, the man tasked with protecting the Democrats’ House majority, creating an open seat and giving Republicans a better opportunity to win his current district this fall. Ocasio-Cortez called on Maloney to step down as D.C.C.C. chairman if he wound up in a primary versus Jones.

In the end, Jones switched from his Westchester district to a new one miles away in New York City. But that didn’t completely defuse the situation. Alessandra Biaggi, a progressive New York state senator from Westchester, decided to [*challenge Maloney in the August primary, securing the endorsement of Ocasio-Cortez.*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/06/07/politics/aoc-endorse-alessandra-biaggi-sean-patrick-maloney/index.html) Biaggi attacked Maloney not just as “an establishment, corporatist” Democrat but for putting his own political fortunes above those of the Democratic Party’s. “What hurt the party was having the head of the campaign arm not stay in his district,” she told reporters, “not maximize the number of seats New York can have to hold the majority.”

“This is so counterproductive,” Jim Messina, Obama’s 2012 campaign manager, wrote on Twitter about Ocasio-Cortez’s support of Biaggi’s primary challenge to Maloney. “The Supreme Court is about to outlaw abortion. We could lose both houses. So we are going to focus our time running against each other. Now we’re primarying committed progressives because ... why? If we lose the House it’s because of dumb [expletive] like this.”

With their majority or their own re-elections in doubt, many House Democrats are already heading for the exits in a pre-midterm exodus. So far, 33 House Democrats have announced that they will not compete for their seats in November. Some are leaving to run for other offices, but most are retiring. And while some Democratic retirees represent solidly blue districts and will almost certainly be replaced by other Democrats, many of them hold the sort of purple — or even red — seats that Democrats have little chance of keeping unless they have an incumbent running.

In the middle of March, the mood was funereal in the office of Stephanie Murphy, a Democratic congresswoman from Florida who announced last December that she would not be running again for her purple Orlando-area seat. She had just watched the Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelensky give a video address to a joint session of Congress, during which he shared footage of Ukrainian women and children packing bags and weeping as they said goodbye to their husbands and fathers who were staying to fight the Russians. Murphy, whose family escaped Vietnam by boat when she was an infant, wiped away tears. “I’m a little emotional about it,” she explained. “Those images have been hard for me to watch.”

As Murphy reflected on her time in Congress, her emotions seemed no less raw. [*She was first elected to the House in 2016,*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2016/results/florida-house-district-7-mica-murphy) defeating a 12-term Republican incumbent whose district had become more Democratic after the state Supreme Court made lawmakers redraw Florida’s congressional lines. But it was hardly blue and Murphy won by hewing to the center on fiscal issues and foreign policy.

Once in Washington, she joined the Blue Dogs. In the group’s early years, most of its members were older white men from the South who were not just fiscal conservatives but cultural ones as well — firm in their opposition to gun control, abortion and gay people serving in the military. In 2018, when Murphy, an Asian American woman who just turned 40, became the group’s co-chairwoman, it was a sign of how even the Blue Dogs had changed amid the Democratic Party’s leftward march. “I’d love for the world to stop using ‘conservative Democrat’ to define Blue Dogs,” Murphy told The Washington Post. “Because I am pro-choice, I am unabashedly pro-L.G.B.T.Q., I am pro-gun-safety.” (In addition to Murphy, the Blue Dogs also now have two Black and four Hispanic members.)

Murphy preferred to describe herself as a moderate; her main areas of disagreement with her fellow House Democrats were about national security and pocketbook issues (she supported a law that toughened penalties for deported immigrants who try to re-enter the United States and another that allows new businesses to deduct more of their start-up expenses). For her first two years in Congress, with Trump as president and Democrats in the minority, she was able to stake out moderate positions with little pushback from members of her caucus. But after 2018, when Democrats took back the House, her moderation became a sore point.

Things came to a head last August. After the Senate passed a bipartisan $1 trillion infrastructure bill, the House Progressive Caucus, led by Representative Pramila Jayapal of Washington, announced that a majority of its 96 members would not vote for the bill until the Senate passed Biden’s $3.5 trillion Build Back Better social spending package, which hinged on the support of two moderate Democratic senators, Joe Manchin of West Virginia and Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona. Pelosi agreed not to hold a House vote on the infrastructure bill until the Senate passed Build Back Better.

Murphy was one of about a dozen or so moderate Democrats in the House who urged Pelosi to hold a vote on the infrastructure bill right away. The most aggressive was Gottheimer. He led a group — dubbed the Gottheimer Nine by Capitol Hill reporters — who threatened not to vote for a budget resolution intended to pave the way for Build Back Better and eventually extracted from Pelosi a promise to schedule a House vote on the infrastructure bill in late September, regardless of whether Build Back Better had passed the Senate at that point. When the deadline that Pelosi agreed to came and went without a vote, Gottheimer attacked her in a statement for breaching “her firm, public commitment.”

Murphy was less public in her agitation but no less passionate. “Parts of the Biden agenda have been delivered in a bipartisan way,” she says she recalled thinking, “and when it hits the House, it’s like: ‘Oh, no, let’s not take the win here. Let’s make sure that we try to shove as many progressive pipe dreams’” — she was referring to Build Back Better — “ ‘as we can into this pragmatic piece of legislation to basically sink it.’” She became the target of intensive lobbying from Pelosi and her leadership team and even from Biden himself. In an August phone call, the president — who had moved in a steadily more progressive direction after winning his party’s nomination as a moderate — told her that if she opposed the budget resolution paving the way for Build Back Better, on the grounds that the House should vote for the infrastructure bill first, then she was opposing his entire agenda. Murphy says the call ended abruptly. “The White House’s approach has been to do things on a partisan basis and try to bludgeon their own members into submission,” she told me. (“They had a good conversation in which the president made his case, and Representative Murphy voted in favor of the resolution in August,” Andrew Bates, a White House spokesman, says.)

In mid-November, after months of negotiations and public dithering, the House finally passed the infrastructure bill. A couple of weeks later, Gottheimer, Murphy and other moderate Democrats helped [*the House pass a $1.8 trillion version of Build Back Better,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/09/us/politics/house-spending-bill.html) only to watch Manchin torpedo the bill in the Senate the following month. Pelosi’s allies insisted that the delay on infrastructure was irrelevant. “I don’t think there’s one voter in a swing district who gives a [expletive] whether infrastructure got passed on a Tuesday or a Thursday,” Maloney told me. “They’re not reading Punchbowl” — the Capitol Hill-focused newsletter by and for people who think Politico is too broad in its coverage — “every day and following the ins and outs of Gottheimer this and Pramila that.”

But many other moderate Democrats viewed its passage, coming as late as it did, as a Pyrrhic victory at best. “Not pushing the infrastructure bill in the House immediately was the biggest mistake of Biden’s term because it essentially said a couple things,” Al From argues. “One, it said progressives still drive the Democratic Party even though he beat them in the primaries. Second, it said he really doesn’t mean this bipartisan thing, because when push comes to shove, he’s going to let the most partisan people in his party lead his course.”

Almost as disconcerting from Murphy’s perspective was a flood of negative ads that not just conservative groups but also outside liberal groups began running against her in her Florida district. “You would have thought it was October of the ‘on’ year,” Murphy told me, referring to election years. “For all that Democrats rail about the super PACs, I would say that there are parts of our party that have very effectively used super PACs as a tool against their own Democratic members to ensure party unity. And so a moderate member these days takes incoming in equal proportion from the left and from the right.”

Murphy told me that the negative advertising against her and other moderates, including New York’s Kathleen Rice, who is retiring, and Maine’s Jared Golden, who is a Frontliner, “takes money to repair,” and she maintained that in a world where online small-dollar donations are the coin of the realm, money can be difficult for moderates to raise. “I’m a member who has been repeatedly named as one of the most effective and bipartisan members on the Hill,” Murphy, who serves on the House Jan. 6 committee, said. “Nobody knows who I am.” Colleagues she deemed far less effective legislators, meanwhile, had Twitter and Facebook followings in the millions while hers were stuck in the mid-five figures. “Social media platforms provide folks the ability to focus more on making statements than making law,” she said. “The crazier things you say, the more money you raise. The more antagonistic you are to the other party, the more money you raise.”

This has put Murphy and her fellow moderates in a bind. They tend to represent or run in competitive districts, which require a lot of campaign money but also punish extremism. This year, Henry Cuellar, a Blue Dog from South Texas who is the only remaining anti-abortion Democrat in the House, faced a progressive challenger in his district’s Democratic primary who outraised him by more than $1 million; in the end, Cuellar won the primary in May by fewer than 300 votes. The South Carolina congressman James Clyburn, the House majority whip and the highest-ranking Black member of Congress, had traveled to Texas to campaign for Cuellar, angering liberal Democrats like Ocasio-Cortez, who attacked senior Democrats who supported Cuellar for “an utter failure of leadership.” Clyburn backed Cuellar, he explained, because he believes Cuellar provides the Democrats their best chance to win in November in a district that, like many in South Texas, has been moving toward the G.O.P. “Cuellar could not get elected in my district, but I could not get elected in his district,” Clyburn told me. “Our job is to try to reconcile those differences.” He added: “It doesn’t mean you occupy the same space. You are under the same umbrella.”

But the Blue Dogs’ share of the space under that umbrella is shrinking. In 2010, the Blue Dogs had 54 members. Today that number stands at 19. Of that group, Murphy is one of three who are leaving Congress on their own volition; two more lost their primaries. Six of the Blue Dogs who will be on the ballot in November are Frontliners. All of which means that come January, there could be fewer than a dozen Blue Dogs left in the House.

Making matters worse, Murphy and some of her fellow moderates believe that the Democrats’ own House campaign arm is working against them. Last summer, during the height of the impasse over the infrastructure bill and Build Back Better, Maloney or members of his D.C.C.C. staff reached out to several centrist representatives to warn that the Democrats’ majority would be in jeopardy if they thwarted Biden’s legislative priorities. Some of these centrists, who face tough re-election campaigns, interpreted the outreach as a not-so-veiled threat that their own fund-​raising help from the party would be at risk if they didn’t get in line. “You want your political arm to be focused on politics, not policy,” Murphy told me. “My belief is that the D.C.C.C. has one job and one job alone: to protect incumbents and expand the majority. And becoming an extension of leadership, and working against members that you’re supposed to protect, runs crosswise with your sole mission.”

Until 2016, the D.C.C.C. chair was appointed by the House Democratic leader every two years. But after their party’s poor performance that November, House Democrats made the D.C.C.C. an elected position, throwing open the selection process to the entire caucus. Murphy argues that changed both the nature of the job and the type of politician who seeks it. “It usually means that person has aspirations to continue in Democratic leadership,” she said, “and in order to secure a position in Democratic leadership, you have to be able to secure the progressive left support. I think that is in conflict with your objective as D.C.C.C. chair, which is to protect incumbents and the majority and the center-left members who deliver you the majority.” (Other moderate Democrats defend Maloney. “Part of what the D.C.C.C. has done, under Chairman Maloney’s leadership, is to really focus on empowering those of us who know our districts best to do what we need to do,” the Nevada congressman Steven Horsford, a Problem Solver and a Frontliner, told me.)

When I put Murphy’s criticism to Maloney, he bristled. Being elected rather than appointed “means you’re responsive to the caucus,” he argued. “I have to earn it every day with members of the Democratic caucus, all of whom have concerns about their own elections, their new districts, their fund-raising, their dues.” As for Murphy’s claim that Maloney and the D.C.C.C. were not sufficiently attuned to the needs of moderate members, Maloney got personal. “Those of us who are going to stay in this fight and defend this majority appreciate the service and points of view of our colleagues who are walking out the door,” he said. “And just to put a finer point on it, my district is a lot tougher than that person’s you mentioned. When Hillary Clinton was winning Stephanie Murphy’s district by seven, she was losing mine by two. In other words, I inhabit the concerns that she’s expressing. So if there’s one person who I think would get that balance right, it would be a person whose own seat depends on it — and that’s me.”

[*Susan Wild was*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/results/pennsylvania-house-district-7) [*elected to her eastern Pennsylvania district*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/results/pennsylvania-house-district-7) in the Democratic wave of 2018, replacing the retiring moderate Republican Charlie Dent — who had represented the district for 13 years and whose departure from Congress was viewed as a sign of just how inhospitable the G.O.P. had become for moderates. Dent was known for crossing the aisle to work with Democrats, especially during Trump’s presidency, when he clashed with his fellow Republicans on their attempts to repeal Obamacare and impose a travel ban, and Wild, who sometimes voted for Dent, has tried to model her congressional career after his. “I think voters here are very, very motivated by people who they consider to be independent of their party,” Wild told me. “That was the case with Charlie, and that’s the way I think I’m perceived.”

Wild, a former lawyer, was eating a lunch of crab asparagus bisque and blackened tuna roll topped with lobster salad at an upscale bistro in Bethlehem’s intermittently gentrifying downtown during Congress’s Easter recess. She continued, “People look at me as a 64-year-old woman who was a lawyer and represented a lot of corporations and hospitals over the years, and they’re like, ‘Yeah, I’m pretty sure she’s not a socialist.’” (She has since turned 65.) She is unequivocal in her support of abortion rights and gay rights and says concerns that critical race theory is being taught in schools are, in her estimation, “completely cooked up.” But she talks about these culture-war issues only when asked. Instead, she prefers to focus on her support of business.

“I’m the biggest cheerleader there is for the industries in our district,” she said, “including industries that sometimes come under attack from some quarters for reasons that aren’t necessarily legitimate.” She noted her support for local cement companies — which environmentalists criticize for their carbon emissions — as well as for an Allentown manufacturer that’s being sued by 35 people who accuse it of emitting a toxic gas that caused their cancers. “The fact of the matter is, the legal process will probably take care of it before any kind of regulatory process will,” she said of the case. “But the main thing, again, for me, is being willing to be pro-business.”

Wild is not unusual among moderate Democrats in promoting an economic agenda that champions the interests of industry, Wall Street and the affluent. Although Josh Gottheimer spends a lot of time jousting with the Squad, his signature issue is raising or eliminating the cap on the state and local tax deduction — not exactly a pressing concern of ***working-class*** voters. (Relatedly, Gottheimer doesn’t need to worry about appealing to small-dollar donors. A favorite of Wall Street donors, he currently has $13 million in his campaign war chest.)

And yet, for all their criticism that Democrats have gone too far to the left on social and cultural issues, moderate Democrats rarely confront that drift head-on. Instead, they do battle with a caricature. They say that they don’t want to defund the police — but at this point, not many liberals want to, either.

Moderate Democrats’ primary aim on culture-war issues is to try not to offend and to offer something to both sides of the fight. Chrissy Houlahan, the Pennsylvania congresswoman who represents Philadelphia’s northern suburbs, told me her own story from the summer of 2020, when she participated in a protest march following the murder of George Floyd. “The police were side by side with us on their bikes,” she recalled. “This is a community that’s very unified behind and supportive of our police.”

What most moderate Democrats refuse to do is pick the sorts of big fights the popularists are itching for. “It’s more small-ball stuff,” Sean McElwee complains. “We need better moderates.” He points to Joe Manchin as an example. “Manchin’s moderation, in my view, makes a lot of sense,” McElwee says. “People who vote for Republicans are not like, ‘I’m voting for Republicans because local companies in West Virginia just need the right tax breaks.’ No, they’re like: ‘I believe that government spending is too big. Too many people don’t work. And social change in this country is happening too quickly.’ And I don’t agree with those things, but that’s what those voters believe. And Manchin’s the only one who really speaks to those broad ideological concerns.” What’s more, Manchin doesn’t just speak to those concerns, he votes on them — witness his sinking of Build Back Better. “It’s not just values,” McElwee says. “To win these races, there’s going to have to be some policy as well.”

McElwee was born the same year Bill Clinton was elected president, but Ruy Teixeira, 70, was there when moderates remade the Democratic Party three decades ago. “The thing about moderates today is I don’t think they have a worldview,” Teixeira says. “They’re just reacting to what A.O.C. and the Democratic left are doing. But what’s their alternative? I don’t think they have an alternative. ‘Don’t do dumb stuff’ is not a worldview.” Perhaps one day in the future, maybe as soon as November, moderate Democrats will refashion their worldviews according to Teixeira’s and Yglesias’s Substacks and McElwee’s and Shor’s tweets the way Clinton and a previous generation of moderate Democrats once based theirs on “The Politics of Evasion.” But that day has yet to arrive.

In the meantime, for all their paeans to kitchen-table issues and support for first responders, the moderate Democrats running for re-election are finding a chillier reception in the communities that ushered them into office — and their party into the majority — four years ago. Susan Wild’s Lehigh Valley congressional seat, which was already considered a swing district when she won it in 2018 and 2020, became redder under the new congressional maps drawn by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court and is now “about as competitive and centrist a district as you’re going to find in American politics,” says Chris Borick, a political analyst at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pa. The Cook Political Report recently moved it from “Tossup” to “Lean R” (for Republican). In Washington, Wild shares an apartment with another Frontliner, Cindy Axne of Iowa, who was also elected in the Democratic wave of 2018. “For the longest time before we had our new maps, I would listen to Cindy on the phone with people, saying, ‘I’m in the toughest district in the country, blah, blah, blah,’” Wild told me. “But now even she says, ‘Susan and I might be in just about the same situation.’” (The Cook Political Report also recently moved Axne’s district from “Tossup” to “Lean R.”)

But Wild insisted that they would both buck the national trend. “I think Cindy and I are still roommates next year,” she said. “Cindy can talk fertilizer with the best of them.” As for her own political prospects, Wild continued: “I will win this race based on the fact that my district knows me, the fact that we’ve been out there working our tails off and have gotten a lot of things done. We’ve actually gotten things accomplished for constituents that probably never would have voted for me in 2018, who are now pretty satisfied with some work we’ve done for them.”

One morning during the Easter recess, Wild put her theory to the test at an Allentown fire station. She held up a poster-size check bearing her congressional logo that was made out to the Allentown Fire Department for $129,593; the memo line explained it was for a new emergency-operations center. The money was part of nearly $10 million in earmarks — or, as they’re now called, “Community Project Funding” — that Wild had secured for her district in the $1.5 trillion federal spending bill the House passed the previous month. “Our community is going to be safer and more protected,” Wild said, presenting the check to Allentown’s mayor and fire chief, “thanks to this funding.”

Among the small crowd of reporters, firefighters and elected officials who had gathered to watch Wild’s presentation was Daryl Hendricks, a jut-jawed man with a thick mustache who is a member of Allentown’s City Council. Before going into politics, Hendricks spent 36 years as an Allentown police officer; now he chaired the City Council’s public-safety committee. “This is near and dear to my heart,” he told me, nodding to the rescue trucks and firefighters.

But Hendricks’s warm feelings did not extend toward Wild. “I think she’s having a tough time,” he said. “I think all Democrats are.” Hendricks was a Democrat himself. He’d been one since he was 18, he said, when he was told that the Democratic Party was “the ***working-class*** party” and the Republican Party was “the party of the rich.” “So there was no question what I was going to be,” he said. But he felt that, in recent years, the Democratic Party had lost its way.

“Look what’s going on in the country today,” he said. “It started with the border. I think it’s the most pressing problem we’re facing today.” He continued: “Let’s get an immigration policy in place. What other countries allow what we do? It’s crazy.” The economy wasn’t any better. “They’re all complaining that they didn’t pass the Build Back Better bill. How bad are we now with inflation?” He didn’t believe the Democrats had any solutions. “I think the policies are just bad.”

Standing in the fire station as the people around us talked excitedly about the new emergency-operations center to come, I asked Hendricks, whose anger had given way to resignation, if he thought Wild could do enough in the cities and towns of her district to offset these larger and more profound problems facing the country. “No,” he answered, shaking his head. “It’s a matter of the national atmosphere right now.” Did he think he was going to have a new congressperson next January? Hendricks didn’t hesitate. “I do.”

Jason Zengerle is a contributing writer for the magazine. [*He last wrote about the rise of the Tucker Carlson politician.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/22/magazine/tucker-carlson-politician.html) He is also working on a book about Tucker Carlson and conservative media.

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUSTIN METZ) (MM26-MM27; MM28; MM29; MM30; MM31)

**Load-Date:** July 3, 2022

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[***The Riddle of Riley Keough***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6366-80B1-DXY4-X4YB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 21, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1636 words

**Byline:** By Kyle Buchanan

**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'' or staring down a romantic rival in ''American Honey,'' 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, who pursued Keough to play Stefani, an exotic dancer with murky intentions, for her raucous new comedy ''Zola.'' 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.]

''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 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, ''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,'' about hustlers just trying to get by, her characters feel real and lived-in rather than condescended to. Or, as a recent tweet 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? 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), 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.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/movies/riley-keough-zola.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/movies/riley-keough-zola.html)

**Graphic**

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

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[***Q Train Killing Threatens Subway’s Fragile Comeback***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65HY-C2N1-DXY4-X4S4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 25, 2022 Wednesday 09:14 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1466 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons, Ana Ley, Ashley Wong and Patrick McGeehan

**Highlight:** The subway is at a critical moment as transit officials struggle to bring back riders, to shore up the system’s finances and to address fears over safety.

**Body**

The subway is at a critical moment as transit officials struggle to bring back riders, to shore up the system’s finances and to address fears over safety.

Transit officials in New York City [*celebrated a major milestone last week*](https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/governor-hochul-announces-mta-pandemic-era-subway-metro-north-and-long-island-rail-road-daily): The subway system logged 3.6 million trips in a single day, a pandemic-era record.

Three days later, a Goldman Sachs employee on his way to brunch was fatally shot on the Q train in an unprovoked attack.

The killing was the latest in a series of violent episodes — including a shooting on a train in Brooklyn that injured at least 23 people in April and the fatal shoving of a woman at Times Square station in January — that have made subway riders worried about their safety at a fraught moment for the transit system.

Ridership fell early in the pandemic, and some riders are still worried about being on crowded trains next to people without masks; many commuters have not returned to offices or are coming only a few times a week; and the system has suffered huge revenue losses and could run out of federal pandemic funding after 2023.

The shooting this week was a significant setback in the city’s campaign to bring workers back to offices in Manhattan, Mayor Eric Adams said. And the victim, Daniel Enriquez, was exactly the type of worker he was trying to persuade to return to the subway.

“The call is to come back to work, and the subway system being safe is a major driver to doing that,” Mr. Adams said at a news conference on Monday. “When you have an incident like this, it sends a chilling impact. There’s no getting around that.”

Two years into the pandemic, less than 65 percent of ridership is back, with many riders who are [*using the subway living in* ***working-class*** *neighborhoods*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/17/nyregion/nyc-subway-ridership.html) — New Yorkers who do not have a choice to stay home or splurge on a taxi.

The mounting pressures facing the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the state-run agency that operates the transit system, are now threatening to fundamentally alter the subway, which has long been considered the city’s great equalizer, where New Yorkers from disparate backgrounds ride the train together.

The subway is still overwhelmingly safe. While direct comparisons are challenging, far more people are killed on New York’s City’s streets than on the subway. Traffic deaths have soared in the city during the pandemic to [*273 last year*](https://www.transalt.org/writing/last-year-was-the-deadliest-under-vision-zero-heres-how-mayor-adams-can-save-lives-in-2022), the highest level in eight years.

And the system is [*much less dangerous than in the 1980s and 1990s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/04/nyregion/nyc-subway-crime.html) when robberies were common. In 1990, there were 26 murders on the subway.

Still, records show, violent crimes have increased since the pandemic began. There were, on average, about two murders per year in the five years before the pandemic, compared with six murders in 2020, eight in 2021 and four already this year.

Adding to concerns: Those figures increased even as ridership fell during the pandemic.

Richard Ravitch, the former M.T.A. chairman credited with turning the subway around in the 1980s, said it could take years for ridership to rebound to its prepandemic levels. He said he worries about his 15-year-old grandson, who takes the subway to school.

“Every time I hear about a shooting on the subway, I feel like calling my son and saying, ‘I’ll pay for an Uber,’” he said, though he noted that his grandson usually turns down the offer.

In surveys, transit riders and employers have repeatedly said that subway safety was a top concern. About 31 percent of employers said that reducing the presence of homeless and mentally ill people on streets and subways would be the most effective way to get employees to return to the office, according to a [*survey by the Partnership for New York City*](https://pfnyc.org/news/nearly-80-of-new-york-city-employers-anticipate-hybrid-work-model-moving-forward-partnership-survey-finds/), an influential business group.

The city announced on Tuesday that, since February, it had persuaded nearly 1,400 homeless people living in the subway to go to shelters. It did not say how many stayed in shelters, a number that is typically smaller: In January, two-thirds of those who went from subways to shelters left by the end of the month.

At the same time, fears over the coronavirus have not gone away. About 79 percent of subway riders who had not returned to trains said that social-distancing concerns were among the top factors keeping them away, according to [*a customer survey*](https://new.mta.info/article/mta-customers-count-fall-2021-survey-results) conducted last fall.

Michelle Lim, 39, lives in Manhattan and stopped taking the subway for nearly two years during the pandemic. She and her husband started biking or walking everywhere and bought Citi Bike memberships.

“I started going distances that I previously would have never thought were bikeable,” she said.

Ms. Lim, who is Asian, said she was also nervous about the possibility of violence on the subway, especially given the rise in random attacks on Asian residents.

“You can’t get sucker punched on a bike,” she said.

The M.T.A. is also facing a potential existential crisis after huge revenue losses during the pandemic. An infusion of state and federal money helped the agency stave off [*a deficit that is expected to reach $2 billion in 2026*](https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/reports/osdc/pdf/report-1-2023.pdf).

But its largest funding source is [*money collected from customers*](https://new.mta.info/budget/MTA-operating-budget-basics). Once government pandemic aid runs out, transit officials could face pressure to raise fares or to cut service. Subway leaders worry about [*setting off a “transit death spiral,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/19/us/coronavirus-public-transit.html) where cuts to service make transit a less convenient option for the public, prompting further drops in ridership.

Although [*subway ridership is up sharply this year*](https://data.ny.gov/Transportation/MTA-Daily-Ridership-Data-Beginning-2020/vxuj-8kew) compared with 2021 — about 64 percent more people used the subway from Jan. 1 through May 19 compared with the same time period last year — [*the M.T.A. counted fewer trips than it had projected for this year*](https://new.mta.info/document/87726). Transit officials have blamed the slump, in part, on the Omicron variant and its subvariants, which dealt a blow to the city’s recovery.

Subway service is often unreliable too, and riders sometimes wait 15 minutes between trains. Only about 82 percent of weekday trains were on time in April, down from about 91 percent last April.

As Hosea Roxbury, 57, waited for a B train at the 86th Street Station in Manhattan this week, he said that reports of violence made him nervous and noted that there were no police officers in the station. Over the last year, he started standing as far away from the platform edge as possible.

“It’s sad that you have to really think twice before getting on the subway,” Mr. Roxbury said.

Bonnie Hefferman, 29, said that she rarely takes the train after 9 p.m. anymore. Instead, she said she has been walking and biking more, or opting to stay home instead of going out.

“It’s rough,” she said. “It’s very different compared to prepandemic.”

Danny Pearlstein, policy director for Riders Alliance, a transportation advocacy group, said that despite valid concerns about a rise in crime on the subways, people would return to the system because it is still the most efficient and inexpensive way to get around the city.

“Riders are much more in danger from cars and trucks on the way to the subway than on the trains,” he added.

Mr. Adams, a Democrat who ran for mayor on a public safety message, has said that he would work to make the subway safer by redeploying police officers where they are needed and by installing mobile gun detectors in stations. Mr. Adams has urged corporate executives like Jamie Dimon of JPMorgan Chase to ride the subway to show that it is safe.

“We’re telling our corporate leaders: ‘Hey, get on the train!’” Mr. Adams said in an interview with The Financial Times before the Q train shooting on Sunday. “We need to advertise that New York is back.”

At a news conference on Tuesday to announce an arrest in the fatal shooting, Janno Lieber, the M.T.A.’s chief executive, thanked the mayor for sending more police officers onto trains and platforms.

“Over time, I believe that we will help with the mayor and the police commissioner’s strategy to restore riders’ sense of safety which has been so harmed, so eroded by this terrible incident and to restore confidence in the safety of mass transit,” he said.

Robert Paaswell, a professor at City College and former executive director of the Chicago Transit Authority, said the subway shooting might scare off some riders for a few days, but the effect would not be likely to last long.

In New York City now, “everybody’s a little nervous,” he said.

“One of the things that would help is a more visible police presence in the subways,” he said. “They have to make it clear to the public that this is a one-time, random, rare event and they’re doing everything possible to prevent it.”

Andy Newman contributed reporting.

Andy Newman contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Despite logging 3.6 million trips in a single day last week, a pandemic-era record, less than 65 percent of ridership is back, and the M.T.A. counted fewer trips than it had planned for this year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRES KUDACKI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Green Party Loses Steam in France, Even as Its Cause Gains Momentum***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6509-R2B1-JBG3-60V8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 13, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1261 words

**Byline:** By Constant Méheut

**Body**

As a presidential election looms, the Greens lag far behind in the polls. Analysts say the party has failed to inspire voters and show them it can rule.

MONTPELLIER, France -- Yannick Jadot, the candidate for the French Green Party in April's presidential elections, walked through a small cheering crowd to a podium topped with banners featuring his face, as speakers blasted a version of ''What a Wonderful World'' by the punk rock singer Joey Ramone. The candidate bobbed his head to the rhythm.

The event on a recent afternoon in the sun-soaked central square of Montpellier, a large city on France's Mediterranean coast, had all of the trappings of a dynamic and enthusiastic campaign. ''Environmentalism is all about fun!'' said a speaker introducing Mr. Jadot.

But with less than 30 days to go before the first round of the French presidential elections, the Green Party's campaign has so far failed to generate much excitement among the public. For weeks, Mr. Jadot has been stuck around 5 percent in the polls, about a third of the share of the top three right-wing contenders and one-sixth of the support for President Emmanuel Macron.

The Greens' disarray comes despite the increasing prominence of environmental concerns in France in recent years, marked by a series of climate marches and lawsuits, as well as by sweeping climate change legislation and a wave of environmental protests that have engulfed universities and cafe terraces.

Mr. Jadot said in an interview that ''the French are not yet invested in the election campaign,'' as other more dramatic issues like the pandemic and the war in Ukraine are consuming much of their attention. He added that he remained ''confident'' that voters would soon focus on environmental issues.

But so far, the run-up to the election has been dominated by issues like security, immigration and national identity, reflecting France's recent shift to the right. By comparison, climate issues have largely been ignored, accounting for 2.5 percent of media coverage of the election in the past four weeks, according to a study released by several environmental groups.

The problem, analysts say, is that the French Greens have failed to bring in new ideas and create a clear, coherent platform that goes beyond their core issues. They also point to the party's struggle to be seen as a credible governmental force, capable of dealing with issues like diplomacy and defense, as is the case in Germany, where the Greens are now part of a three-party government coalition.

In a recent essay, Bruno Latour, a French anthropologist and philosopher, and Nikolaj Schultz, a Danish sociologist, said environmental parties had failed to come up with inspiring narratives conveying hope for a better world.

''For now, environmental politics is succeeding in panicking minds and making them yawn with boredom,'' they wrote.

Hoping to shake off this negative image, Mr. Jadot recently embarked on a tour of France that will bring him to some 15 cities by early April. All of the campaign stops have been designed to create connections with voters, with Mr. Jadot addressing them from a small octagonal podium.

Mr. Jadot said he wanted to solve ''both sides of the equation'' by convincing voters that it is time for real climate action and that doing so can also bring about a better lifestyle, or what he called ''a new kind of enthusiasm.''

''Taking action for the climate means economic innovation, eating well thanks to sustainable and small-scale farming,'' he said. ''Basically, it's about regaining control of one's life.''

In Montpellier, where some 500 people had gathered, Mr. Jadot's speech was filled with concrete proposals, including an $11 billion ''Marshall Plan'' for home insulation to cut energy consumption in half. He also plans to ban the use of dangerous pesticides and to create a new wealth tax that reflects the environmental impact of some investments.

''On the substance, these are very relevant proposals,'' said Daphné Destevian, 50, a project manager for an offshore renewable energy institute.

But when it came to the candidate's approach, Ms. Destevian was unmoved. ''He yells too much,'' she said. ''I find it a bit aggressive.''

Standing on a podium that resembled a boxing ring, Mr. Jadot struck a combative tone, castigating the government for signing free-trade agreements, attacking the French energy giant TotalEnergies and likening Mr. Macron's pro-nuclear measures to far-right or authoritarian government policies.

Jérémie Peltier, an opinion expert at the Foundation Jean-Jaurès research institute, said this tone could prove detrimental to the Greens. ''When you listen to Yannick Jadot,'' he said, ''you feel like you're constantly being told off.''

Mr. Jadot's supporters in Montpellier were well aware of the need to convey more optimism, like the positivity that radiated from the youth climate protests in 2019.

José Bové, a longtime Green and anti-globalization activist, said ''the battle we have to win'' is to prove that environmentalism ''is a joyful project, one that makes people feel good.''

Marie-Noël De Visscher, 70, a former researcher in agronomy, said that instead of ''making people feel guilty,'' the Greens had to show that ''we can do great things and that taking the train is fun.''

That challenge has proved particularly acute on the economic front, with the Greens struggling to reconcile the fight against climate change with combating economic insecurity. Mr. Jadot is performing poorly with ***working-class*** voters, who fear the impact of the transition to clean energy on their livelihoods.

Mr. Schultz, the sociologist, said the Greens had focused ''too much on negative narratives, on punitive narratives'' -- for example, by promoting ideas like limiting the growth of the economy through restrictions on food and energy consumption.

Standing back from the crowd, Bruno Cécillon, a longtime Green supporter, acknowledged that ''people are worried'' because ''they won't be able to live as peacefully as they used to, to take their car, turn on the heat, put on the air conditioning without second thoughts.''

Although the French Greens have gained credentials at the local level -- they now control some of France's largest cities, including Lyon and Bordeaux, administering the lives of over two million French people -- they are still a work in progress at the national level.

Daniel Boy, a political scientist at Science-Po university in Paris, said the Greens were not deemed credible on issues that are the prerogative of a president, such as security or international relations. ''Can we imagine an ecologist talking to Putin?'' he said, citing a concern of voters.

By contrast, Mr. Boy added, the Greens in Germany are seen as a more competent and pragmatic political party, one that is capable of forging coalition agreements with centrist forces and entering the debate on non-environmental issues. Annalena Baerbock, the candidate of the German Greens in last year's national elections, today serves as the country's minister of foreign affairs.

Mr. Jadot said he is ready to lead France. ''I want to govern this country,'' he said. ''I want to be responsible.''

But in Montpellier, his supporters already seemed more doubtful.

Mr. Cécillon said he would vote for Mr. Jadot ''not to get him elected -- I don't think he'll be elected -- but because what I'm interested in is to enable this ecological thinking to carry weight.''

''A society doesn't change like that overnight,'' he said. ''It takes time, it's slow.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/france-elections-greens-environment.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/france-elections-greens-environment.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Yannick Jadot at a rally in Montpellier last month. The run-up to the presidential election has been dominated by issues like security. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Eat Now, Pay Later: Going Into Debt for Food***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:668C-K8V1-JBG3-62VW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 29, 2022 Monday 17:03 EST

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 1956 words

**Byline:** Priya Krishna

**Highlight:** Americans are increasingly turning to pay-later services for groceries and other everyday essentials. And there are signs that the practice is putting some in deep debt.

**Body**

Josh Roberts didn’t think twice about taking out a loan to pay for groceries. It was early in the pandemic, and he was making $16.50 an hour working for a technology company in Cincinnati while supporting his sister and her girlfriend.

“We were just not making enough to live,” he said.

So he started buying groceries online using a virtual credit card from [*Klarna*](https://www.klarna.com/), a “buy now, pay later” service that allowed him to break payments into smaller installments that could be made over several weeks, with no interest.

Soon Mr. Roberts, 30, was regularly spending beyond his means on food — [*chicken breasts*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/68861692-nyt-cooking/465934-48-great-chicken-breast-recipes), bananas, chips, cereal. He fell behind on payments, and ended up owing more than $1,000 to Klarna, an estimated $100 of it in late fees. He already had about $11,000 in student debt, and another $2,000 in unpaid medical bills.

“I don’t want to be in debt for a carrot,” he said. “But you have got to do what you’ve got to do.”

When pay-later services like Klarna, which was founded in Sweden, arrived in the United States about a decade ago, they were largely used for [*one-time, discretionary purchases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/03/your-money/buy-now-pay-later-afterpay-affirm-amazon-square.html) like concert tickets and high-end clothing. But as inflation mounts, Americans are increasingly turning to them to finance something much more mundane and essential: what they eat.

And there are signs that the use of these services for repeated, everyday expenses like groceries and restaurant meals is pushing some users, particularly younger people who are already overextended, deeper into debt.

“If you are not financially literate, it is easy to abuse it and say, ‘I will just keep using it, it is free money,’” said Mr. Roberts, who has paid off his debt to Klarna and no longer uses the app.

Pay-later companies say their products are a convenient tool — like layaway plans or credit cards — to help consumers manage their finances in tough times. The services, with breezy names like Zip, Zilch and Affirm, are easy to use, with well-designed apps, websites, virtual credit cards and widgets. Shoppers can apply for them in a checkout line and be approved in minutes.

Unlike credit cards, most of the services don’t charge interest or require applicants to undergo extensive credit checks. There is usually a processing fee for each purchase, typically paid by the merchant.

Pay-later companies are already commonplace in countries like South Korea and Australia. Buoyed by inflation and the rise in e-commerce, they have quickly gained [*a foothold in the United States,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/03/your-money/buy-now-pay-later-afterpay-affirm-amazon-square.html)where $45.9 billion in pay-later transactions were made online in 2021, up from $15.3 billion the year before, according to GlobalData, a data analytics company.

Food, which accounted for about 6 percent of those purchases, appears to be an important part of the growth. In the last year, [*Zip*](https://zip.co/us), a company based in Sydney, Australia, says it has seen 95 percent growth in U.S. grocery purchases, and 64 percent in restaurant transactions. Klarna reports that more than half of the top 100 items its app users are currently buying from national retailers are grocery or household items. [*Zilch*](https://www.zilch.com/us/), says groceries and dining out account for 38 percent of its transactions.

Philip Belamant, the founder of Zilch, said consumers don’t balk at swiping a credit card to buy lunch or coffee. So why shouldn’t they use a pay-later plan, with no interest, for those purchases?

“Why would you take a line of credit out to buy a sandwich?” by using a credit card, he said. “You are doing it today and paying 20 percent interest on it.”

But critics of services like Zilch say their ease of use can lull shoppers into thinking they can take on more debt with no consequences.

“Buy-now-pay-later companies have really insidiously and ingeniously kind of like marketed themselves and advertised themselves as, ‘I am just your friend, I am just here to help you out,’” said Jathan Sadowski, the author of “[*Too Smart: How Digital Capitalism Is Extracting Data, Controlling Our Lives and Taking Over the World*](https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/too-smart).”

A pay-later purchase is essentially a loan, he said, with its own pitfalls. Some services charge late fees that can exceed the interest charges on credit cards, according to a March report by Consumer Reports. Companies aren’t always transparent about the terms of using the service, and missed payments can hurt users’ credit scores.

Pay-later users tend to be economically vulnerable. A July report by the financial services company Fitch Ratings found that they carry more debt than the general population, and that more than 41 percent of applicants have a poor credit history.

The report showed that delinquency rates for some pay-later services more than doubled from June 2021 to last March — from 1.7 percent to 4.1 percent at Afterpay, for example — while delinquency rates for major credit cards remained unchanged, at roughly 1.4 percent.

Pay-later services are less regulated than other forms of credit, and it is unclear exactly how many Americans are using them. The federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau monitors firms that offer the loans, and in [*December*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/31/your-money/buy-now-pay-later-loans-credit.html) opened an inquiry into the business practices of five companies.

But Consumer Reports says many pay-later arrangements are designed to circumvent the Truth in Lending Act, which means they aren’t subject to the same disclosure protections as credit cards.

Some credit agencies[*include pay-later data*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/31/your-money/buy-now-pay-later-loans-credit.html) in their reports[*,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/31/your-money/buy-now-pay-later-loans-credit.html) and others are working toward that goal.

So a seemingly trivial decision like paying for chips using a pay-later service can end up seriously harming one’s financial health, Mr. Sadowski said. “Because I used one of these loan services to buy groceries, that might in the future impact my ability to buy a car, get a job, rent an apartment — all the things that use our credit score to assess and judge our worth in society.”

Some of the companies pointed out that most payments are made on time. At Afterpay, 98 percent of its payments in the first quarter of 2022 didn’t incur a late fee, said Alex Fisher, the company’s head of North American sales. And the service doesn’t allow new purchases by anyone who has missed a payment.

For consumers who keep up with payments, the services can be a boon as food prices soar.

“My husband and I have good jobs, we are able to pay for the things we want to pay for,” said Ambar Valdez, who works for Medicare in San Antonio. But her grocery bills have almost doubled.

Thanks to services like Klarna and Afterpay, “I don’t have to worry about groceries, and that is great,” said Ms. Valdez, 30. “I can focus on my light bill, my phone bill, my internet.”

Jessie Blum, 39, an instructional designer in Rutherford, N.J., didn’t need convincing to use a pay-later system for her everyday food purchases.

“If I wanted to pick up a coffee on the way home from somewhere and I didn’t have any money in my coffee or eat-out budget, I would push it to next month’s budget,” she said.

Others said it takes some effort to juggle multiple payment plans. Noelle Platt, 27, a stay-at-home mother of one in Kerry, N.C., uses Zip and Sezzle to buy groceries. The number of payments can pile up, she said. “We had a whole bunch going at once for some reason. It was stressful planning them out.” But she has been able to manage for now.

She first used the services at the start of the pandemic, when her husband lost his job at a coffee and tea warehouse. As the price of groceries has risen, she still relies on them.

Hannah Brown, a hair stylist in Phoenix, said her paycheck varies from week to week, so she finds it easier to pay for food in installments. But because she pays less up front, she’ll spend double what she normally would on takeout meals.

“It doesn’t feel like I just spent $80,” said Ms. Brown, 32, adding, “I can’t say it is a healthy habit.”

Many of her co-workers use pay-later services, she said; several have defaulted on payments, and they aren’t the ones who use the loans for clothing. They use them to buy food.

Chris Browning a financial analyst who hosts the podcast “[*Popcorn Finance*](https://popcornfinance.com/podcast/),” said the growing use of the loans for something as basic as food, he said, signals a weak social safety net. Some states have recently ended or [*scaled back food-stamp benefits*](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/states-scale-back-food-stamp-benefits-as-prices-soar), even though more than [*23 million Americans*](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/2022/demo/hhp/hhp46.html) reported being sometimes or often food insecure in June, according to census data.

Without programs to meet people’s essential needs, “something needs to come in to fill the gap,” Mr. Browning said. “And when it is based on consumerism and capitalism, this is what fills the gap: companies coming in to make these purchases more attainable, even if there are downsides.”

Mike Taiano, a senior banking analyst for Fitch Ratings, said that what especially concerns him about pay-later loans is that consumers are often encouraged to link their credit cards to the service.

“It potentially creates a cycle-of-debt issue, where consumers are paying off one type of debt with another type of debt,” and end up paying high interest rates on their credit cards, he said.

Many of the pay-later food purchases have been [*groceries*](https://www.nbcnews.com/business/consumer/consumers-use-buy-now-pay-later-apps-pay-food-gas-basics-klarna-affirm-rcna25101). But restaurants are edging into that territory. The San Francisco-based payments company Block, Inc. completed its acquisition of Afterpay in January. Restaurants are one of the largest clienteles for Square, Block’s retail technology company, and Afterpay has been added to those businesses’ point-of-sale systems.

[*Broad Street Oyster Company*](https://www.broadstreetoyster.com/), a restaurant in Malibu, Calif., has offered Afterpay for a year, and the owner, Christopher Tompkins said 5 percent of online customers use it.

That may not sound like much, he said, but the average pay-later transaction is 40 percent higher than the average online order, and twice as much as an average in-person order.

Afterpay currently gives Mr. Tompkins a temporary discount on its processing fee. When that discount expires, he said, he might reconsider using the service.

Dennis Cantwell and Monica Wong discovered that their San Francisco restaurant, [*Palm City Wines*](https://www.palmcitysf.com/), offered a pay-later option when they saw a [*viral tweet*](https://twitter.com/matt_slotnick/status/1538918785389735936?s=21&amp;t=BCCAdc0dxUjEGIuVO9HE1w) in late June by a customer who joked about paying for a $19 hoagie in installments. The option had come with Palm City’s point-of-sale system; Mr. Cantwell said he missed an email telling him how to opt out.

The restaurant no longer offers Afterpay. If it did, Mr. Cantwell said, he would have to raise the price of small menu items by $2 to pay the processing fees.

A hoagie, he said, is “an old-school ***working-class*** item,” he added. Financing one? “It seems so bizarre.”

Or maybe it’s not so far-fetched. Mr. Roberts, the grocery customer who got caught up in late fees, said he would rather shop for food at a dollar store than use a pay-later service.

Would he use one to eat out? “Maybe,” he said. “For a really nice meal.”

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PHOTOS: Josh Roberts, who used to buy groceries with a pay-later app, visiting a store in Washington State. (D1); Through the Klarna app on his phone, Josh Roberts is able to consider the selection of groceries that he might buy. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHONA KASINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Ambar Valdez, who has a steady income, said pay-later services helped her worry less about being able to afford other expenses. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSH HUSKIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Philip Belamant, the founder of Zilch, suggested using pay-later services for everyday purchases because there was no interest. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER FLUDE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Christopher Tompkins offers his customers a pay-later option at his restaurant, Broad Street Oyster Company, in Malibu, Calif. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON ZAUCHA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (D4)

**Load-Date:** September 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***What Nevada Wants in a President***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y85-6WT1-DXY4-X450-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 21, 2020 Friday 18:57 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1035 words

**Byline:** Brittany Bronson

**Highlight:** This diverse state is home to immigrants, transients, ranchers and union members — and many of us are struggling.

**Body**

This diverse state is home to immigrants, transients, ranchers and union members — and many of us are struggling.

LAS VEGAS — No Democratic candidate for president can win the nomination without the overwhelming support of voters of color, and Nevada — with its nearly 30 percent Latino, 10 percent African-American, and about 9.5 percent Asian-American and Pacific Islander population — is the first contest to offer insight into which of the remaining all-white front-runners can earn it.

As early caucus voting began in Las Vegas, appealing to nonwhite voters was a clear focus of the candidates. Senator Bernie Sanders marched to a polling place alongside a crowd of young Latinx voters. Pete Buttigieg answered town hall questions about immigration reform in Spanish. Senator Elizabeth Warren ordered boba tea and strolled the small businesses of Las Vegas’s Chinatown plaza. Tom Steyer hosted a Black History Month Concert featuring members of En Vogue and Boyz II Men. At Las Vegas’s First African Methodist Episcopal Church, former Vice President Joe Biden shared stories with congregants about his boyhood experiences visiting black churches.

To understand what’s on Nevadans’ minds as they cast their votes, remember that the state is ground zero for some of the most pressing national crises of our moment, many of which disproportionately impact these minority communities. More than one in 10 Nevadans have [*no health insurance*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured). The state is the worst in the availability of   [*affordable housing*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) for low-income residents. It has the fourth-   [*highest level*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) of income inequality. And Las Vegas, a concrete slab in the belly of the Mojave Desert, is the   [*fastest-warming city*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) in the United States.

It should be no surprise, then, that [*a recent poll*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) showed the two most progressive candidates had the highest favorability ratings among likely caucus-goers. Senator Warren’s focus on corruption has resonated with Nevada’s primarily ***working-class*** families, many of whom, just a decade ago, were destroyed by predatory lending. Although her best-case scenario is a second- or third-place finish here, Senator Sanders is well on his way to his largest victory yet of the presidential contest. His promises to reinstate DACA and abolish ICE are enticing to a state population of which 7 percent are   [*undocumented*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured). Hispanic voters and thriving activist organizations form the foundation of his support.

Also driving support for Senator Sanders is the fact that, for ***working-class*** communities that are not covered by the protection of a union or citizenship, a life in Nevada is defined by economic struggle and poverty. Our Democratic legislators have not hesitated to use billions of dollars to build an N.F.L. stadium or to raise regressive sales taxes that hit the poor the hardest. For decades, leaders of both political parties have sacrificed comprehensive government services to protect the pocketbooks of the wealthy, refusing to raise desperately needed revenue by raising income or property taxes. Nevada is considered one of the [*best states*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) for the wealthy, but for those who are struggling, Senator Sanders’s populist message hits close to home.

Still, outside of diverse Clark County, registered Republicans [*outnumber*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) Democrats in 15 out of 16 of Nevada’s mostly rural counties. In a general election, a “socialist” message will struggle here, even if it is a democratic one.

And Nevada has always been guided by a spirit of political pragmatism. In this state of immigrants, transients, ranchers and union card-holding members, decades of organizing, bargaining and long, tireless work have shaped our collective identity to understand the realities of negotiation, that change doesn’t always happen overnight and often requires compromise. This could explain why for so long, Mr. Biden seemed like the state’s most likely choice. His strong relationship with unions, the state party and nonwhite voters aligned him with the state’s preferences, at least on paper.

This is a swing state that has gone to the Democrats in every presidential election since 2008. And despite all of the far-left critiques of the “political establishment,” it was, in fact, Nevada’s that all but guaranteed, then hand-delivered, two sweeping blue waves in 2016 and 2018. The party knows how to pick winning candidates, and the last elections brought with them Nevada’s two sitting female Democratic senators, a Democratic governor, and a majority-Democratic, historic majority-female Nevada State Legislature.

So Nevada’s diverse voters have historically trusted the party’s judgment. But Mr. Biden’s poor performances in the first two contests have taken a toll, and the late surges of other moderates are likely to siphon enough votes to keep Mr. Biden well below Senator Sanders. If the state party coalesces around Mr. Biden — which seems possible based on their [*major endorsements*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) — there’s a small possibility it could keep his campaign above water.

Some moderate Nevadans have already turned a listening ear to the unoffensive centrism of Senator Amy Klobuchar and the starkly youthful energy of Mr. Buttigieg, who may have opportunities here to outperform expectations. They appeal here for the same reasons they did in Iowa and New Hampshire. After all, Nevadans’ transience means that residents often bring their geographic sensibilities with them.

The state remains Senator Sanders’s to win. But until the caucus ends on Saturday, the candidates will work to appeal to voters in a state that is in many ways unique, but more important, offers the most realistic reflection yet of the demographics of their party.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/report-nevada-has-the-sixth-highest-uninsured-rate-in-nation-with-more-than-1-in-10-uninsured).

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PHOTO: Volunteers Hasani Brooks-Smith-Lowe left, and Rosalinda Castaneda canvassing for Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders in Reno. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Max Whittaker for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2020

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[***History Hides Here***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6684-TX61-DXY4-X3H0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 28, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 1; STREETSCAPES

**Length:** 1913 words

**Byline:** By John Freeman Gill

**Body**

Before it was a clothing store, it was a bar, and before it was a bar, it was a key part of American history.

In a city of showy skyscrapers climbing ever higher in their bids to catch the eye, the beguiling little brick-and-wood house at 2 White Street in TriBeCa is striking precisely because of its humble scale and design.

Built in 1809 by Gideon Tucker, a school commissioner who ran a nearby plaster factory, the two-and-a-half-story, Federal-style corner house is exceedingly rare as a Manhattan home whose sloping gambrel roof and original dormer windows have survived more than two centuries.

The ground floor of the little house was divided into multiple storefronts, which in the 20th century held a variety of mom-and-pop shops serving a ***working-class*** neighborhood known until the 1970s as Washington Market: a corner barbershop with a candy-striped pole, a cigar store, a liquor store, a travel agency and a footwear shop with a distinctive shoe-shaped sign suspended above West Broadway. Now combined into a single storefront, the current retail space retains raffish details of its liquor-store days, including a retro red-and-blue neon sign and period gilt window lettering advertising cognacs and cordials.

In the past 14 years, the building has become a fashion destination, as two haberdashers -- first J. Crew and now Todd Snyder -- have sold men's wear from the evocative corner storefront.

Less well known, however, is 2 White Street's antebellum incarnation as a destination of a very different kind: the home of a prominent Black abolitionist minister and a possible stop on the Underground Railroad, the network of Black and white activists who helped African Americans flee Southern slavery before the Civil War. From 1842 until his death in 1847, Rev. Theodore S. Wright lived in the house, helping conduct fugitives to freedom in more-Northern parts of the country or Canada.

Although 2 White Street was declared an individual landmark by the city Landmarks Preservation Commission in 1966, followed by the house's inclusion in the Tribeca East Historic District in 1992, neither designation report even mentioned Wright. In the years since, the minister's obscurity has persisted. In interviews, three tenants who operated out of the corner storefront over most of the past 28 years said they had never heard of Wright or the building's abolitionist history until informed by a reporter.

''It gives me goose bumps,'' said the men's wear designer Todd Snyder, who opened his own boutique in the building in 2019 after overseeing the J. Crew store that opened there in 2008.

Born free in Rhode Island in 1797, Wright was educated at the Free African School in New York City and graduated in 1828 from the Princeton Theological Seminary, the first African American to receive a degree from such a seminary in the United States.

As pastor of the First Colored Presbyterian Church of New York City, which congregated in a schoolroom near Duane and Hudson streets before obtaining a church on Frankfort Street, Wright denounced slavery from the pulpit and relentlessly organized the Black community in defense of its civil liberties.

In the 1830s, he served on the first executive committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society and was one of the earliest members of the New York Vigilance Committee, which aggressively aided those fleeing bondage and hired lawyers to argue in court to keep kidnappers from forcing free Black Americans into slavery. In the 1840s, while living on White Street, he served as the group's president.

''To me, Wright is really one of the founders of the Underground Railroad,'' said Eric Foner, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of ''Gateway to Freedom: The Hidden History of the Underground Railroad.'' ''In New York, that's a small number of people, but they were very active -- and no one could give you an exact figure, but they were very successful in helping fugitive slaves who reached the city and then sending them off to New England or to Canada where they could be free.''

By 1841, the New York Vigilance Committee claimed to have helped more than 1,000 fugitives, crucial work at a time when the city was run by a pro-Southern government and was economically intertwined with the slaveholding South through the cotton trade.

Mr. Foner said that Wright probably harbored fugitives from slavery in his home.

''We know from some of the correspondence that he was in touch with the Boston sort of branch of the Underground Railroad, and they exchanged letters about Wright and others in New York City sending fugitives on their way to Boston who had gotten to New York City,'' he said. ''There weren't a heck of a lot of places where you could hide fugitives in New York, so I would say it's quite likely'' that Wright's home was used as a hiding place.

Deeply committed to the principle of passive resistance, Wright was ''an early giant of the civil rights movement, the Martin Luther King of his time,'' said Tom Calarco, a co-author, with Don Papson, of ''Secret Lives of the Underground Railroad in New York City.''

At a Princeton event in 1836, the minister did not fight back as he was severely beaten by a white anti-abolitionist, ''and Wright said later he was glad to be able to remain true to his nonviolent principles,'' Mr. Calarco said.

After Wright's death, the funeral procession down Broadway was a quarter of a mile long, and the sidewalks ''during the whole route'' were ''filled with women belonging to the colored congregations of the city,'' Lewis Tappan, a leading white abolitionist, wrote in the Emancipator and Republican newspaper at the time.

Wright's White Street home carries special significance because it is one of just 18 city sites with landmark protection that are associated with abolitionism or the Underground Railroad.

The nearby homes of two other major African-American Underground Railroad figures -- the publisher and New York Vigilance Committee leader David Ruggles, on Lispenard Street (where the fugitive Frederick Douglass was hidden), and the indefatigable Underground Railroad conductor Louis Napoleon, on Leonard Street -- were long ago demolished.

Today, most people familiar with 2 White Street, which is also known as 235 West Broadway, associate it with one of its several liquor-related incarnations.

In 1994, Martin Sheridan, an Irish-born ''roadie'' for rock musicians, rented the corner storefront for $2,000 a month and opened the Liquor Store Bar, a glass-enclosed jewel box lent period charm by the old-school Liquor Store neon sign that hung over West Broadway.

''It was catching the downtown artist wave,'' Mr. Sheridan recalled. ''It was the last wave before they all moved to Brooklyn or wherever.''

Most of the bartenders at Mr. Sheridan's watering hole were artists or musicians who lived in TriBeCa, which helped suffuse the bar with a creative, neighborhood atmosphere distinct to that time and place.

''My biggest fulfillment as a patron anywhere was at the Liquor Store Bar,'' said Charles Coleman, a composer who has lived in the neighborhood since 1975. One of his favorite aspects of the place was that it allowed him to discuss with painters how both he and they created something out of nothing except their imaginations.

''It's wonderful to get into a discussion about that,'' he said, ''especially when beer is involved.''

The Liquor Store Bar closed in 2004, Mr. Sheridan said, when he could not obtain a lease renewal. The following year, Michele Angerosi, an Italian-born bartender at nearby Puffy's Tavern, rented 2 White Street with the intention of opening an upgraded version of the popular haunt.

In the basement, Mr. Angerosi said, ''we found old alcohol bottles, probably from the 1920s, that looked almost like pharmacy bottles.''

He poured $250,000 into his new venture, he said, knocking out a wall to combine the building's two storefronts and installing, at a cost of nearly $40,000, a 49-foot mahogany bar adorned with elegant wraparound molding.

But no drink was ever sold at that bar. When Mr. Angerosi applied for a liquor license, he ran into fierce opposition from some neighbors.

High-profile area residents like the ''Sopranos'' star James Gandolfini wrote letters supporting his application, but New York State denied Mr. Angerosi a license, determining that the Liquor Store must remain dry because there were already three or more businesses with full liquor licenses within 500 feet. Mr. Angerosi was compelled to abandon his dream.

The custom-built mahogany bar he installed was meant ''to last a hundred years, and it's still there,'' he lamented recently. ''It's beautiful, and every time I go by my heart gets squeezed.''

J. Crew's decision to open its first stand-alone men's wear store in the Liquor Store in 2008 was championed by the marketing guru Andy Spade, who pitched it to top J. Crew executives.

''It wrote itself,'' said Mr. Snyder, who was then J. Crew's head of men's design. ''Andy had a story like, 'A man walks into a bar, and he comes out with a madras.'''

The store became an incubator where the company tested many items that became J. Crew staples.

It was a turning point for both the brand and Mr. Snyder.

''That was the place where I learned not only how to design apparel but really to create the environment that apparel lives in,'' he said. ''A light bulb went off in my head, and that's when I decided to go off on my own.''

Mr. Snyder opened his first store in 2016, and after J. Crew left the Liquor Store in 2019, he jumped at the opportunity to put a shop of his own there, adding crown moldings and square ceiling soffits to give the space a clubby, old-world style.

''I've always been inspired by British pubs and gentlemen's clubs where you go to smoke and drink,'' he explained.

Behind the shop's bar is a small framed portrait of Wright, nestled amid the whiskey bottles. Mr. Snyder said he did not know how it got there.

Ryan Taylor, who managed the store until January when he left to focus on acting, said it was he who had decided to honor Wright by displaying the portrait.

Mr. Taylor had never heard of Wright until 2019, when Rabbi Andy Bachman, executive director of the nearby Jewish Community Project Downtown, stopped in and told him about the minister. Rabbi Bachman gave Mr. Taylor the portrait of Wright and later led a community meeting at the Liquor Store to discuss efforts to mark abolitionism-related city sites with plaques as part of a Freedom Trail.

''Some of our African-American clients didn't understand that history,'' said Mr. Taylor, 54, who is also African American. So when shoppers of any race came in and asked about Wright's portrait, Mr. Taylor made a point of telling them why he felt they were standing on ''sacred ground.''

''In this building was a very powerful man who risked his life to make a difference -- he wasn't safe, but he did it,'' Mr. Taylor said, adding, ''As you stand here enjoying your $40-a-glass Japanese whiskey as you're buying a suit -- and your fiancée is standing there and you're dropping $4,000 to $10,000 on a Tuesday -- there's an opportunity to reflect and look back.''

Mr. Taylor's voice rose to a crescendo: ''You didn't know you were coming here to get an education, but you got it, and you learned not just about the building but about humanity.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/25/realestate/streetscapes-tribeca-abolition.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/25/realestate/streetscapes-tribeca-abolition.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The 1809 frame house at 2 White Street was once home to a Black abolitionist minister, Theodore S. Wright, above, and is now a Todd Snyder men's wear shop. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

INSET, RANDOLPH LINSLY SIMPSON AFRICAN-AMERICAN COLLECTION, JAMES WELDON JOHNSON MEMORIAL COLLECTION IN THE YALE COLLECTION OF AMERICAN LITERATURE, BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY) (RE1)

The obsolete liquor store sign, below right, on 2 White Street, seen at top in the mid-1920s and at left today, hints at the string of businesses that have called the building home over the years. In 2019, the men's wear designer Todd Snyder, below left, redid the storefront to house his TriBeCa store. A portrait of the building's onetime resident Theodore S. Wright, a minister who helped conduct fugitive slaves to freedom, hangs in the store. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

EUGENE L. ARMBRUSTER/THE NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (RE6)

**Load-Date:** August 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***An Unlikely Oscar Winner, 30 Years Later***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6503-17F1-JBG3-62NF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 12, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1288 words

**Byline:** By Jason Bailey

**Body**

Much like Vinny in the South, the film was a fish out of water at the Academy Awards. But the comedy endures, thanks to a generous Joe Pesci and a fiery Marisa Tomei.

When the culture-clash courtroom comedy ''My Cousin Vinny'' landed in theaters on March 13, 1992, the critical response was mostly positive. The Times's Vincent Canby found it ''inventive and enjoyable,'' The Los Angeles Times's Peter Rainer called it ''often funny'' and The Hollywood Reporter deemed it ''a terrific variation on the fish-out-of-water/man-from-Mars story formula.''

One phrase you won't find in any of those reviews is ''Oscar worthy.'' Yet ''Vinny'' proved just that, landing an Academy Award for best supporting actress a full year after its original theatrical release -- one of the biggest upsets in Oscar history, and a trophy that would prove both a blessing and a curse for its recipient, Marisa Tomei.

Her performance as Mona Lisa Vito, the long-suffering fiancée and legal secret weapon of Joe Pesci's title character, was a breakthrough for the Brooklyn-born actress, who had done her time Off Broadway and in the world of soaps and sitcoms. ''I was fresh to the business and didn't know how movies worked,'' Tomei explained in 2017, ''but Joe chose me for the part, then took me by the hand and guided me immensely, so I got very lucky.''

''Vinny'' concerns a pair of New York University students who, while driving through Alabama, are falsely accused of murder. They're so desperate for legal representation that they call upon the only lawyer they can afford: Vincent LaGuardia Gambini (Pesci), a cousin of one of the accused and a novice who has just passed the bar after six attempts.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Pesci roars into town in a Cadillac convertible at the eleven-and-a-half minute mark; on the DVD audio commentary, the director, Jonathan Lynn, calls this, with characteristically British understatement, ''a star entrance.'' And that's an accurate assessment of Pesci's station -- he had just won an Oscar for his menacingly funny work in ''Goodfellas,'' and ''Vinny'' was one of his first attempts to leapfrog from supporting player to leading man.

But Pesci wasn't the only star making an entrance; a gum-smacking Tomei scores the first two laughs in the scene, first with her retort to his assertion that she sticks out ''like a sore thumb'' -- ''Oh, yeah, you blend'' -- and then her heartbroken realization, ''I bet the Chinese food here is terrible.''

It's noteworthy that Pesci cedes those laughs to her, and continues to do so throughout the picture, playing the George to her Gracie (though she is, clearly, the smarter one). A lesser actor might try to upstage her, but Pesci had been the scene-stealer before, in films like ''Raging Bull'' and ''Easy Money''; he knew how to step back and let his co-stars shine. And this principle of generosity is most pronounced in the courtroom climax, when Vinny puts Mona Lisa on the stand as an automobile expert (she worked in her father's garage), giving the testimony that exonerates his clients.

It's clear why the commitment-shy Vinny falls in love with Mona Lisa all over again. She charms everyone from judge to jury to onlookers, and, in turn, the moviegoing audience. Credible, fiery, funny and energetic, she and Pesci turn what could've been broad caricatures into grounded, empathetic characters.

But ''My Cousin Vinny'' is not what we think of as an ''Oscar movie,'' and Tomei's is not what is conventionally considered an ''Oscar performance.'' Credit where due to 20th Century Fox: When the film was an unexpected commercial success ($52 million on an $11 million budget), the studio spent some of those profits on a ''For Your Consideration'' campaign, paying off in her nomination for best supporting actress -- alongside Judy Davis (''Husbands and Wives''), Joan Plowright (''Enchanted April''), Vanessa Redgrave (''Howards End'') and Miranda Richardson (''Damage''), formidable competition indeed.

If the nomination was a surprise, Tomei's victory over her distinguished competition was a shock. She was a newcomer triumphing over veterans, an American television actress taking on distinguished stage thespians from abroad, and, perhaps most importantly, the only comic performance against a quartet of scorching dramatic turns. And for all of those reasons, when Jack Palance opened the envelope and called Tomei's name, it sent a shock wave through the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

Maybe the uniformity of Tomei's competition canceled each other out in her favor. Maybe she had the home court advantage. Or maybe, in a flurry of dramatic performances, the comedic joy of Mona Lisa Vito was a breath of fresh air.

Or maybe, maybe, it was a big mistake. Whispers began to circulate that a confused Palance had awarded Tomei the prize rather than the ''rightful'' winner. Palance was 74 at the time, adding a dash of ageism to the tall tale. The rumor first appeared in print a year later, in The Hollywood Reporter, its origin ascribed to an unnamed ''former son-in-law of a distinguished Academy Award winner''; in the months that followed, it would find its way into Entertainment Weekly and Variety, among others.

All would take pains to insist that Tomei's victory was legitimate; academy spokespeople refuted the rumor to anyone who would listen. ''If such a scenario were ever to occur,'' Roger Ebert was told, ''the Price Waterhouse people backstage would simply step out onstage and point out the error. They are not shy.'' (And that is, in fact, what happened during the ''La La Land'' and ''Moonlight'' mess of 2017, though it was hard to tell in all the hubbub onstage.) But it became a case of the Streisand effect, where these corrections ultimately just helped the story spread.

It didn't help that these publications frequently took the opportunity to brand Tomei as somehow undeserving. EW explained the persistence of the rumor by noting that ''she seems to have made a few enemies along the way,'' quoting a producer (anonymously, of course) who claimed the award had changed her. Variety similarly quoted an anonymous filmmaker in their item, titled ''Tomei Poisoning,'' who suggested that the actor was fickle and overly ambitious.

Tomei did her best to make light of the rumor, even poking fun at it in her monologue while hosting ''Saturday Night Live'' in 1994. But this was a brave face. ''When I was younger, it hurt my feelings,'' Tomei told The Times in 2017. ''It made me quite ashamed, actually. But on the other hand, it's a load of [expletive]. I think it had to do more with the role that I played -- that it was comedic and that it wasn't upper class. I think it was more of a classist thing, frankly.''

She's right, of course, and not just about the character. Comic performers are treated as second-class citizens by the academy, and though there are occasional exceptions, they're rarely rewarded with Oscar nominations, much less statuettes. And there certainly seems to have been a classist prejudice against Tomei herself, a ***working-class*** actor who won the prize over acting royalty like Plowright and Redgrave and was subsequently (if anonymously) chastised in the press for getting too big for her britches.

Tomei took her lumps. When her post-''Vinny'' film roles disappointed, she returned to the theater and became a mainstay of the New York stage. Her film roles, while less frequent, were juicier; they paid off with two more Oscar nominations, for ''In the Bedroom'' (2000) and ''The Wrestler'' (2008), as well as a role in one of the most popular film franchises of the moment. If Tomei learned one thing from Mona Lisa Vito, it seems, it was how to turn underestimation into triumph.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/movies/my-cousin-vinny-joe-pesci-marisa-tomei.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/movies/my-cousin-vinny-joe-pesci-marisa-tomei.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The engaging performances from Joe Pesci and Marisa Tomei, who won an Oscar, helped make a winning case for the courtroom comedy ''My Cousin Vinny.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY 20TH CENTURY FOX)

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[***France Cares About Green Causes, but Not Its Green Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6504-5KR1-JBG3-6393-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 12, 2022 Saturday 22:11 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1274 words

**Byline:** Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** As a presidential election looms, the Greens lag far behind in the polls. Analysts say the party has failed to inspire voters and show them it can rule.

**Body**

As a presidential election looms, the Greens lag far behind in the polls. Analysts say the party has failed to inspire voters and show them it can rule.

MONTPELLIER, France — Yannick Jadot, the candidate for the French Green Party in April’s presidential elections, walked through a small cheering crowd to a podium topped with banners featuring his face, as speakers blasted a version of “What a Wonderful World” by the punk rock singer Joey Ramone. The candidate bobbed his head to the rhythm.

The event on a recent afternoon in the sun-soaked central square of Montpellier, a large city on France’s Mediterranean coast, had all of the trappings of a dynamic and enthusiastic campaign. “Environmentalism is all about fun!” said a speaker introducing Mr. Jadot.

But with less than 30 days to go before the first round of the French presidential elections, the Green Party’s campaign has so far failed to generate much excitement among the public. For weeks, Mr. Jadot has been stuck around [*5 percent in the polls*](https://www.ifop.com/presidentielle-2022/), about a third of the share of the top three right-wing contenders and one-sixth of the support for [*President Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/18/world/europe/france-election-macron-zemmour-le-pen.html).

The Greens’ disarray comes despite the increasing prominence of environmental concerns in France in recent years, marked by a series of climate marches and [*lawsuits*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/03/world/europe/france-emissions-court.html), as well as by [*sweeping climate change legislation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/world/europe/france-climate-law.html) and a wave of environmental protests that have engulfed [*universities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/30/world/europe/france-elite-universities-environment.html) and [*cafe terraces*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/11/world/europe/paris-terraces-climate-change.html).

Mr. Jadot said in an interview that “the French are not yet invested in the election campaign,” as other more dramatic issues like the pandemic and the war in Ukraine are consuming much of their attention. He added that he remained “confident” that voters would soon focus on environmental issues.

But so far, the run-up to the election has been dominated by issues like [*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), reflecting [*France’s recent shift to the right*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/18/world/europe/france-valerie-pecresse-republicans.html). By comparison, climate issues have largely been ignored, accounting for 2.5 percent of media coverage of the election in the past four weeks, according to a [*study*](https://twitter.com/laffairedusiecl/status/1496397458150146053) released by several environmental groups.

The problem, analysts say, is that the French Greens have failed to bring in new ideas and create a clear, coherent platform that goes beyond their core issues. They also point to the party’s struggle to be seen as a credible governmental force, capable of dealing with issues like diplomacy and defense, as is the case in Germany, where the Greens are now part of a [*three-party government coalition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/24/world/europe/germany-new-government.html).

In a [*recent essay*](https://www.editionsladecouverte.fr/memo_sur_la_nouvelle_classe_ecologique-9782359252187), [*Bruno Latour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/25/magazine/bruno-latour-post-truth-philosopher-science.html), a French anthropologist and philosopher, and [*Nikolaj Schultz*](https://ku-dk.academia.edu/NikolajSCHULTZ), a Danish sociologist, said environmental parties had failed to come up with inspiring narratives conveying hope for a better world.

“For now, environmental politics is succeeding in panicking minds and making them yawn with boredom,” they wrote.

Hoping to shake off this negative image, Mr. Jadot recently embarked on a tour of France that will bring him to some 15 cities by early April. All of the campaign stops have been designed to create connections with voters, with Mr. Jadot addressing them from a small octagonal podium.

Mr. Jadot said he wanted to solve “both sides of the equation” by convincing voters that it is time for real climate action and that doing so can also bring about a better lifestyle, or what he called “a new kind of enthusiasm.”

“Taking action for the climate means economic innovation, eating well thanks to sustainable and small-scale farming,” he said. “Basically, it’s about regaining control of one’s life.”

In Montpellier, where some 500 people had gathered, Mr. Jadot’s speech was filled with concrete proposals, including an $11 billion “Marshall Plan” for home insulation to cut energy consumption in half. He also plans to [*ban the use of dangerous pesticides*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/18/world/europe/france-pesticides-mayor.html) and to create a new wealth tax that reflects the environmental impact of some investments.

“On the substance, these are very relevant proposals,” said Daphné Destevian, 50, a project manager for an offshore renewable energy institute.

But when it came to the candidate’s approach, Ms. Destevian was unmoved. “He yells too much,” she said. “I find it a bit aggressive.”

Standing on a podium that resembled a boxing ring, Mr. Jadot struck a combative tone, castigating the government for signing free-trade agreements, attacking the French energy giant TotalEnergies and likening [*Mr. Macron’s pro-nuclear measures*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/10/world/europe/france-macron-nuclear-power.html) to far-right or authoritarian government policies.

Jérémie Peltier, an opinion expert at the Foundation Jean-Jaurès research institute, said this tone could prove detrimental to the Greens. “When you listen to Yannick Jadot,” he said, “you feel like you’re constantly being told off.”

Mr. Jadot’s supporters in Montpellier were well aware of the need to convey more optimism, like the positivity that radiated from the [*youth climate protests in 2019*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/climate/global-climate-strike.html).

[*José Bové*](https://www.nytimes.com/1999/10/12/world/montredon-journal-french-see-a-hero-in-war-on-mcdomination.html), a longtime Green and anti-globalization activist, said “the battle we have to win” is to prove that environmentalism “is a joyful project, one that makes people feel good.”

Marie-Noël De Visscher, 70, a former researcher in agronomy, said that instead of “making people feel guilty,” the Greens had to show that “we can do great things and that taking the train is fun.”

That challenge has proved particularly acute on the economic front, with the Greens struggling to reconcile the fight against climate change with combating economic insecurity. Mr. Jadot is performing poorly with ***working-class*** voters, who [*fear the impact of the transition to clean energy on their livelihoods*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/france-climate-change-energy-prices.html).

Mr. Schultz, the sociologist, said the Greens had focused “too much on negative narratives, on punitive narratives” — for example, by promoting ideas like limiting the growth of the economy through restrictions on food and energy consumption.

Standing back from the crowd, Bruno Cécillon, a longtime Green supporter, acknowledged that “people are worried” because “they won’t be able to live as peacefully as they used to, to take their car, turn on the heat, put on the air conditioning without second thoughts.”

Although the French Greens have gained credentials at the local level — they now control some of France’s largest cities, including Lyon and Bordeaux, administering the lives of over two million French people — they are still a work in progress at the national level.

[*Daniel Boy*](https://www.sciencespo.fr/cevipof/fr/chercheur/daniel-boy.html), a political scientist at Science-Po university in Paris, said the Greens were not deemed credible on issues that are the prerogative of a president, such as security or international relations. “Can we imagine an ecologist talking to Putin?” he said, citing a concern of voters.

By contrast, Mr. Boy added, the Greens in Germany are seen as a more competent and pragmatic political party, one that is capable of forging coalition agreements with centrist forces and entering the debate on non-environmental issues. [*Annalena Baerbock*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/07/world/europe/annalena-baerbock-germany-greens-chancellor.html), the candidate of the German Greens in last year’s national elections, today serves as the country’s minister of foreign affairs.

Mr. Jadot said he is ready to lead France. “I want to govern this country,” he said. “I want to be responsible.”

But in Montpellier, his supporters already seemed more doubtful.

Mr. Cécillon said he would vote for Mr. Jadot “not to get him elected — I don’t think he’ll be elected — but because what I’m interested in is to enable this ecological thinking to carry weight.”

“A society doesn’t change like that overnight,” he said. “It takes time, it’s slow.”

PHOTO: Yannick Jadot at a rally in Montpellier last month. The run-up to the presidential election has been dominated by issues like security. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREA MANTOVANI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

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[***From Queens, a Kitchen Roams Widely***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658C-PT01-DXY4-X2RR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 20, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Dining In, Dining Out / Style Desk; Pg. 4; RESTAURANT REVIEW

**Length:** 1333 words

**Byline:** By Pete Wells

**Body**

Three chefs in the savory kitchen and a pastry chef with a knack for focaccia bring remarkable range to a new Ridgewood restaurant.

For restaurant critics in New York City, the road forward is often hard to make out, but in the winter of 2020-21 the visibility was so low I sometimes felt I was driving in a blizzard. New restaurants were opening, but not in the usual sense; indoor dining was banned for the second time since the pandemic began.

That January, for instance, Rolo's began doing business on a corner of the Ridgewood section of Queens as a grocery, bakery, sandwich shop and focaccia-by-the-slice joint by day, with an abbreviated dinner menu for takeout and delivery. Then as now, three chefs, the pastry chef and the general manager had all worked at Gramercy Tavern, which is a lot of horsepower for a restaurant where you couldn't actually sit down.

The weather was hostile to sidewalk sandwich-eating, so one night in February I had dinner and a bottle of wine brought to my door. There was wilted cabbage, still fragrant with the smoke of Rolo's wood grill, and melting duck confit accompanied by mustard spaetzle. I also ordered a bottle of Slovakian riesling -- honey-scented, grown on the banks of the Danube and costing just $17 in that brief but glorious period of unknotted alcohol laws.

The meal helped me imagine this restaurant I had yet to see as a homage to Ridgewood's fading past as a haven for German speakers and other Central European exiles, a legacy that survives in the neighborhood pork stores selling logs of Tyrolean sausage and slabs of dark, conifer-smoked Black Forest bacon.

It turned out that I had, at best, a partial view of Rolo's. Now that I've seen the place is in full swing, with more than 100 seats at tables in its barroom, another dining area facing the open kitchen and a third in an enclosed shed on the street, it's clear that Central Europe is a minor influence. The short pandemic menu led me to underestimate the kitchen's range. This would be noticeable anywhere, but really stands out in a Ridgewood restaurant that, with its green canvas awnings and Venetian blinds, looks at first glance like a corner tavern where you might come for wings and a pint while watching the Mets.

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Rolo's contribution to the Ridgewood pork-product tradition is a housemade mortadella. What the restaurant calls wood-fired polenta bread turns out to be a wheel of flatbread about six inches across. The polenta gives the interior a creamy softness you won't find inside many pizzas, but the crust arrives with the puffy outer lip and the charred blisters you'd expect on a Neapolitan pizza.

The toppings may also be pizzalike, as in the model that glistens with a fire engine-red layer of Calabrian chile butter. Then again, they may not be; the wonderfully fragrant round of bread coated with sesame seeds and ground, dried oregano in olive oil obviously descends from manaeesh, a bread from a different corner of the Mediterranean.

In fact, it may be more useful to think of the polenta bread at Rolo's as essentially Middle Eastern. A loaf or two could become the centerpiece for a mezze course: boiled chickpeas over a puddle of garlic tahini, say, or, more excitingly, some crisp half-moons of spicy carrot pickles, crunchy with cracked coriander, and a bowl of milky stracciatella dusted with sumac and Turkish silk peppers. (This is the same chile that was a prime export of Aleppo before that city was devastated by the civil war in Syria.)

Pasta is always on the menu, like the rigatoni in a crunchy, red-and-green pesto of tomatoes and chopped pistachios. There is an admirable attempt at lasagna Bolognese made with two long, thin planks of green pasta that the wood oven toasts in some patches and leaves tender in others. The night I had it, only the underseasoned meat stew inside kept the whole package from being a complete success.

This is not a complaint anyone will make about most of Rolo's cooking, which tends toward bright, punchy flavors. The dry-style Sichuan cabbage -- fried, grilled and showered with powdered Sichuan peppercorns and other spices -- is compelling in exactly the way I imagine the mala-flavored Doritos sold in Asia must be. Grilled chicken stacked over garlic bread gets an appealingly sweet layer of heat from a pepper relish made with Fresno chiles.

The most interesting thing to come out of the kitchen, weirdly enough, may be a side dish of potatoes. The starting point is the Dutch treatment of French fries called patatje oorlog, which translates as ''war fries.'' Rolo's uses fried, skin-on potato wedges instead of ordinary fries, and while they are very crisp and very good on their own, you might not remember them if they were not buried under raw onions, fiery Indonesian peanut sauce and a quantity of mayonnaise that is rarely seen outside a jar.

By day, Rolo's pastry chef and head baker, Kelly Mencin, turns out sticky and lightly caramelized Zeeuwse bolussen, the Dutch cinnamon buns, and other sweets, along with the focaccias that helped get Rolo's through the pandemic. By night, her desserts are simple, sensible and meticulous: a tart with a brown-butter crust and a filling of sour cherries, or a cross between a sundae and a Pavlova that serves as showcase for winter citrus.

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Of course, a $44 muscat will not seem cheap to everybody. As Chris Crowley reported last year in Grub Street, Rolo's has been a flash point for neighbors who worry that it and other new businesses will help push rents in Ridgewood beyond the reach of ***working-class*** and middle-class families.

One of the owners of Rolo's, Stephen Maharam, is a partner in the local real-estate development firm of Kermit Westergaard. The two men own Rolo's building, with Mr. Kalachnikoff, Mr. Wetzel and Mr. Salim. Mr. Westergaard, who owns a number of other buildings nearby, including the one where he lives, follows a pattern familiar in many cities: buy, renovate and install street-level businesses that make the area more appealing to people who can afford the new rents.

We're used to chefs and restaurateurs opening in neighborhoods where the rents are cheaper; it's one of the secrets of longevity in the business. But growing numbers are putting their reputations, talent and labor at the service of developers whose idea of building a neighborhood might be at odds with the desire of the people who live there to keep living there.

In its defense, any business that manages to be as busy and popular as Rolo's can be a blessing for street life, making the area safer than a vacant storefront would. But as more and more developers come calling, restaurants should keep in mind that they risk being complicit in the negative aspects of gentrification -- more than that, they risk making their customers complicit, too. You can have a full house and lose sight of the whole community, just as you can eat a delicious meal and have just a partial view of a restaurant.

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Follow NYT Food on Twitter and NYT Cooking on Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Pinterest. Get regular updates from NYT Cooking, with recipe suggestions, cooking tips and shopping advice.EMAIL [*petewells@nytimes.com*](mailto:petewells@nytimes.com)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/19/dining/rolos-review-pete-wells.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/19/dining/rolos-review-pete-wells.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left: Rolo's wraparound bar, the focus of one of two dining rooms

wood-fired chicken with Fresno chile relish and garlic bread

rigatoni with Sicilian tomato pesto

and, from left, Stephen Maharam, a partner

Howard Kalachnikoff, a chef

Kelly Mencin, the pastry chef

Ben Howell, the general manager

and Rafiq Salim, also a chef. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 20, 2022

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[***Rolo’s Looks Like a Corner Tavern in Queens. It’s That and Then Some.; Restaurant Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6587-76W1-JBG3-63MG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 19, 2022 Tuesday 23:14 EST

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 1394 words

**Byline:** Pete Wells

**Highlight:** Three chefs in the savory kitchen and a pastry chef with a knack for focaccia bring remarkable range to a new Ridgewood restaurant.

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EMAIL [*petewells@nytimes.com*](mailto:petewells@nytimes.com)

PHOTOS: Clockwise from top left: Rolo’s wraparound bar, the focus of one of two dining rooms; wood-fired chicken with Fresno chile relish and garlic bread; rigatoni with Sicilian tomato pesto; and, from left, Stephen Maharam, a partner; Howard Kalachnikoff, a chef; Kelly Mencin, the pastry chef; Ben Howell, the general manager; and Rafiq Salim, also a chef. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 19, 2022

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[***Where 'Blue Wall' Held, and Where It Saw Cracks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6187-6VC1-JBG3-60RJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 10, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 1236 words

**Byline:** By Jeremy W. Peters

**Body**

President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. took back Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin by surging in the suburbs. He held his own in big cities, but there were signs of weakness in Black and Latino neighborhoods.

President Trump's path to re-election always had very little margin for error. His victory in 2016 was decided by just 77,000 votes spread across three Northern battleground states, fewer than the crowd at an average Big Ten football game on a Saturday, at least before the pandemic.

Since the start of his campaign in early 2019, President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has made the case that he could beat Mr. Trump precisely because of the strength he would have in those states -- Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin -- where his unpretentious, approachable style and moderate politics would connect with voters.

On Election Day, Mr. Biden's analysis prevailed. He won every state. Here is a look at the dynamics that worked in his favor.

Michigan

The antipathy toward Mr. Trump in many swing and Republican-leaning suburbs was a national phenomenon, and in the communities surrounding Detroit it provided Mr. Biden with the votes he needed to help claw the state back from the president.

Victory was always going to be difficult for Mr. Trump in Michigan, a state he won by less than 11,000 votes in 2016. But he traveled there often in the final days of the race, believing it was within reach. The Republican National Committee, whose chairwoman, Ronna McDaniel, lives in Michigan, dropped money on a last-minute ad campaign in the hope of moving the needle in the president's favor.

In the end, Mr. Trump held onto most of the counties he won in 2016 and boosted his vote total statewide by nearly 370,000, with gains in places like Macomb County, a bellwether that first appeared in the political spotlight in the 1980s, thanks to its high concentration of Reagan Democrats. But it was not enough. He grew his base, but often in smaller, rural counties where there weren't a lot of votes to begin with. And even in places where he gained significantly, like Macomb, Mr. Biden's gains were bigger when measured against Hillary Clinton's totals in 2016.

Mr. Biden surged ahead of Mrs. Clinton's statewide, especially in suburban areas where Republicans were once dominant. He managed to flip conservative-leaning Kent County in the western part of the state, the home of former President Gerald R. Ford. In Oakland County, the state's second-largest, Mr. Biden finished ahead of Mr. Trump by 14 points, a major improvement over not just Mrs. Clinton but also Barack Obama in 2008, who both won it by eight points. Mr. Biden managed to do very well in the county's wealthy enclaves like Bloomfield Hills, where Mitt Romney grew up and where being a Democrat was, until recently, one of the surest impediments to getting elected at any level of government.

As was the case in many suburban areas across the Midwestern battlegrounds, women voters were especially activated in Oakland County.

One place that was not especially helpful to the president-elect was the city of Detroit. A lack of enthusiasm there for Mrs. Clinton helped sink her chances of winning the state, but this year Democrats had high hopes that turnout in the predominantly African-American city would rebound. It did, but for Mr. Trump. Though Mr. Biden won Detroit with 94 percent of the vote, he received almost 1,000 fewer votes than Mrs. Clinton did in 2016. Mr. Trump increased his totals by nearly 5,000 votes, with strength concentrated in small pockets of the city like the west side, which has a large number of Latino voters.

Pennsylvania

The trends in the state that put Mr. Biden over the top in the Electoral College were similar to those in Michigan. Its biggest city, Philadelphia, went overwhelmingly to the president-elect, but also provided Mr. Trump with more votes than he received four years ago.

Though votes were still trickling in nearly a week after Election Day, Mr. Biden was behind where Mrs. Clinton finished in Philadelphia. And Mr. Trump saw an uptick in his numbers in white ***working-class*** neighborhoods in the city's northeast, as well as in precincts with large Latino populations.

Outside of Philadelphia, it was a different story. Mr. Biden's voters showed up in overwhelming numbers in the suburbs and swing counties farther out, like Northampton in the Lehigh Valley and Erie in the northwest. These predominantly white counties voted twice for Mr. Obama, then went to Mr. Trump in 2016.

Mr. Biden won them both, but narrowly -- Erie County by one percentage point and Northampton County by less than a point. Northampton, with its mix of rural areas, old mining towns and small to medium-size cities like Bethlehem, behaved like other demographically similar areas where Mr. Trump's leadership style drove voters away and energized the opposition against him.

Erie County does not have as high an average income as Northampton, but it has about the same majority percentage of white voters, spread across rural areas and small cities. It was the kind of place where Mr. Biden's back story, rooted in the ***working-class*** city of Scranton, about five hours east, seems to have made Trump voters comfortable switching sides. While Mr. Trump increased his vote totals in Erie County by roughly 5,000, Mr. Biden outdid him. He improved on Mrs. Clinton's performance by more than 9,000 votes to pull just barely ahead, proving again that in places where the Trump campaign was effective at mobilizing its base, it could not keep pace.

Wisconsin

For much of the campaign, Mr. Trump's re-election seemed to hinge on Wisconsin. It was the test market for his playbook of driving up turnout in rural areas where his operation could identify people who liked him but who didn't vote in 2016. The playbook worked, but the margins were too small: a few thousand votes, give or take, in most of the state's 72 counties.

Mr. Biden didn't flip any major counties, just two smaller ones north of Milwaukee. But in a sign of the president's weakness among voters 65 and older, one of those was Door County, northeast of Green Bay on Lake Michigan. As a destination popular with retirees but also reliant on tourism, Door County was an especially bad environment for the president, considering the many voters who blamed him for mismanaging the deadly coronavirus and the economic fallout that followed.

In the bigger picture, Wisconsin's shifts toward Mr. Biden came from its cities and largest counties. Well-educated, prosperous counties like Dane, home to the liberal university town of Madison, saw a significant jump in turnout over 2016 that went almost entirely to Mr. Biden. In the conservative counties surrounding Milwaukee that are a bulwark of support for Republicans running statewide, Mr. Trump's share of the vote declined. The drop off wasn't huge, but it helped Mr. Biden build his 20,000-vote lead in Wisconsin.

In the city of Milwaukee, the dynamic was once again similar to the ones seen in Detroit and Philadelphia: Mr. Biden won an overwhelming share of the city but did not improve much over Mrs. Clinton. And in wards of the city with majority Black populations, fewer voters cast their votes for him than they did for her, according to The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Mr. Biden also appeared to do worse against Mr. Trump in city wards with a large number of Latino voters.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/09/us/politics/biden-blue-states-red-states.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/09/us/politics/biden-blue-states-red-states.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Joseph R. Biden Jr. flipped two smaller counties in Wisconsin, enough to win him the state. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN JUSTICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A Trump rally Nov. 1, in Michigan, a state the president narrowly won in 2016 but lost this year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRITTANY GREESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Group Starts Ad Campaign To Promote Biden's Plans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JX-JR61-DXY4-X03C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 1, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 695 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Martin

**Body**

Building Back Together will highlight the president's coronavirus response and his economic plan and will contrast his measured approach to his bombastic predecessor's.

WASHINGTON -- A new group dedicated to promoting President Biden's ambitious agenda is beginning a multimillion-dollar ad campaign trumpeting his Covid recovery package and infrastructure proposal while contrasting Mr. Biden's low-key style with his bombastic predecessor's.

Building Back Together, a progressive organization run by Biden allies, will air minute-long television commercials next week in Pennsylvania, Nevada, Georgia and Wisconsin that highlight the president's response to the coronavirus and his wide-ranging economic plans. The group is planning to spend over $3 million on a monthlong effort, including a shorter advertisement that will appear on digital platforms in the same four states and in North Carolina.

Both spots differentiate Mr. Biden's approach from that of former President Donald J. Trump.

''You won't hear him yelling or sending angry tweets, because for Joe Biden, actions speak louder,'' says a narrator in the television commercial.

The shorter digital advertisement concludes, ''No drama, just results.''

The strategy illustrates how determined Democrats are to effectively keep running against Mr. Trump. He may be out of the White House, and barred from sending angry or insulting tweets, but his approval ratings have fallen even lower since he left the presidency, and he remains the best foil for Mr. Biden, who has kept an unusually low profile for a new president.Mr. Biden, meanwhile, is drawing solid if not spectacular early marks, a reflection of the country's deep polarization.

So as he turns to an expansive, and expensive, menu of domestic proposals aimed at lifting the economy, combating poverty and addressing climate change, his supporters are hoping to retain support from the voters who helped lift him to victory last year in part by reminding them of Mr. Biden's predecessor.

''The message is simple: Chaos is out, competence is in, and help is here for Americans,'' said Stephanie Cutter, an adviser to Building Back Together who is close to Mr. Biden and top West Wing officials.

The group, whose formation was first reported in February, is going on the air in vote-rich and costly markets: Las Vegas, Atlanta, Philadelphia and Milwaukee, as well as Scranton, Pa., Mr. Biden's childhood home. The group has drawn some scrutiny because it has said it will not disclose the identity of its donors.

The ads are aimed at winning over people of color, upscale white suburbanites and the smaller group of ***working-class*** whites who moved from supporting Mr. Trump in 2016 to backing Mr. Biden in 2020. Building Back Together is particularly focused on retaining the sort of independent or even Republican-leaning voters who backed Mr. Biden but might have voted for G.O.P. candidates farther down the ballot.

The goal for this and future ad blitzes, officials say, is to try to cement the president's new coalition by reminding them of what they may have disliked about Mr. Trump and by pitching Mr. Biden's agenda. They hope that by mixing television and digital they will reach voters across platforms and throughout the day.

In addition to being crucial presidential battlegrounds, Georgia, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin also have some of the most significant races for Senate and governor seats next year.

This new effort, while chiefly aimed at promoting Mr. Biden, could also help Democratic candidates in those states whose fortunes in the midterms will be tied in large part to the president's popularity. Many in the party, including Mr. Biden himself earlier this year, have said that former President Barack Obama did not do enough to highlight his early agenda and paid a price for it in the 2010 midterm elections.

This is the group's first advertising campaign, but the organization intends to be active as the main outside group for Mr. Biden, at least through next year's midterm election. The name is taken from the president's campaign slogan, which has become shorthand for his post-Covid economic proposals.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/30/us/politics/pro-biden-ads-swing-states.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/30/us/politics/pro-biden-ads-swing-states.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Biden, with Vice President Kamala Harris, speaking about Covid-19 vaccinations at the White House on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Al Drago for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Pro-Biden Group to Begin Ad Campaign Promoting His Agenda in Swing States***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62JP-D1R1-JBG3-628S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2021 Friday 22:23 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 723 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Martin

**Highlight:** Building Back Together will highlight the president’s coronavirus response and his economic plan and will contrast his measured approach to his bombastic predecessor’s.

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PHOTO: President Biden, with Vice President Kamala Harris, speaking about Covid-19 vaccinations at the White House on Wednesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Al Drago for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 30, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘My Cousin Vinny’ at 30: An Unlikely Oscar Winner***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YX-HKP1-DXY4-X1NW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 11, 2022 Friday 13:12 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1300 words

**Byline:** Jason Bailey

**Highlight:** Much like Vinny in the South, the film was a fish out of water at the Academy Awards. But the comedy endures, thanks to a generous Joe Pesci and a fiery Marisa Tomei.

**Body**

Much like Vinny in the South, the film was a fish out of water at the Academy Awards. But the comedy endures, thanks to a generous Joe Pesci and a fiery Marisa Tomei.

When the culture-clash courtroom comedy “My Cousin Vinny” landed in theaters on March 13, 1992, the critical response was mostly positive. The Times’s Vincent Canby found it “[*inventive and enjoyable*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/03/13/movies/review-film-a-flashy-new-lawyer-in-an-unflashy-town.html),” The Los Angeles Times’s Peter Rainer called it “[*often funny*](https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1992-03-13-ca-3747-story.html)” and The Hollywood Reporter deemed it “a [*terrific variation*](https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/movies/movie-news/my-cousin-vinny-1992-review-985526/) on the fish-out-of-water/man-from-Mars story formula.”

One phrase you won’t find in any of those reviews is “Oscar worthy.” Yet “Vinny” proved just that, landing an Academy Award for best supporting actress a full year after its original theatrical release — one of the biggest upsets in Oscar history, and a trophy that would prove both a blessing and a curse for its recipient, Marisa Tomei.

Her performance as Mona Lisa Vito, the long-suffering fiancée and legal secret weapon of Joe Pesci’s title character, was a breakthrough for the Brooklyn-born actress, who had done her time Off Broadway and in the world of soaps and sitcoms. “I was fresh to the business and didn’t know how movies worked,” Tomei [*explained in 2017*](https://www.theguardian.com/film/2017/jun/25/marisa-tomei-spider-man-homecoming-interview), “but Joe chose me for the part, then took me by the hand and guided me immensely, so I got very lucky.”

“Vinny” concerns a pair of New York University students who, while driving through Alabama, are falsely accused of murder. They’re so desperate for legal representation that they call upon the only lawyer they can afford: Vincent LaGuardia Gambini (Pesci), a cousin of one of the accused and a novice who has just passed the bar after six attempts.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/hITJLnyH9Fc)]

Pesci roars into town in a Cadillac convertible at the eleven-and-a-half minute mark; on the DVD audio commentary, the director, Jonathan Lynn, calls this, with characteristically British understatement, “a star entrance.” And that’s an accurate assessment of Pesci’s station — he had just won an Oscar for his menacingly funny work in “Goodfellas,” and “Vinny” was one of his first attempts to leapfrog from supporting player to leading man.

But Pesci wasn’t the only star making an entrance; a gum-smacking Tomei scores the first two laughs in the scene, first with her retort to his assertion that she sticks out “like a sore thumb” — “Oh, yeah, you blend” — and then her heartbroken realization, “I bet the Chinese food here is terrible.”

It’s noteworthy that Pesci cedes those laughs to her, and continues to do so throughout the picture, playing the George to her Gracie (though she is, clearly, the smarter one). A lesser actor might try to upstage her, but Pesci had been the scene-stealer before, in films like “Raging Bull” and “Easy Money”; he knew how to step back and let his co-stars shine. And this principle of generosity is most pronounced in the courtroom climax, when Vinny puts Mona Lisa on the stand as an automobile expert (she worked in her father’s garage), giving the testimony that exonerates his clients.

It’s clear why the commitment-shy Vinny falls in love with Mona Lisa all over again. She charms everyone from judge to jury to onlookers, and, in turn, the moviegoing audience. Credible, fiery, funny and energetic, she and Pesci turn what could’ve been broad caricatures into grounded, empathetic characters.

But “My Cousin Vinny” is not what we think of as an “Oscar movie,” and Tomei’s is not what is conventionally considered an “Oscar performance.” Credit where due to 20th Century Fox: When the film was an unexpected commercial success ($52 million on an $11 million budget), the studio spent some of those profits on a “For Your Consideration” campaign, paying off in her nomination for best supporting actress — alongside Judy Davis (“Husbands and Wives”), Joan Plowright (“Enchanted April”), Vanessa Redgrave (“Howards End”) and Miranda Richardson (“Damage”), formidable competition indeed.

If the nomination was a surprise, Tomei’s victory over her distinguished competition was a shock. She was a newcomer triumphing over veterans, an American television actress taking on distinguished stage thespians from abroad, and, perhaps most importantly, the only comic performance against a quartet of scorching dramatic turns. And for all of those reasons, when Jack Palance opened the envelope and [*called Tomei’s name*](https://youtu.be/ej8EpWYFhnw), it sent a shock wave through the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

Maybe the uniformity of Tomei’s competition canceled each other out in her favor. Maybe she had the home court advantage. Or maybe, in a flurry of dramatic performances, the comedic joy of Mona Lisa Vito was a breath of fresh air.

Or maybe, maybe, it was a big mistake. Whispers began to circulate that a confused Palance had awarded Tomei the prize rather than the “rightful” winner. Palance was 74 at the time, adding a dash of ageism to the tall tale. The rumor first appeared in print a year later, in The Hollywood Reporter, its origin ascribed to an unnamed “[*former son-in-law*](https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/marisa-tomei-awarded-oscar-mistake/) of a distinguished Academy Award winner”; in the months that followed, it would find its way into [*Entertainment Weekly*](https://ew.com/article/1994/04/08/marisa-tomei-oscar-winner/) and Variety, among others.

All would take pains to insist that Tomei’s victory was legitimate; academy spokespeople refuted the rumor to anyone who would listen. “If such a scenario were ever to occur,” [*Roger Ebert was told*](https://www.rogerebert.com/answer-man/the-questions-that-will-not-die), “the Price Waterhouse people backstage would simply step out onstage and point out the error. They are not shy.” (And that is, in fact, what happened during the [*“La La Land” and “Moonlight” mess of 2017,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/26/movies/oscars-academy-awards.html) though it was hard to tell in all the hubbub onstage.) But it became a case of the [*Streisand effect*](https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/words-were-watching-streisand-effect-barbra#:~:text=The%20Streisand%20effect%20is%20a,promote%20and%20advertise%20the%20ACA.), where these corrections ultimately just helped the story spread.

It didn’t help that these publications frequently took the opportunity to brand Tomei as somehow undeserving. EW explained the persistence of the rumor by noting that “she seems to have made a few enemies along the way,” quoting a producer (anonymously, of course) who claimed the award had changed her. Variety similarly quoted an anonymous filmmaker in their item, titled “Tomei Poisoning,” who suggested that the actor was fickle and overly ambitious.

Tomei did her best to make light of the rumor, even poking fun at it in [*her monologue*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAXOpyUiYM0&amp;ab_channel=SaturdayNightLive) while hosting “Saturday Night Live” in 1994. But this was a brave face. “When I was younger, it hurt my feelings,” Tomei [*told The Times in 2017*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/07/movies/marisa-tomei-on-spider-man-empire-and-playing-dark-and-angry.html?searchResultPosition=1). “It made me quite ashamed, actually. But on the other hand, it’s a load of [expletive]. I think it had to do more with the role that I played — that it was comedic and that it wasn’t upper class. I think it was more of a classist thing, frankly.”

She’s right, of course, and not just about the character. Comic performers are treated as second-class citizens by the academy, and though there are occasional exceptions, they’re rarely rewarded with Oscar nominations, much less statuettes. And there certainly seems to have been a classist prejudice against Tomei herself, a ***working-class*** actor who won the prize over acting royalty like Plowright and Redgrave and was subsequently (if anonymously) chastised in the press for getting too big for her britches.

Tomei took her lumps. When her post-“Vinny” film roles disappointed, she returned to the theater and became [*a mainstay of the New York stage*](https://www.nytimes.com/1998/02/01/theater/sunday-view-a-stage-life-less-noticed-in-the-glare-of-stardom.html?searchResultPosition=1). Her film roles, while less frequent, were juicier; they paid off with two more Oscar nominations, for “In the Bedroom” (2000) and “The Wrestler” (2008), as well as a role in one of the most [*popular film franchises of the moment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/07/movies/marisa-tomei-on-spider-man-empire-and-playing-dark-and-angry.html?searchResultPosition=1). If Tomei learned one thing from Mona Lisa Vito, it seems, it was how to turn underestimation into triumph.

PHOTO: The engaging performances from Joe Pesci and Marisa Tomei, who won an Oscar, helped make a winning case for the courtroom comedy “My Cousin Vinny.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY 20TH CENTURY FOX)

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Democratic Group Reminds Voters Of Trump's Hostility to Care Act***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60X1-2TJ1-DXY4-X0BS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 23, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 21

**Length:** 533 words

**Body**

Democrats up and down the ballot have been focusing on health care in their paid advertising campaigns. Now, with a vacancy on the Supreme Court upending the presidential and Senate races, Priorities USA, a major Democratic super PAC, is using a new ad to remind voters that the Trump administration is seeking to invalidate the Affordable Care Act in a case heading to the Supreme Court.

THE MESSAGE

The ad begins with a different focus, aimed at undercutting the support Mr. Trump has been seeing in polls regarding his ability to rebuild the economy. It frames the 2017 tax law as one that helped ''the rich get richer'' and states that his proposed budget would have included cuts to Medicare and Medicaid. ''But that's not all,'' a deep-voiced narrator intones.

The ad claims that the Trump administration ''asks Supreme Court to Strike Down Affordable Care Act,'' a reference to a current lawsuit that the court has not yet decided. The ad continues to another repetition of a common Democratic attack: that the gutting of the Affordable Care Act, whether through the courts or legislation, would end coverage for millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions. The ad concludes its focus on health care by noting that all these efforts are ongoing ''in the middle of a pandemic.''

FACT CHECK

It is true that billionaires paid a lower tax rate than the ***working class*** in 2018. While the 2017 federal tax law wasn't the sole cause of the tax rate, it was ''the tipping point'' by lowering the top income tax rate and cutting corporate taxes, according to a study by economists at the University of California at Berkley.

It is also true that the president's budget in 2020 sought to cut many safety net programs. But perhaps with an eye toward the coming election, Mr. Trump's budget avoided some hot-button issues -- notably by not reducing Social Security or Medicare benefits. Most of the administration's initiatives to save money on Medicare are cost-reduction proposals first offered under President Barack Obama. Earlier this year, Mr. Trump suggested to an interviewer at the World Economic Forum in Switzerland that he would ''at some point'' look at cutting entitlement programs.

The Trump administration is seeking to eliminate the Affordable Care Act in court, which would also eliminate provisions in the law that protect people with pre-existing conditions. In the past, Mr. Trump has expressed support for a bill sponsored by Republican Senators Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, that would prohibit insurers from denying coverage to patients with pre-existing conditions. However, it would allow certain states to request an exception that would allow insurers to charge more based on a person's health status.

WHERE IT'S RUNNING

On television in Wisconsin, Michigan, Arizona, and Pennsylvania.

THE TAKEAWAY

The 2018 midterms were a windfall for Democrats largely over the issue of health care and prescription drug costs. In the midst of many crises of 2020, from the coronavirus to natural disasters to the sudden vacancy on the Supreme Court, it appears many Democratic groups will keep the message, at least somewhat, on health care.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/pageoneplus/23rex2.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/22/pageoneplus/23rex2.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO

**Load-Date:** September 23, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Democratic Dollars Flow Once Again to Likely Lost Causes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6587-WHR1-DXY4-X1TD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 19, 2022 Tuesday 11:34 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1370 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Weisman

**Highlight:** New fund-raising figures show emerging Democratic stars like Marcus Flowers in Georgia and Gary Chambers Jr. in Louisiana, with no clear path to victory.

**Body**

New fund-raising figures show emerging Democratic stars like Marcus Flowers in Georgia and Gary Chambers Jr. in Louisiana, with no clear path to victory.

Gary Chambers Jr. burst onto the national scene in 2020 with [*a viral video of him castigating the racism*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEUNnvGA-1g) of the East Baton Rouge school district. Now, he has captured the hearts and wallets of young liberals with a video for his improbable Senate campaign that shows him [*smoking a large joint*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qj_FD25oREY) and calling for the legalization of marijuana.

He has almost no paths to victory over a sitting Republican senator in a red state like Louisiana. But he has raised $1.2 million.

The same most likely goes for the Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, a gay minister who has raised $1.4 million to oust Representative Madison Cawthorn, the far-right Republican, from his North Carolina seat. And for Marcus Flowers, a cowboy-hat-wearing veteran in Georgia who raised $2.4 million just in the first three months of the year to try to dislodge [*Marjorie Taylor Greene*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/18/us/politics/marjorie-taylor-greene-jan-6.html) from a heavily Republican district.

Every election year in recent cycles, celebrity Democratic candidates have emerged — either on the strength of their personalities, the notoriety of their Republican opponents or both — to rake in campaign cash, then lose impossible elections. Some Democrats say such races are draining money from more winnable campaigns, but the candidates insist that even in losing, they are helping the party by pulling voters in for statewide races, bolstering the Democratic brand and broadening the party’s appeal.

“We are asking folks to join us, join us in winning this race and doing the organizing we need,” Ms. Beach-Ferrara said in an interview, “and to say we can’t look at the map and say we aren’t running there. When you do that you get a Madison Cawthorn in office.”

As first-quarter fund-raising numbers roll in, the stars are emerging. The biggest bucks belong to incumbents. Senator Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, a Republican widely viewed as vulnerable this year, was criticized six years ago for anemic fund-raising; this time around, he raised nearly $8.7 million in the first quarter. Senator Raphael Warnock, a Georgia Democrat facing a difficult re-election, raised $13.6 million against the $5.2 million raised by his main Republican opponent, Herschel Walker.

Competitive races are already awash in money. Representative Val Demings, Democrat of Florida, raised more than $10 million to challenge Senator Marco Rubio, who raised $5.8 million.

Then there’s Mr. Flowers, whose $2.4 million haul in the first quarter easily topped Ms. Greene’s $1.1 million, in a Northwest Georgia district that has given Republicans 75 percent of the vote since it was created in 2012.

Mr. Flowers has proved remarkably adept at raising small-dollar donations with a barrage of emails — sometimes multiple emails each day — that capitalize on the behavior of the far-right congresswoman he is running against. An Army veteran who served in combat, he has [*emphasized his military service*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAoaX1VYvQE&amp;t=2s), talking tough while attacking Ms. Greene’s sympathy for the Jan. 6 rioters and far-right conspiracy theories.

Jon Soltz, the co-founder and chairman of VoteVets.org, a liberal veterans organization that gave Mr. Flowers the maximum allowable contribution, said support was not necessarily about winning the seat but holding Ms. Greene in check and using his run to elevate her profile as the face of the Republican Party in suburban districts that are more winnable.

“She can’t be free to travel around the country and spew her lies and disinformation,” Mr. Soltz said. “We’re making her spend her money.”

In the process, Mr. Flowers can build name recognition for future runs and might energize the Democrats who live in Northwest Georgia to come out and vote for him, Mr. Warnock and the Democratic candidate for governor, Stacey Abrams.

Ms. Beach-Ferrara is similarly buoyed by her opponent, Mr. Cawthorn, the young face of far-right conservatism in the Trump era. A married lesbian mother of three, Ms. Beach-Ferrara insists her unlikely life story will help her in a district where an influx of politically active outsiders in the Asheville area could change the region’s direction.

North Carolina’s 11th House district, with new lines, is slightly less Republican than it was in 2020, when Mr. Cawthorn was first elected. She said Mr. Trump still would have won it by 10 percentage points but the state’s Democratic governor, Roy Cooper, would have lost by only 4 points.

Her [*advantage two years later*](https://youtu.be/YuEGsT_sams) comes from disenchantment with Mr. Cawthorn, whose antics — he has called Ukraine’s president a thug and most recently said his colleagues had invited him to cocaine-filled orgies — have prompted [*seven Republicans to challenge him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-congress.html) in the upcoming primary.

“As people walk away from Cawthorn, our job is to meet them,” she said, adding, “For those who don’t know what to make of a gay Christian minister, what is very clear with them is I’m being honest with them from the start.”

In Senator John Kennedy, Republican of Louisiana, Mr. Chambers does not have the villain that Democrats have made nationally of Ms. Greene. His campaign is based on his irreverent appeal — [*an outspoken Black progressive*](https://youtu.be/cUdrwZLsdnE) voice willing to smoke weed in a commercial, [*burn a Confederate flag*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X6iSRU9486I) and call white school board members racist to their faces for defending a school named after Robert E. Lee.

He raised $800,000 in the first three months of the year from 18,500 donors. The average contribution was $41, many of those small-dollar donors youthful and excited, the campaign said.

Critics say such campaigns are more about building the brand of Democratic consultants than making a play for a Senate seat. The man who created Mr. Chambers’s marijuana and Confederate flag ads, [*Erick Sanchez*](https://www.unitedpublicaffairs.com/team), helped run Andrew Yang’s presidential campaign and also hawks [*“Fouch on the Couch”*](https://fouchonthecouch.com/products/fouch-on-the-couch-throw-pillow) throw pillows of Dr. Anthony Fauci for $40 a pop.

But Randy Jones, one of Mr. Chambers’s campaign chiefs, said the candidate should not be discounted. Mr. Chambers, he said, is taking a page from Ms. Abrams, who energized Georgia voters of color, urban liberals and the scatterings of rural Democrats to nearly win the governorship four years ago, build a political organization and set herself up for a rematch this year with the Republican governor, Brian Kemp.

Mr. Jones ran the campaign of another celebrity Democrat, Richard Ojeda of West Virginia, whose House campaign in 2018 was instructive in other ways. Mr. Ojeda, a trash-talking Bronze Star winner, sought to remake his party’s image in his emerging Republican stronghold as more muscular and more ***working class***. He raised nearly $3 million, then lost by nearly 13 percentage points.

Embittered by the experience, Mr. Ojeda moved to North Carolina to leave a home state he describes with [*the same epithet Mr. Trump used for developing countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/12/world/africa/africa-trump-shithole.html). He uses his political notoriety to lift his group [*No Dem Left Behind*](https://www.nodemleftbehind.com/), which promotes candidates in rural Republican areas, as he builds a new house.

Even as he defended his campaign, Mr. Ojeda criticizes the party in ways that echo criticism of his own effort. Democrats across the country dumped hundreds of millions of dollars into the Senate campaigns of Jaime Harrison in South Carolina and Amy McGrath in Kentucky, when the money could have been spent on more winnable local races, he said. He insisted he could have won if Mr. Trump hadn’t come to his corner of West Virginia twice.

But he also sees no point in ever trying again in a state so thoroughly Republican in the Trump era.

“West Virginia is going to have to burn to the ground before it will ever rise from the ashes — that’s it,” Mr. Ojeda said. “In West Virginia, all you can do as a Democrat is stand up, fight the battle so it’s recorded and say, ‘You guys are full of’” it.

PHOTOS: Democratic upstarts who lack paths to victory have raised hundreds of thousands. Clockwise from above: The Rev. Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, a congressional candidate in North Carolina; Richard Ojeda, a West Virginia Senate candidate; and Gary Chambers Jr., a Senate hopeful from Louisiana. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGELI WRIGHT/CITIZEN-TIMES.COM-ASHEVILLE; RITA HARPER/ASSOCIATED PRESS; ANDREW SPEAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[***French Candidates' Ideas for Easing Economic Woes Hold Key to Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6585-T041-DXY4-X09R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 19, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1376 words

**Byline:** By Liz Alderman

**Body**

Promising tax cuts, higher wages and changes in the retirement age, President Macron and Marine Le Pen vie for undecided voters.

PARIS -- As President Emmanuel Macron wove through crowds during a campaign stop in northern France last week, an elderly voter got in his face to protest one of his most unpopular economic proposals: raising the retirement age to 65 from 62 to fund France's national pension system.

''Retirement at 65, no, no!'' the woman shouted, jabbing a finger at Mr. Macron's chest as he tried to assuage her. The boisterous exchange was caught on camera. Two hours later, he retreated, saying he would consider tweaking the age to 64. ''I don't want to divide the country,'' he said on French television.

Mr. Macron's reversal on a key element of his economic platform, in an industrial region backing the far-right firebrand Marine Le Pen ahead of France's presidential election next Sunday, was a reminder of the social distress dominating the minds of voters. He and Ms. Le Pen have starkly divergent visions of how to address these concerns.

As they cross the country in a whirlwind of last-minute campaigning, their runoff will hinge to a large extent on perceptions of the economy. Worries about widening economic insecurity, and the surging cost of living amid the fallout from Russia's war on Ukraine, have become top issues in the race, ahead of security and immigration.

Ms. Le Pen won by a comfortable margin in the first round of voting last Sunday in places that have lost jobs to deindustrialization, where she has found a ready audience for her pledges to bolster purchasing power, create employment through ''intelligent'' protectionism and shield France from European policies that expanded globalization.

While Mr. Macron is still expected to win in a tight race, workers in restless blue-collar bastions may yet prove a liability. Despite a robust recovery in France from Covid lockdowns -- the economy is now growing at around 7 percent, and unemployment has fallen to a 10-year low of 7.4 percent -- many feel inequality has widened, rather than narrowed, as he pledged, in the five years since Mr. Macron took office.

After France's traditional left-wing and right-wing parties collapsed in the first round of voting, both candidates are scrambling to lure the undecided and voters who gravitated to their opponents -- especially the far-left firebrand Jean-Luc Mélenchon -- in large part by recasting major planks of their economic programs to appeal to those struggling to get by.

Pensions is a case in point. Mr. Macron has worked to recalibrate his image as a president who favors France's wealthy classes, the business establishment and white-collar voters as he set about overhauling the economy to bolster competitiveness.

In 2019 he was forced to set aside plans to raise the retirement age to 65 after raucous nationwide strikes shut down much of France. He had sought to streamline France's complex system of public and private pension schemes into one state-managed plan to close a shortfall of 18 billion euros, or about $19 billion.

Following his confrontation in northern France last week, Mr. Macron insisted that he would continue to push back the retirement age incrementally -- by four months per year starting next year -- but that he was open to discussing an easing of the plan in its later stages.

''It's not dogma,'' he said of the policy. ''I have to listen to what people are saying to me.''

Ms. Le Pen accused Mr. Macron of engaging in a policy of ''social wreckage'' and of blowing with the wind to capture votes, although she has also shifted gears after the protectionist economic platform she advanced five years ago spooked businesses. She dropped plans to withdraw from the European Union and the eurozone.

Today, Ms. Le Pen favors maintaining the current retirement age of 62, abandoning a previous push to reduce it to 60 -- although certain workers engaged in intensive manual labor like construction could retire at the lower age.

As Ms. Le Pen seeks to rebrand her far-right National Rally party as a kinder, gentler party than the one she steered in 2017, albeit with a clear anti-immigrant message, she has focused on economic issues close to blue-collar voters' hearts.

She got out front on one of the biggest issues of the campaign: a surge in the cost of living.

While Mr. Macron was trying to broker a cease-fire in Ukraine, Ms. Le Pen was visiting towns and rural areas across France, promising increased subsidies for vulnerable households.

She pledged tax cuts for companies that raise salaries by 10 percent for employees who earn up to three times France's minimum wage. She is also vowing to slash sales taxes to 5.5 percent from 20 percent on fuel, oil, gas and electricity, and to cut them altogether on 100 ''essential'' goods. Workers under 30 would be exempt from income tax, and young couples would get interest-free housing loans.

Her France-first policy extends even further: To make up for increased spending on social programs, she has said she would slash billions in social spending on ''foreigners.''

She has also vowed to create jobs and re-industrialize the country by prioritizing French companies for government contracts over foreign investors and dangling a host of expensive tax incentives to encourage French companies that have branched out overseas to return to France.

While she has abandoned talk of a so-called Frexit -- a French exit from the European Union -- some of her proposals to protect the economy would amount to essentially that, including a pledge to ignore some European Union laws, including on internal free trade. She has said she would withhold some French payments to the bloc.

Mr. Macron has branded such promises ''pure fantasy'' and is proposing to retain many of his pro-business policies, with modifications.

Having vowed to lure jobs and investment, under his watch foreign companies have poured billions of euros into industrial projects and research and development, creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs, many in tech start-ups, in a country that has not easily embraced change.

At the same time, he has faced a challenge in discarding the image of an aloof president whose policies tended to benefit the most affluent. His abolition of a wealth tax and the introduction of a 30 percent flat tax on capital gains has mainly lifted incomes for the richest 0.1 percent and increased the distribution of dividends, according to the government's own analysis.

After a growing wealth divide helped set off the Yellow Vest movement in 2019, bringing struggling ***working-class*** people into the streets, Mr. Macron increased the minimum wage and made it easier for companies to give workers ''purchasing power bonuses'' of up to 3,000 euros annually without being taxed, a policy he has pledged to beef up.

As inflation has surged recently, Mr. Macron has also authorized billions of euros in subsidies for energy bills and at the gas pump and has promised to peg pension payments to inflation starting this summer. He has vowed new tax cuts for both households and businesses.

His economic platform also aims for ''full employment,'' in part by pressing ahead with a series of pro-business reforms that has continued to lure the support of France's biggest employers' organization, Medef.

''Emmanuel Macron's program is the most favorable to ensure the growth of the economy and employment,'' the group said last week, adding that Ms. Le Pen's platform ''would lead the country to stall compared to its neighbors and to put it on the sidelines of the European Union.''

For all the differences, the pledges by Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen have one thing in common: more public spending, and less savings. According to estimates by the Institut Montaigne, a French economic think tank, Mr. Macron's economic plan would worsen the public deficit by 44 billion euros, while Ms. Le Pen's would widen it by 102 billion euros.

''These shifts are significant enough to think that some of their proposals cannot actually be applied -- except if they put in place budget austerity measures that they are not talking about,'' Victor Poirier, director of publications at the Institut Montaigne, said.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron on the campaign trail last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES HILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Where the ‘Blue Wall’ Was Strongest, and Where Cracks Appeared***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6185-X931-DXY4-X0RF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 9, 2020 Monday 01:19 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1280 words

**Byline:** Jeremy W. Peters

**Highlight:** President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. took back Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin by surging in the suburbs. He held his own in big cities, but there were signs of weakness in Black and Latino neighborhoods.

**Body**

President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. took back Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin by surging in the suburbs. He held his own in big cities, but there were signs of weakness in Black and Latino neighborhoods.

President Trump’s path to re-election always had very little margin for error. His victory in 2016 was decided by just 77,000 votes spread across three Northern battleground states, fewer than the crowd at an average Big Ten football game on a Saturday, at least before the pandemic.

Since the start of his campaign in early 2019, President-elect Joseph R. Biden Jr. has made the case that he could beat Mr. Trump precisely because of the strength he would have in those states — Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — where his unpretentious, approachable style and moderate politics would connect with voters.

On Election Day, Mr. Biden’s analysis prevailed. He won every state. Here is a look at the dynamics that worked in his favor.

Michigan

The antipathy toward Mr. Trump in many swing and Republican-leaning suburbs was a national phenomenon, and in the communities surrounding Detroit it provided Mr. Biden with the votes he needed to help claw the state back from the president.

Victory was always going to be difficult for Mr. Trump in Michigan, a state he won by less than 11,000 votes in 2016. But he traveled there often in the final days of the race, believing it was within reach. The Republican National Committee, whose chairwoman, Ronna McDaniel, lives in Michigan, dropped money on a last-minute ad campaign in the hope of moving the needle in the president’s favor.

In the end, Mr. Trump held onto most of the counties he won in 2016 and boosted his vote total statewide by nearly 370,000, with gains in places like Macomb County, a bellwether that first appeared in the political spotlight in the 1980s, thanks to its high concentration of Reagan Democrats. But it was not enough. He grew his base, but often in smaller, rural counties where there weren’t a lot of votes to begin with. And even in places where he gained significantly, like Macomb, Mr. Biden’s gains were bigger when measured against Hillary Clinton’s totals in 2016.

Mr. Biden surged ahead of Mrs. Clinton’s statewide, especially in suburban areas where Republicans were once dominant. He managed to flip conservative-leaning Kent County in the western part of the state, the home of former President Gerald R. Ford. In Oakland County, the state’s second-largest, Mr. Biden finished ahead of Mr. Trump by 14 points, a major improvement over not just Mrs. Clinton but also Barack Obama in 2008, who both won it by eight points. Mr. Biden managed to do very well in the county’s wealthy enclaves like Bloomfield Hills, where Mitt Romney grew up and where being a Democrat was, until recently, one of the surest impediments to getting elected at any level of government.

As was the case in many suburban areas across the Midwestern battlegrounds, women voters were especially activated in Oakland County.

One place that was not especially helpful to the president-elect was the city of Detroit. A lack of enthusiasm there for Mrs. Clinton helped sink her chances of winning the state, but this year Democrats had high hopes that turnout in the predominantly African-American city would rebound. It did, but for Mr. Trump. Though Mr. Biden won Detroit with [*94 percent*](https://election-county-reports-prod112020.s3.amazonaws.com/4539283c-3f09-4fdf-ad93-0bfd82d32be1/c64f9ade-9049-43ef-ab73-3feebc7ef5f0/Contest%20Overview%20Data%20report.pdf) of the vote, he received almost 1,000 fewer votes than Mrs. Clinton did [*in 2016*](https://election-county-reports-prod112020.s3.amazonaws.com/4539283c-3f09-4fdf-ad93-0bfd82d32be1/c64f9ade-9049-43ef-ab73-3feebc7ef5f0/Contest%20Overview%20Data%20report.pdf). Mr. Trump increased his totals by nearly 5,000 votes, with strength concentrated in small pockets of the city like the west side, which has a large number of Latino voters.

Pennsylvania

The trends in the state that put Mr. Biden over the top in the Electoral College were similar to those in Michigan. Its biggest city, Philadelphia, went overwhelmingly to the president-elect, but also provided Mr. Trump with more votes than he received four years ago.

Though votes were still trickling in nearly a week after Election Day, Mr. Biden was behind where Mrs. Clinton finished in Philadelphia. And Mr. Trump saw an uptick in his numbers in white ***working-class*** neighborhoods in the city’s northeast, as well as in precincts with large Latino populations.

Outside of Philadelphia, it was a different story. Mr. Biden’s voters showed up in overwhelming numbers in the suburbs and swing counties farther out, like Northampton in the Lehigh Valley and Erie in the northwest. These predominantly white counties voted twice for Mr. Obama, then went to Mr. Trump in 2016.

Mr. Biden won them both, but narrowly — Erie County by one percentage point and Northampton County by less than a point. Northampton, with its mix of rural areas, old mining towns and small to medium-size cities like Bethlehem, behaved like other demographically similar areas where Mr. Trump’s leadership style drove voters away and energized the opposition against him.

Erie County does not have as high an average income as Northampton, but it has about the same majority percentage of white voters, spread across rural areas and small cities. It was the kind of place where Mr. Biden’s back story, rooted in the ***working-class*** city of Scranton, about five hours east, seems to have made Trump voters comfortable switching sides. While Mr. Trump increased his vote totals in Erie County by roughly 5,000, Mr. Biden outdid him. He improved on Mrs. Clinton’s performance by more than 9,000 votes to pull just barely ahead, proving again that in places where the Trump campaign was effective at mobilizing its base, it could not keep pace.

Wisconsin

For much of the campaign, Mr. Trump’s re-election seemed to hinge on Wisconsin. It was the test market for his playbook of driving up turnout in rural areas where his operation could identify people who liked him but who didn’t vote in 2016. The playbook worked, but the margins were too small: a few thousand votes, give or take, in most of the state’s 72 counties.

Mr. Biden didn’t flip any major counties, just two smaller ones north of Milwaukee. But in a sign of the president’s weakness among voters 65 and older, one of those was Door County, northeast of Green Bay on Lake Michigan. As a destination popular with retirees but also reliant on tourism, Door County was an especially bad environment for the president, considering the many voters who blamed him for mismanaging the deadly coronavirus and the economic fallout that followed.

In the bigger picture, Wisconsin’s shifts toward Mr. Biden came from its cities and largest counties. Well-educated, prosperous counties like Dane, home to the liberal university town of Madison, saw a significant jump in turnout over 2016 that went almost entirely to Mr. Biden. In the conservative counties surrounding Milwaukee that are a bulwark of support for Republicans running statewide, Mr. Trump’s share of the vote declined. The drop off wasn’t huge, but it helped Mr. Biden build his 20,000-vote lead in Wisconsin.

In the city of Milwaukee, the dynamic was once again similar to the ones seen in Detroit and Philadelphia: Mr. Biden won an overwhelming share of the city but did not improve much over Mrs. Clinton. And in wards of the city with majority Black populations, fewer voters cast their votes for him than they did for her, [*according to*](https://election-county-reports-prod112020.s3.amazonaws.com/4539283c-3f09-4fdf-ad93-0bfd82d32be1/c64f9ade-9049-43ef-ab73-3feebc7ef5f0/Contest%20Overview%20Data%20report.pdf) The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. Mr. Biden also appeared to do worse against Mr. Trump in city wards with a large number of Latino voters.

PHOTOS: Joseph R. Biden Jr. flipped two smaller counties in Wisconsin, enough to win him the state. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAUREN JUSTICE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); A Trump rally Nov. 1, in Michigan, a state the president narrowly won in 2016 but lost this year. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRITTANY GREESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***No Relief in Sight for Soaring House Prices***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KM-FDH1-DXY4-X35M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 22, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1134 words

**Byline:** By Emily Badger

**Body**

There appears to be no quick reprieve coming for rising prices: ''It's not a bubble, it really is about the fundamentals.''

Two years into the pandemic, rundown bungalows command bidding wars, buyers keep snatching up places they've never seen, and homebuilders can't find enough cabinet doors for everyone who wants a new home. The median price for an American home is up nearly 20 percent in a year. The for-sale inventory is at a new low. And the hopeful buyers left on the sidelines have helped drive up rents instead.

All of this may feel unsustainable -- the tight inventory, the wild price growth, the dwindling affordability. Surely something's got to give.

But what if that's not exactly true? Or, at least, not true anytime soon for renters locked out of homeownership today or anyone worried about housing affordability. There's probably no quick reprieve coming, no rollback in stratospheric home prices if you can just wait a little longer to jump in.

''It's not a bubble, it really is about the fundamentals,'' said Jenny Schuetz, a housing researcher at the Brookings Institution. ''It really is about supply and demand -- not enough houses, and huge numbers of people wanting homes.''

Neither side of that ledger has a quick fix. More than six million existing homes sold in 2021, the highest number since 2006, according to data published Thursday by the National Association of Realtors. But that was still well short of satisfying demand. And there's little evidence to suggest the nation is in a hurry to correct the imbalance between supply and demand.

''My pessimistic view is that the economy is perfectly capable of running with unaffordable housing,'' said Daryl Fairweather, the chief economist at Redfin. This was evident over the last decade, she said, when affordability worsened even as the economy continued to grow. And that reality has enabled politicians and the public to largely neglect the issue of housing affordability.

''Another way to phrase that is people will still get up and go to their jobs, even if they're housing insecure,'' Ms. Fairweather said. ''That's one reason to think we'll still just keep letting this problem get worse.''

More housing construction will help -- and it has been increasing -- but the United States has been underbuilding for so long that it'll take years to meet demand.

You might also expect home buyers to get fed up with soaring prices. But that answer falters in, say, Salt Lake City when asking prices that look absurd to local buyers seem reasonable to someone moving in from Seattle.

Today, first-time home buyers in once-affordable markets have competition from all kinds of sources that didn't exist a generation ago: from global capital, from all-cash ''iBuyers'' that size up homes by algorithm, from institutional investors renting single-family homes, from smaller-scale investors running Airbnbs.

''It's really hard for an owner-occupier to compete with the amount of money that's flowing into this region,'' said Dan Immergluck, a professor at Georgia State in Atlanta. There, even in a Sun Belt market with robust new housing construction, supply still can't keep up with demand.

Perhaps at some point in the medium term, the geographic reshuffling of remote workers will settle down, calming price growth in places like Boise, Idaho, and Denver that have been most jolted by it. But the investor purchasers aren't going away. Nor are new technologies that enable homes to sell at a much faster pace.

Rising mortgage rates should help slow the growth in home prices. But they won't affect anyone paying cash. And higher rates will make home owning even less affordable.

''For first-time home buyers, they're going to find it very, very difficult to get a home in the next two, three years,'' said Mark Zandi, the chief economist at Moody's Analytics. And in the meantime they'll be paying higher rents, cutting into their ability to save for a down payment.

***Working-class*** households on the cusp of homeownership before the pandemic may now need another five to 10 years to play catch-up, said Ralph McLaughlin, the chief economist at Kukun, a company that tracks real estate investment activity. The days of one-earner households buying a decent-quality starter home anywhere in the U.S. may be over, he said -- unless that one earner is a high earner.

''As a housing economist, it's kind of depressing to think that there may not be an undoing of the hardships that have been brought upon young households trying to get their foot in the door of the housing market'' during the pandemic, Mr. McLaughlin said.

Those hardships have been remarkably widespread across the country. The last time such home price growth occurred was in the years leading up to the housing crash. But even at the height of the bubble in 2006, only about 40 percent of metro areas experienced greater than 10 percent annual home price growth. In the past year, 80 percent of metros have seen such spikes. And a quarter of all metro areas have had price rises of more than 20 percent.

Widespread pain in the rental market has followed. In 2021, communities across the country experienced the kind of double-digit rent growth seen only before the pandemic in small oil or fracking boom towns, said Igor Popov, the chief economist at Apartment List. Now, he said, ''it's going to be challenging to imagine a world where the affordability concerns start to wane.''

None of this is rooted in the kind of risky borrowing that inflated the housing bubble. Rather, home buyers flush with pandemic savings and strong credit have been taking out conventional loans (if they're taking out loans at all). The rental market has experienced a rise in higher-income households, too, at a time when new household formation has also surged with young adults who began the pandemic by moving back home.

Add to all of this a few more forces stressing the housing market even without a pandemic: Baby boomers who own a lot of housing stock are sticking around in their primary homes longer than previous generations did, at a time millennials have reached peak home-buying age. That ties up existing supply.

Local governments have further stymied new housing supply with zoning and building restrictions that will remain a problem even when home-building supply chain kinks resolve. And looking forward, climate change means that a growing share of housing supply that exists today may be uninhabitable or require expensive retrofits in the future, said Ms. Fairweather, the Redfin economist.

That is a lot to be glum about -- unless, of course, you already own a home and are happy to see its value skyrocketing.

But that brings us back to Ms. Fairweather's point about whether there's much public appetite to curb housing costs at all.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/upshot/home-prices-surging.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/upshot/home-prices-surging.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Home construction, as in Mebane, N.C., above, has been rising in the United States, but not enough to meet demand. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GERRY BROOME/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[***French Candidates’ Economic Programs Hold Key to the Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6580-3VN1-JBG3-62G6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 18, 2022 Monday 15:56 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1379 words

**Byline:** Liz Alderman

**Highlight:** Promising tax cuts, higher wages and changes in the retirement age, President Macron and Marine Le Pen vie for undecided voters.

**Body**

Promising tax cuts, higher wages and changes in the retirement age, President Macron and Marine Le Pen vie for undecided voters.

PARIS — As [*President Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/emmanuel-macron) wove through crowds during a campaign stop in northern France last week, an elderly voter got in his face to protest one of his most unpopular economic proposals: raising the retirement age to 65 from 62 to fund France’s national pension system.

“Retirement at 65, no, no!” the woman shouted, jabbing a finger at Mr. Macron’s chest as he tried to assuage her. The boisterous exchange was caught on camera. Two hours later, he retreated, saying he would consider tweaking the age to 64. “I don’t want to divide the country,” he said on French television.

Mr. Macron’s reversal on a key element of his economic platform, in an industrial region backing the far-right firebrand [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/marine-le-pen) ahead of [*France’s presidential election*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/french-presidential-election) next Sunday, was a reminder of the social distress dominating the minds of voters. He and Ms. Le Pen have starkly [*divergent visions*](https://www.institutmontaigne.org/presidentielle-2022/) of how to address these concerns.

As they cross the country in a whirlwind of [*last-minute campaigning*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/world/europe/macron-le-pen-france-election.html?searchResultPosition=4), their runoff will hinge to a large extent on perceptions of the economy. Worries about widening economic insecurity, and the surging cost of living amid the fallout from Russia’s war on Ukraine, have become top issues in the race, ahead of security and immigration.

Ms. Le Pen won by a comfortable margin in the first round of voting last Sunday in places that have lost jobs to deindustrialization, where she has found a ready audience for her pledges to bolster purchasing power, create employment through “intelligent” protectionism and shield France from European policies that expanded globalization.

While Mr. Macron is still expected to win in a tight race, workers in restless blue-collar bastions may yet prove a liability. Despite a robust recovery in France from Covid lockdowns — the economy is now growing at around 7 percent, and unemployment has fallen to a 10-year low of 7.4 percent — many feel inequality has widened, rather than narrowed, as he pledged, in the five years since Mr. Macron took office.

After France’s traditional left-wing and right-wing parties [*collapsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen-far-fight.html?searchResultPosition=2) in the first round of voting, both candidates are scrambling to lure the undecided and voters who gravitated to their opponents — especially the far-left firebrand Jean-Luc Mélenchon — in large part by recasting major planks of their economic programs to appeal to those struggling to get by.

Pensions is a case in point. Mr. Macron has worked to recalibrate his image as a president who favors France’s wealthy classes, the business establishment and white-collar voters as he set about overhauling the economy to bolster competitiveness.

In 2019 he was forced to set aside plans to raise the retirement age to 65 after raucous nationwide strikes [*shut down*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/05/world/europe/france-strike-pensions.html?searchResultPosition=1) much of France. He had sought to [*streamline France’s complex system*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/06/world/europe/france-strike-pension-reform.html?searchResultPosition=4) of public and private pension schemes into one state-managed plan to close a shortfall of 18 billion euros, or about $19 billion.

Following his confrontation in northern France last week, Mr. Macron insisted that he would continue to push back the retirement age incrementally — by four months per year starting next year — but that he was open to discussing an easing of the plan in its later stages.

“It’s not dogma,” he said of the policy. “I have to listen to what people are saying to me.”

Ms. Le Pen accused Mr. Macron of engaging in a policy of “social wreckage” and of blowing with the wind to capture votes, although she has also shifted gears after the protectionist economic platform she advanced five years ago spooked businesses. She dropped plans to withdraw from the European Union and the eurozone.

Today, Ms. Le Pen favors maintaining the current retirement age of 62, abandoning a previous push to reduce it to 60 — although certain workers engaged in intensive manual labor like construction could retire at the lower age.

As Ms. Le Pen [*seeks to rebrand*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/europe/marine-le-pen-french-elections-macron.html?searchResultPosition=1)her far-right National Rally party as a kinder, gentler party than the one she steered in 2017, albeit with a clear anti-immigrant message, she has focused on economic issues close to blue-collar voters’ hearts.

She got out front on one of the biggest issues of the campaign: a surge in the cost of living.

While Mr. Macron was [*trying to broker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/world/europe/macron-france-russia-ukraine.html?searchResultPosition=2) a cease-fire in Ukraine, Ms. Le Pen was visiting towns and rural areas across France, promising increased subsidies for vulnerable households.

She pledged tax cuts for companies that raise salaries by 10 percent for employees who earn up to three times France’s minimum wage. She is also vowing to slash sales taxes to 5.5 percent from 20 percent on fuel, oil, gas and electricity, and to cut them altogether on 100 “essential” goods. Workers under 30 would be exempt from income tax, and young couples would get interest-free housing loans.

Her France-first policy extends even further: To make up for increased spending on social programs, she has said she would slash billions in social spending on “foreigners.”

She has also vowed to create jobs and re-industrialize the country by prioritizing French companies for government contracts over foreign investors and dangling a host of expensive tax incentives to encourage French companies that have branched out overseas to return to France.

While she has abandoned talk of a so-called Frexit — a French exit from the European Union — some of her proposals to protect the economy would amount to essentially that, including a pledge to ignore some European Union laws, including on internal free trade. She has said she would withhold some French payments to the bloc.

Mr. Macron has branded such promises “pure fantasy” and is proposing to retain many of his pro-business policies, with modifications.

Having vowed to [*lure jobs and investment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/08/world/europe/france-presidential-election-macron-economy-le-pen.html?searchResultPosition=2), under his watch foreign companies have poured billions of euros into industrial projects and research and development, creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs, many in tech start-ups, in a country that has not easily embraced change.

At the same time, he has faced a challenge in discarding the image of an aloof president whose policies tended to [*benefit the most affluent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/01/world/europe/france-emmanuel-macron.html?searchResultPosition=1). His abolition of a wealth tax and the introduction of a 30 percent flat tax on capital gains has mainly [*lifted incomes for the richest 0.1 percent*](https://www.strategie.gouv.fr/sites/strategie.gouv.fr/files/atoms/files/fs-2020-rapport-isf-octobre.pdf) and increased the distribution of dividends, according to the government’s own analysis.

After a growing wealth divide helped set off the Yellow Vest movement in 2019, bringing struggling ***working-class*** people into the streets, Mr. Macron increased the minimum wage and made it easier for companies to give workers “purchasing power bonuses” of up to 3,000 euros annually without being taxed, a policy he has pledged to beef up.

As inflation has surged recently, Mr. Macron has also authorized billions of euros in subsidies for energy bills and at the gas pump and has promised to peg pension payments to inflation starting this summer. He has vowed new tax cuts for both households and businesses.

His economic platform also aims for “full employment,” in part by pressing ahead with a series of pro-business reforms that has continued to lure the support of France’s biggest employers’ organization, Medef.

“Emmanuel Macron’s program is the most favorable to ensure the growth of the economy and employment,” the group said last week, adding that Ms. Le Pen’s platform “would lead the country to stall compared to its neighbors and to put it on the sidelines of the European Union.”

For all the differences, the pledges by Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen have one thing in common: more public spending, and less savings. According to estimates by the Institut Montaigne, a French economic think tank, Mr. Macron’s economic plan would worsen the public deficit by 44 billion euros, while Ms. Le Pen’s would widen it by 102 billion euros.

“These shifts are significant enough to think that some of their proposals cannot actually be applied — except if they put in place budget austerity measures that they are not talking about,” Victor Poirier, director of publications at the Institut Montaigne, said.

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron on the campaign trail last week. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES HILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Black Voters Are Transforming New York With Black Victories***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634N-Y8T1-DXY4-X06F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1743 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck and Jeffery C. Mays

**Body**

Black candidates are poised to occupy some of New York's top elected offices, including those of mayor, public advocate and two of the city's five district attorneys.

A cascade of victories for Black candidates in the New York City Democratic primaries -- highlighted by Eric Adams's win in the mayoral race -- is redefining the flow of political power in the nation's largest city.

For just the second time in its history, New York City is on track to have a Black mayor. For the first time ever, the Manhattan district attorney is set to be a Black man, after Alvin Bragg won the Democratic nomination. The city's public advocate, who is Black, cruised to victory in last month's primary. As many as three of the five city borough presidents may be people of color, and the City Council is poised to be notably diverse.

''This is a mission-driven movement,'' Mr. Adams said in Harlem last weekend, at the Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network headquarters. ''If you don't sit back and rejoice in this moment, shame on you. Shame on you. One of your own is going to move to become the mayor of the most important city in the most important country on the globe.''

If Mr. Adams and Mr. Bragg win their general elections as expected, they will become among the most influential elected Black officials in the state, joining the state attorney general, Letitia James; the State Senate majority leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins; and Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie.

Black Democrats also claimed two new congressional wins last year in New York City: Representatives Ritchie Torres, who identifies as Afro-Latino, in the South Bronx; and Jamaal Bowman, who defeated the longtime congressman Eliot Engel, in a district covering parts of the Bronx and Westchester County.

Their success was repeated by Black candidates across the highest levels of city government this year, who were typically propelled in part by strong support among Black voters.

''Twitter has its place in modern-day campaigning -- however, if you're more comfortable online than in a Black church on Sunday morning, that says something about your likelihood of success,'' said Representative Hakeem Jeffries, New York's highest-ranking House Democrat, who may become the first Black speaker of the House.

''Black New Yorkers are under siege by rising crime and intense housing displacement,'' Mr. Jeffries said. ''Our community is closest to the pain, and therefore Black candidates are uniquely positioned to speak powerfully to the needs of ***working-class*** New Yorkers.''

Mr. Adams won on the strength of more moderate, ***working-class*** Black and Latino voters, as well as some centrist white voters outside of Manhattan, with assists from labor unions, his own strong fund-raising and super PAC spending. He ran on a message focused on combating inequality and promoting public safety, and he supported a more expansive role for the police than some of his rivals did.

Donovan Richards, the Queens borough president who is narrowly leading in his re-election battle, called Mr. Adams's primary victory and those of other Black candidates a ''watershed moment'' -- one that will help determine whether issues of improving infrastructure, public safety and schools can be achieved equitably in a city shaped by deep racial and socioeconomic disparities.

''We had a Black president before we had our second Black mayor, so it's our time,'' said Mr. Richards, who is Black, recalling the excitement he felt as an elementary school student when David N. Dinkins, the city's first Black mayor, was elected more than three decades ago.

Other diverse American cities, from Detroit to Kansas City, Mo., have elected more Black mayors than New York City has, while cities including Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta are led by Black women. Los Angeles, like New York, has had just one Black mayor.

But the results in New York this summer, especially at the top of the ticket, underscored the central role Black voters play both in city politics and in the national Democratic Party, less than a year after Black Americans played decisive roles in electing President Biden and flipping the Senate to the Democrats. Some have likened Mr. Adams's coalition, at least in part, to the one that propelled Mr. Biden to the presidency, a comparison both Mr. Adams and the White House chief of staff have embraced.

Black voters were also vital to the Democratic efforts to reclaim the Senate, a goal that came down to two victories in Georgia. And in New York, Black voters played a significant role in electing Mayor Bill de Blasio in 2013 (though his coalition also included far more white progressives than Mr. Adams's did).

There was little exit polling available on the New York City mayor's race, but surveys from other years showed that Black voters were not the majority of the electorate. Still, Black voters are among the most reliable voters in the Democratic Party, and the sparse polling data that was available during the primary showed that Mr. Adams was the overwhelming favorite of those voters -- meaning that they packed a more unified electoral punch than other constituencies whose preferences were spread more evenly among several contenders.

''The Democratic Party can't win anything of significance without Black voters,'' said Leah Daughtry, a longtime party strategist. ''You have, with every passing cycle, an increasing awareness and acceptance that we make a difference.''

She suggested that Mr. Adams's victory -- which disappointed the most left-wing forces in the city -- may prompt a reassessment of what it means to be ''progressive'' in New York.

''Is it that Black and brown people are not as progressive as some people want to say they are, or does the definition of 'progressive' need to be looked at?'' said Ms. Daughtry, whose father, the Rev. Dr. Herbert Daughtry, was an early mentor of Mr. Adams's.

Left-wing leaders and activists, and some centrist party strategists and officials, caution against drawing sweeping political conclusions from an off-year municipal election and, in particular, a mayoral primary that was decided by a few thousand votes.

''The next generation of leaders being elected around the country to Congress -- many of them are progressive people of color,'' said Adam Green, who co-founded the Progressive Change Campaign Committee. ''That seems more like a harbinger of future national progressive trends than a New York City mayor's race.''

Mr. Adams's relatively moderate message on policing was plainly a significant factor with a substantial number of voters. But certainly, his win was driven by dynamics that go well beyond ideology, including a sense among some New Yorkers that Mr. Adams not only felt their pain, but had lived it.

The slate of other Black candidates who won their primaries represents considerable generational and political diversity. Jumaane D. Williams, the city's public advocate and one of New York's most prominent younger left-wing leaders, stressed that those results show that voters of color ''aren't a monolith.''

''Voters of all hues want to be respected for their lived experiences and their traumas,'' said Mr. Williams, who easily won his primary last month, and may be considering a run for higher office. ''They want to feel safe and have all of the access to as good a life as they can and they want to see this city reopened with justice and equity.''

Mr. Torres, who backed Andrew Yang's mayoral campaign, supported Mr. Adams as his second pick under the city's ranked-choice voting system. He said the success of ideologically diverse Black contenders was a function of candidate quality, highlighting the deep and growing bench of candidates of color across the city.

''That's the only variable that explains the widely varied ideological results of the 2021 election cycle,'' the congressman said. ''It speaks to the caliber of the next generation of Black public figures.''

Another through line for several of the successful contenders was their ability to connect their personal stories to some of the most searing challenges facing Black New Yorkers. Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Bragg speak in strikingly personal terms about the need to combat both police brutality and gun violence that has disproportionately affected neighborhoods with many Black and Latino residents.

Mr. Adams has said he was beaten by police as a teenager. He later joined the police force, pushing to combat misconduct from within the system. Mr. Bragg has described a police officer putting a gun to his head when he was a teenager -- and he cast himself as the candidate best positioned to tackle criminal justice reform from the powerful prosecutor's office.

''It's not just having a first Black district attorney in Manhattan, but the experiences that for me have gone along with that,'' Mr. Bragg said in an interview, ticking through his own encounters with the law enforcement system.

Mr. Richards, the Queens borough president, said that for all of the historic results, Mr. Adams's victory -- he was the first choice of every borough but Manhattan -- illustrated stark divides in the city.

''If you look at the demographic maps from this election it paints a very scary story,'' Mr. Richards said, adding, ''As diverse as we are, we are still a divided city.''

For many Black leaders, Mr. Adams's election is both a vindication and cause to wonder what might have been.

Keith L.T. Wright, the chair of New York County Democrats, worked for Mr. Dinkins when he was the Manhattan borough president. For decades, Mr. Wright has harbored ''extreme resentment'' that Mr. Dinkins did not win a second term.

''Can you imagine if David had two terms? The gentrification problem would not be as serious,'' Mr. Wright said. ''If he had gotten his hands on the Board of Education we would not have the educational inequality problem we have right now.''

Maya Wiley -- who would have been the city's first Black female mayor, but came in third -- has said that the diversity of the mayoral field, as well as Mr. Adams's win, would have implications for shaping perceptions of a suitable leader.

''It shows that we have a pipeline of people of color, particularly Black people, who can run and contest effectively in our important executive offices,'' she said. ''I don't think this is a one-time phenomenon. This is really about our democratic process opening up.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/nyregion/black-power-eric-adams-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/nyregion/black-power-eric-adams-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Eric Adams celebrating essential workers at a parade in New York City last week. His win in the Democratic mayoral primary makes him a heavy favorite in the election. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** July 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Democrats Continue to Struggle With Men of Color; Charles M. Blow***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63M9-2YJ1-DXY4-X0G6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 15, 2021 Wednesday 14:54 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 841 words

**Byline:** Charles M. Blow

**Highlight:** The idea of always playing defense and never offense is, well, offensive.

**Body**

The big headline is that the California recall failed. Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom gets to keep his job. He handily fought off the Republican challenge.

But there is a worrisome detail in the data, one that keeps showing up, one that Democrats would do well to deal with: Black and Latino men are not hewing as close to the party line as Black and Latina women.

There are, of course, issues with exit polls, and results often change as more votes are counted. But that said, [*the California exit polls*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2021/exit-polls/california/recall/0) do seem to reflect what polls have shown for [*some time now*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/04/opinion/election-2020-exit-polls.html).

In CNN’s exit poll, nearly half of the Hispanic men surveyed and nearly a quarter of the Black men voted to support the recall. The largest difference between men and women of any racial group was between Black men and Black women.

Even if these numbers are later adjusted, the warning must still be registered.

For many of these men, saying Republicans are racist or attract racists or abide racists isn’t enough.

For one thing, never underestimate the communion among men, regardless of race. Men have privileges in society, and some are drawn to policies that elevate their privileges.

For instance, many Black and Hispanic men oppose abortion.

Some men liked the bravado of Donald Trump and chafed at the rise of the #MeToo movement. Some simply see trans women as men in dresses and want to carry guns wherever they want.

The question for Democrats is how do they lure some of these men back without catering to the patriarchy. From a position of principle, the party can’t really appeal to them; it must seek to change them.

Add to the patriarchal issues a sense of disillusionment with the Democratic Party and its inability to make meaningful changes on the issues that many of these men care most about, such as criminal justice reform and workplace competition. Democrats often resort to emotional appeals in election season, telling minorities that they must vote for liberal candidates as a defense, to prevent the worst. But many of these men believe that the Democrats are just as bad as the Republicans.

The idea of always playing defense and never offense is, well, offensive.

Instead, Democrats have to craft a message of empowerment and change. They have to say to these men that they don’t have to operate from a position of weakness and pleading, holding back the forces that would otherwise overwhelm them.

To be honest, a robust, offensive messaging campaign would resonate with all people who tend to vote Democratic — men and women.

The truth is that in a two-party system, voters have only two choices, so protest votes are self-defeating, as is sitting out elections or supporting the opposition to scare your favored side into better behavior.

In a two-party system, if you don’t want the Trump Republicans to win, you must vote Democratic. You are trapped in that way, and no one likes the feeling of being trapped.

But “trapped” is not an inspiring campaign message, particularly to people who spent a lifetime feeling trapped and have tired of it, as these men have.

Yelling at them isn’t going to work; neither is shaming them or thinking that you are “educating” them.

My fear is that these men will continue to drift away from the Democratic Party, not because the Republican Party is the most welcoming of spaces, but because Democrats cannot or will not do more to appeal to [*Black*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/democrats-scramble-to-win-over-more-black-men-11591268401) and [*Latino*](https://www.npr.org/2021/09/10/1035148423/newsom-needs-latinos-to-turn-out-for-the-recall-but-may-not-have-their-attention) men.

To my mind, the Democratic Party must do a few things:

* Admit that it makes many promises to Black people in election seasons that it not only doesn’t accomplish, but sometimes doesn’t even take up.

1. Acknowledge that many of these men feel that the system itself has failed them, that the status quo has failed them.
2. Give the plight of Black and brown men the same prominence that both parties have given the plight of ***working-class*** white men.

Black and brown men need to feel that they are being seen as more than victims of a predatory justice system or part of the so-called immigrant crisis. They need to be rendered in full and seen as whole.

When they are not, it leaves an opening for Republicans to exploit, and conservatives have done a clever job of doing just that in recent elections.

If you are like me, you are thinking: These men should know better. They are voting in ways that invite injury or not voting at all. They shouldn’t be coddled. The world is sick of coddling selfish men.

But we, too, are stuck in this two-party system, and as such, we must do whatever it takes to prevent calamity and eke out progress.

In that world, when men of color vote against the interests of people of color and out of the male ego, we must gingerly talk them down rather than aggressively chant them down.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Majoli/Magnum Photos FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 16, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Something Has to Give in the Housing Market. Or Does It?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64K6-V871-JBG3-621N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 20, 2022 Thursday 22:56 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 1149 words

**Byline:** Emily Badger

**Highlight:** There appears to be no quick reprieve coming for rising prices: “It’s not a bubble, it really is about the fundamentals.”

**Body**

There appears to be no quick reprieve coming for rising prices: “It’s not a bubble, it really is about the fundamentals.”

Two years into the pandemic, rundown bungalows command bidding wars, buyers keep snatching up places they’ve never seen, and homebuilders [*can’t find enough cabinet doors*](https://twitter.com/RickPalaciosJr/status/1480935312138256387) for everyone who wants a new home. The median price for an American home is up nearly 20 percent in a year. The for-sale inventory is at a [*new low*](https://twitter.com/mikesimonsen/status/1483181849580998657). And the hopeful buyers left on the sidelines have helped drive up rents instead.

All of this may feel unsustainable — the tight inventory, the wild price growth, the dwindling affordability. Surely something’s got to give.

But what if that’s not exactly true? Or, at least, not true anytime soon for renters locked out of homeownership today or anyone worried about housing affordability. There’s probably no quick reprieve coming, no rollback in stratospheric home prices if you can just wait a little longer to jump in.

“It’s not a bubble, it really is about the fundamentals,” said Jenny Schuetz, a housing researcher at the Brookings Institution. “It really is about supply and demand — not enough houses, and huge numbers of people wanting homes.”

Neither side of that ledger has a quick fix. More than six million existing homes sold in 2021, the highest number since 2006, according to [*data published Thursday*](https://www.nar.realtor/newsroom/annual-existing-home-sales-hit-highest-mark-since-2006) by the National Association of Realtors. But that was still well short of satisfying demand. And there’s little evidence to suggest the nation is in a hurry to correct the imbalance between supply and demand.

“My pessimistic view is that the economy is perfectly capable of running with unaffordable housing,” said Daryl Fairweather, the chief economist at Redfin. This was evident over the last decade, she said, when affordability worsened even as the economy continued to grow. And that reality has enabled politicians and the public to largely neglect the issue of housing affordability.

“Another way to phrase that is people will still get up and go to their jobs, even if they’re housing insecure,” Ms. Fairweather said. “That’s one reason to think we’ll still just keep letting this problem get worse.”

More housing construction will help — and it [*has been increasing*](https://www.marketplace.org/2021/12/16/despite-shortages-of-materials-new-housing-construction-is-up/) — but the United States has been underbuilding for so long that it’ll take years to meet demand.

You might also expect home buyers to get fed up with soaring prices. But that answer falters in, say, Salt Lake City when asking prices that look absurd to local buyers seem reasonable to someone moving in from Seattle.

Today, first-time home buyers in once-affordable markets have competition from all kinds of sources that didn’t exist a generation ago: from global capital, from all-cash [*“iBuyers” that size up homes by algorithm*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/19/realestate/ibuying-ilending.html), from institutional investors renting single-family homes, from smaller-scale investors running Airbnbs.

“It’s really hard for an owner-occupier to compete with the amount of money that’s flowing into this region,” said Dan Immergluck, a professor at Georgia State in Atlanta. There, even in a Sun Belt market with robust new housing construction, supply still can’t keep up with demand.

Perhaps at some point in the medium term, the geographic reshuffling of remote workers will settle down, calming price growth in places like Boise, Idaho, and Denver that have been most jolted by it. But the investor purchasers aren’t going away. Nor are new technologies that enable homes to sell at a much faster pace.

Rising mortgage rates should help slow the growth in home prices. But they won’t affect anyone paying cash. And higher rates will make home owning even less affordable.

“For first-time home buyers, they’re going to find it very, very difficult to get a home in the next two, three years,” said Mark Zandi, the chief economist at Moody’s Analytics. And in the meantime they’ll be paying higher rents, cutting into their ability to save for a down payment.

***Working-class*** households on the cusp of homeownership before the pandemic may now need another five to 10 years to play catch-up, said Ralph McLaughlin, the chief economist at Kukun, a company that tracks real estate investment activity. The days of one-earner households buying a decent-quality starter home anywhere in the U.S. may be over, he said — unless that one earner is a high earner.

“As a housing economist, it’s kind of depressing to think that there may not be an undoing of the hardships that have been brought upon young households trying to get their foot in the door of the housing market” during the pandemic, Mr. McLaughlin said.

Those hardships have been remarkably widespread across the country. The last time such home price growth occurred was in the years leading up to the housing crash. But even at the height of the bubble in 2006, only about 40 percent of metro areas experienced greater than 10 percent annual home price growth. In the past year, 80 percent of metros have seen such spikes. And a quarter of all metro areas have had price rises of more than 20 percent.

Widespread pain in the rental market has followed. In 2021, communities across the country experienced the kind of double-digit rent growth seen only before the pandemic in small oil or fracking boom towns, said Igor Popov, the chief economist at Apartment List. Now, he said, “it’s going to be challenging to imagine a world where the affordability concerns start to wane.”

None of this is rooted in the kind of risky borrowing that inflated [*the housing bubble*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/19/business/economy/fed-transcripts-open-a-window-on-2007-crisis.html). Rather, home buyers flush with pandemic savings and strong credit have been [*taking out conventional loans*](https://twitter.com/modestproposal1/status/1480648939682603009?s=20) (if they’re taking out loans at all). The rental market has experienced a rise in higher-income households, too, at a time when new household formation has also surged with young adults who began the pandemic by moving back home.

Add to all of this a few more forces stressing the housing market even without a pandemic: Baby boomers who own a lot of housing stock are sticking around in their primary homes longer than previous generations did, at a time millennials have reached peak home-buying age. That ties up existing supply.

Local governments have further stymied new housing supply with zoning and building restrictions that will remain a problem even when home-building supply chain kinks resolve. And looking forward, climate change means that a growing share of housing supply that exists today may be uninhabitable or require expensive retrofits in the future, said Ms. Fairweather, the Redfin economist.

That is a lot to be glum about — unless, of course, you already own a home and are happy to see its value skyrocketing.

But that brings us back to Ms. Fairweather’s point about whether there’s much public appetite to curb housing costs at all.

PHOTO: Home construction, as in Mebane, N.C., above, has been rising in the United States, but not enough to meet demand. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GERRY BROOME/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2022

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[***Eric Adams’s Win Is a ‘Watershed Moment’ for Black Leaders in New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:634G-7M01-JBG3-631K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 13, 2021 Tuesday 15:54 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1766 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck and Jeffery C. Mays

**Highlight:** Black candidates are poised to occupy some of New York’s top elected offices, including those of mayor, public advocate and two of the city’s five district attorneys.

**Body**

Black candidates are poised to occupy some of New York’s top elected offices, including those of mayor, public advocate and two of the city’s five district attorneys.

[Follow our live [*New York election results*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor.html).]

A cascade of victories for [*Black*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html) candidates in the New York City Democratic primaries — highlighted by [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/eric-adams-mayor-nyc)’s win in the mayoral race — is redefining the flow of political power in the nation’s largest city.

For just the second time in its history, New York City is on track to have a [*Black mayor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html). For the first time ever, the Manhattan district attorney is set to be a Black man, after [*Alvin Bragg*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/02/nyregion/alvin-bragg-district-attorney-trump.html) won the Democratic nomination. The city’s public advocate, who is Black, cruised to victory in last month’s primary. As many as three of the five city borough presidents may be people of color, and the City Council is poised to be [*notably diverse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/08/nyregion/new-york-city-council-diversity.html).

“This is a mission-driven movement,” Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/27/nyregion/eric-adams-bloomberg.html) said in Harlem last weekend, at the Rev. Al Sharpton’s National Action Network headquarters. “If you don’t sit back and rejoice in this moment, shame on you. Shame on you. One of your own is going to move to become the mayor of the most important city in the most important country on the globe.”

If Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/13/nyregion/gowanus-redevelopment-eric-adams.html) and Mr. Bragg win their general elections as expected, they will become among the most influential elected [*Black*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/adams-second-black-mayor.html) officials in the state, joining the state attorney general, Letitia James; the State Senate majority leader, Andrea Stewart-Cousins; and Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie.

Black Democrats also claimed two new congressional wins last year in New York City: Representatives Ritchie Torres, [*who identifies*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/07/19/im-afro-latino-i-cant-join-both-black-hispanic-caucuses-congress-that-must-change/) as Afro-Latino, in the South Bronx; and Jamaal Bowman, [*who defeated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/17/nyregion/jamaal-bowman-eliot-engel.html) the longtime congressman Eliot Engel, in a district covering parts of the Bronx and Westchester County.

Their success was repeated by Black candidates across the highest levels of city government this year, who were typically propelled in part by strong support among Black voters.

“Twitter has its place in modern-day campaigning — however, if you’re more comfortable online than in a Black church on Sunday morning, that says something about your likelihood of success,” said Representative Hakeem Jeffries, New York’s highest-ranking House Democrat, who may become the [*first Black speaker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/15/us/politics/who-is-hakeem-jeffries.html) of the House.

“Black New Yorkers are under siege by rising crime and intense housing displacement,” Mr. Jeffries said. “Our community is closest to the pain, and therefore Black candidates are uniquely positioned to speak powerfully to the needs of ***working-class*** New Yorkers.”

Mr. [*Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/nyregion/eric-adams-public-schedule.html) won on the strength of [*more moderate,* ***working-class*** *Black and Latino voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/26/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html), as well as some centrist white voters outside of Manhattan, with assists from labor unions, his own strong fund-raising and [*super PAC spending*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/21/nyregion/mayor-super-pacs-money.html). He ran on a message focused on combating inequality and promoting public safety, and he supported a [*more expansive role*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/nyregion/mayor-race-nyc-crime-police.html) for the police than some of his rivals did.

Donovan Richards, the Queens borough president who is [*narrowly leading*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-borough-president-primaries.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-elections-2020&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;context=election_recirc) in his re-election battle, called Mr. Adams’s primary victory and those of other Black candidates a “watershed moment” — one that will help determine whether issues of improving infrastructure, public safety and schools can be achieved equitably in a city shaped by deep racial and socioeconomic disparities.

“We had a Black president before we had our second Black mayor, so it’s our time,” said Mr. Richards, who is Black, recalling the excitement he felt as an elementary school student when David N. Dinkins, the city’s first Black mayor, was elected more than three decades ago.

Other diverse American cities, from Detroit to Kansas City, Mo., have elected more Black mayors than New York City has, while cities including Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta are led by Black women. Los Angeles, like New York, has had [*just one*](https://www.lapl.org/collections-resources/blogs/lapl/los-angeles%E2%80%99s-first-and-only-black-mayor-broke-racial-barriers) Black mayor.

But the results in New York this summer, especially at the top of the ticket, underscored the [*central role Black voters*](https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-what-eric-adams-represents-20210710-knlgrbgfyjfnzbakhfyq3s2ozu-story.html) play both in city politics and in the national Democratic Party, less than a year after Black Americans played decisive roles in electing President Biden and [*flipping the Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/07/upshot/warnock-ossoff-georgia-victories.html) to the Democrats. Some have likened Mr. Adams’s coalition, at least in part, to the one that propelled Mr. Biden to the presidency, a comparison both Mr. Adams and [*the White House chief of staff*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/opinion/sway-kara-swisher-ron-klain.html?showTranscript=1) have embraced.

Black voters were also vital to the Democratic efforts to [*reclaim the Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/06/us/politics/warnock-loeffler-ossoff-perdue-georgia-senate.html), a goal that came down to two victories in Georgia. And in New York, Black voters played a significant role in electing Mayor Bill de Blasio in 2013 (though his coalition also included far more white progressives than Mr. Adams’s did).

There was [*little exit polling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/nyregion/nyc-mayor-exit-polls.html) available on the New York City mayor’s race, but surveys from other years showed that Black voters were not the majority of the electorate. Still, Black voters are among the most reliable voters in the Democratic Party, and the sparse polling data that was available during the primary showed that Mr. Adams was the overwhelming favorite of those voters — meaning that they packed a more unified electoral punch than other constituencies whose preferences were spread more evenly among several contenders.

“The Democratic Party can’t win anything of significance without Black voters,” said Leah Daughtry, a longtime party strategist. “You have, with every passing cycle, an increasing awareness and acceptance that we make a difference.”

She suggested that Mr. Adams’s victory — which [*disappointed the most left-wing forces*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/10/nyregion/yang-adams-mayor-progressives.html) in the city — may prompt a reassessment of what it means to be “progressive” in New York.

“Is it that Black and brown people are not as progressive as some people want to say they are, or does the definition of ‘progressive’ need to be looked at?” said Ms. Daughtry, whose father, the Rev. Dr. Herbert Daughtry, was an early mentor of Mr. Adams’s.

Left-wing leaders and activists, and some centrist party strategists and officials, caution against drawing sweeping political conclusions from an off-year municipal election and, in particular, a mayoral primary that was decided by a few thousand votes.

“The next generation of leaders being elected around the country to Congress — many of them are progressive people of color,” said Adam Green, who co-founded the Progressive Change Campaign Committee. “That seems more like a harbinger of future national progressive trends than a New York City mayor’s race.”

Mr. Adams’s [*relatively moderate message*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/11/nyregion/mayor-race-nyc-crime-police.html) on policing was plainly a significant factor with a substantial number of voters. But certainly, his win was driven by dynamics that go well beyond ideology, including a sense among some New Yorkers that Mr. Adams not only felt their pain, but had lived it.

The slate of other Black candidates who won their primaries represents considerable generational and political diversity. Jumaane D. Williams, the city’s public advocate and one of New York’s most prominent younger left-wing leaders, stressed that those results show that voters of color “aren’t a monolith.”

“Voters of all hues want to be respected for their lived experiences and their traumas,” said Mr. Williams, who easily won his primary last month, and [*may be considering*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/26/nyregion/andrew-cuomo-election-challengers.html) a run for higher office. “They want to feel safe and have all of the access to as good a life as they can and they want to see this city reopened with justice and equity.”

Mr. Torres, who backed Andrew Yang’s mayoral campaign, supported Mr. Adams as his second pick under the city’s ranked-choice voting system. He said the success of ideologically diverse Black contenders was a function of candidate quality, highlighting the deep and growing bench of candidates of color across the city.

“That’s the only variable that explains the widely varied ideological results of the 2021 election cycle,” the congressman said. “It speaks to the caliber of the next generation of Black public figures.”

Another through line for several of the successful contenders was their ability to connect their personal stories to some of the most searing challenges facing Black New Yorkers. Both Mr. Adams and Mr. Bragg speak in strikingly personal terms about the need to combat both police brutality and [*gun violence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/14/nyregion/shootings-nyc-covid.html) that has disproportionately affected neighborhoods with many Black and Latino residents.

Mr. Adams has said he was beaten by police as a teenager. He later joined the police force, pushing to combat misconduct from within the system. Mr. Bragg [*has described*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/12/nyregion/alvin-bragg-manhattan-district-attorney.html) a police officer putting a gun to his head when he was a teenager — and he cast himself as the candidate best positioned to tackle criminal justice reform from the powerful prosecutor’s office.

“It’s not just having a first Black district attorney in Manhattan, but the experiences that for me have gone along with that,” Mr. Bragg said in an interview, ticking through his own encounters with the law enforcement system.

Mr. Richards, the Queens borough president, said that for all of the historic results, Mr. Adams’s victory — he was the first choice of every borough but Manhattan — illustrated stark divides in the city.

“If you look at the demographic maps from this election it paints a very scary story,” Mr. Richards said, adding, “As diverse as we are, we are still a divided city.”

For many Black leaders, Mr. Adams’s election is both a vindication and cause to wonder what might have been.

Keith L.T. Wright, the chair of New York County Democrats, worked for Mr. Dinkins when he was the Manhattan borough president. For decades, Mr. Wright has harbored “extreme resentment” that Mr. Dinkins did not win a second term.

“Can you imagine if David had two terms? The gentrification problem would not be as serious,” Mr. Wright said. “If he had gotten his hands on the Board of Education we would not have the educational inequality problem we have right now.”

Maya Wiley — who would have been the city’s first Black female mayor, but came in third — has said that the diversity of the mayoral field, as well as Mr. Adams’s win, would have implications for shaping perceptions of a suitable leader.

“It shows that we have a pipeline of people of color, particularly Black people, who can run and contest effectively in our important executive offices,” she said. “I don’t think this is a one-time phenomenon. This is really about our democratic process opening up.”

PHOTO: Eric Adams celebrating essential workers at a parade in New York City last week. His win in the Democratic mayoral primary makes him a heavy favorite in the election. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KARSTEN MORAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A17)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2021

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[***Sanders and Buttigieg Close Out New Hampshire Pitching Different Visions***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YV5-D401-JBG3-63YP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2020 Tuesday 11:34 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1510 words

**Byline:** Sydney Ember and Nick Corasaniti

**Highlight:** For months, the two candidates had rarely faced off in direct attacks. But now, as the polling leaders, they are using the other as a foil to press their divergent cases for the presidency.

**Body**

For months, the two candidates had rarely faced off in direct attacks. But now, as the polling leaders, they are using the other as a foil to press their divergent cases for the presidency.

SALEM, N.H. — Bernie Sanders stands before his audience reciting his familiar pitch, railing against the elite and declaring that America is “the only major country not to guarantee health care for all.” He directs his message to ***working-class*** voters and young people, vowing to make it easier to join unions and to legalize marijuana across the country. He is holding concerts to show off his big crowds.

Pete Buttigieg calls out to independents and Republicans even though registered Republicans can’t participate in [*New Hampshire’s primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/new-hampshire-primary-02-11). He warns about the cost of “Medicare for all” and says it is a risk to be “alienating Americans at this critical moment.” He says pointedly that a “revolution” of the kind Mr. Sanders is pushing for is not what voters want.

On the last day before the New Hampshire primary, Mr. Sanders, the white-haired independent senator from Vermont, and Mr. Buttigieg, the youthful former mayor of South Bend., Ind., offered starkly different messages as they vied for dominance in the first primary state in the election calendar. With recent polls showing the two men in a close race after finishing in a near tie for the lead in Iowa last week, they are aggressively escalating their rivalry, using the other as a foil to press their divergent cases for the presidency. Both campaigns on Monday officially requested a recanvass of some Iowa caucus results.

It is a striking departure from their posture earlier in the race. For months, the two candidates eyed each other warily from opposite ends of the Democratic Party’s ideological and generational spectrum, obliquely competing for bigger crowds but rarely facing off in direct attacks. Yet amid signs that Joseph R. Biden Jr. and Elizabeth Warren may be slipping, Mr. Sanders and Mr. Buttigieg are now pushing their closing arguments in New Hampshire with messages that are clearly aimed at gaining an edge on each other even though they are largely still angling for different voters.

“Tomorrow you have a choice,” Mr. Sanders said at a morning stop in Manchester, N.H. “You have the option to vote for a campaign which will not only defeat Trump but which will transform this country.” And he sent an implied rebuke to Mr. Buttigieg by declaring that he had “changed the nature of the game” with respect to fund-raising.

At this point in the race, no two candidates better reflect the political and cultural divisions in the Democratic Party that have come to define the primary — and the party’s different visions for change. And their ascendancy to the top of the polls reflects the new contours of a race that has changed since Iowa, presenting voters here with a distinct directional choice.

Both men have seemed invigorated by the clash, eager to draw an explicit contrast with a candidate who represents what they are not.

Mr. Sanders, a 78-year-old democratic socialist, wants a political revolution that will lift up ***working-class*** Americans who know what it is like to struggle. He believes that he can mobilize people who do not usually participate in the political process, inspiring a movement that will extend across the country and overwhelm President Trump in the general election in November.

Like a professor imparting wisdom to his class, he speaks from a podium, his right arm in constant motion to underscore each point. He rarely takes questions from voters and almost never from reporters at his events.

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Mr. Buttigieg, who at 38 is less than half Mr. Sanders’s age, pitches himself as an agent not of political but generational change, offering a more moderate, traditional path to retaking the White House for the Democratic Party. At his upbeat rallies, he offers frequent overtures to independents and voters he calls “future former Republicans.”

During a flurry of stops on Monday, Mr. Sanders focused on highlighting the same message he has presented voters for years, portraying himself as a beacon of consistency who can fix a political and economic system he views as broken.

“What we are going to do is begin the process of transforming this country,” Mr. Sanders said at the rally in Rindge, inside a field house at Franklin Pierce University. “We are prepared, with your help, to take on the greed of Wall Street, the insurance companies, the drug companies, the fossil fuel industry, the military-industrial complex, the prison-industrial complex and the entire 1 percent.”

In contrast, Mr. Buttigieg emphasized the idea that he’d bring together people from across the political spectrum with a message of moderation. Mr. Sanders, he said, is offering unrealistic plans that can’t be paid for under the new taxes he’s proposing.

“How are we going to pay for it? Are we going to pay for it in the form of still further taxes or are we going to pay for it in the form of broken promises?” Mr. Buttigieg told supporters Monday at Plymouth State University in Plymouth. “We have to choose a responsible approach that can actually get big things done and answer the question of how we’re going to get from point A to point B.”

The two candidates have not just implicitly drawn contrasts; they have also attacked each other directly, especially in the last few days as the Iowa results and recent polls established them as the two front-runners. Over the weekend, Mr. Sanders laced into Mr. Buttigieg for raising money from billionaires, including “heads of large corporations, C.E.O.’s in the pharmaceutical industry, people from Wall Street.”

“If you think that people are going to get money from the C.E.O.’s of drug companies and are going to tackle the greed and corruption of the pharmaceutical industry, you’re mistaken,” Mr. Sanders told a capacity crowd in Hanover on Sunday. “If you think people are going to get money from financiers in the fossil fuel industry, and they’re going to be prepared to take them on and transform our energy system away from fossil fuel to energy efficiency and sustainable energy, you’ll be wrong. So, it does matter where money comes from.”

On Monday, he reprised his targeted jabs at Mr. Buttigieg, whom he called a “smart guy.”

“Pete seems to think that it doesn’t matter that, in his case, he raised lots and lots of money from at least 40 billionaires,” Mr. Sanders said at an afternoon event for supporters in Salem, at a coffee shop that featured a Sanders “presidential blend.”

On Saturday morning, before Mr. Sanders had begun his billionaire broadsides, Mr. Buttigieg was obliquely criticizing Mr. Sanders’s calls for a “revolution” as divisive. Though he never mentioned his rival by name, Mr. Buttigieg told a crowd of nearly 1,000 in Keene on Saturday morning that he disagreed with the notion that “if you’re not for a revolution” then “you don’t fit.”

On Monday morning in Plymouth, he stressed the point harder.

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The spat has delighted Mr. Sanders’s advisers, who have long harbored a distaste for Mr. Buttigieg. In addition to privately frowning on his inexperience, many continue to pronounce his last name incorrectly. Mr. Buttigieg’s aides, too, frequently join in a chorus of criticism of Mr. Sanders, [*pushing videos on Twitter on Monday*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/new-hampshire-primary-02-11) morning featuring Mr. Sanders dodging a question about the cost of his health care plan.

The two candidates have different bases, and it is unlikely they can siphon much support from each other at this stage: Mr. Sanders appeals to ***working-class*** voters and young people, while Mr. Buttigieg’s supporters tend to be older, whiter, more educated and wealthier.

“He’s very well-spoken but he doesn’t have any real experience, and I think he’s entirely beholden to the rich donor class,” Henry Buck, 30, said of Mr. Buttigieg after hearing Mr. Sanders speak at a stop in Nashua.

But their willingness to engage with each other is a sign that the race is intensifying: Both recognize they need to consolidate support from their respective wings of the party to win the nomination, as well as make the most compelling case that they can defeat Mr. Trump to attract those whose No. 1 priority is to remove the president from office.

Sydney Ember reported from Salem, and Nick Corasaniti from Hanover, N.H. Reid J. Epstein contributed reporting from Plymouth, N.H.

PHOTOS: Senator Bernie Sanders reminded voters in Manchester, N.H., on Monday of his emphasis on grass-roots fund-raising. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., said in Plymouth, N.H., that his emphasis was on getting “from point A to point B.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 6, 2020

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[***Sanders and Buttigieg Ramp Up Rivalry as They Prepare for a Primary Showdown***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y61-5P91-JBG3-651R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2020 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1469 words

**Byline:** By Sydney Ember and Nick Corasaniti

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/10/us/politics/bernie-sanders-pete-buttigieg-new-hampshire.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/10/us/politics/bernie-sanders-pete-buttigieg-new-hampshire.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Senator Bernie Sanders reminded voters in Manchester, N.H., on Monday of his emphasis on grass-roots fund-raising. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., said in Plymouth, N.H., that his emphasis was on getting ''from point A to point B.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Fareed Zakaria; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68CD-6CR1-JBG3-606S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 2, 2023 Friday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 14545 words

**Highlight:** The June 2, 2023, episode of “The Ezra Klein Show.”

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Fareed Zakaria. Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

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EZRA KLEIN: Russia invaded Ukraine 15 months ago. For a time following the invasion, it was all the world could talk about. It’s all the show could talk about. And now, as happens with a lot of stories huge at the outset, now the Russia-Ukraine war is treated as one news story — I mean, a major one — but one news story among many.

But it’s still more than that. It’s a kind of hyper story. There is the conflict itself, which matters enormously. And then there’s the way it’s reshaping global geopolitics and the relationships and balancing of the great powers. Early in the invasion, I had Fareed Zakaria on to talk about the way it felt at that moment like we were re-entering an age of great power conflict. So I wanted to have him back on now to discuss where the war is now, what the prospects and possibilities of its end might be, and how it’s changed the relationships and competition between America and Europe and China and India among others.

Zakaria, of course, is host of the CNN show, “Fareed Zakaria GPS.” He’s a columnist for The Washington Post and the author of many, many books, including, most recently “10 Lessons for a Post-Pandemic World.” As always, my email for our guest suggestions, thoughts, et cetera, [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Fareed Zakaria, welcome back to the show.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Always a pleasure, Ezra.

EZRA KLEIN: So we last talked on the show in March 2022. This was right after Russia invaded Ukraine. So give me your overview of where that conflict stands now.

FAREED ZAKARIA: I think I said this to you the last time, but it’s worth pointing out that what this represents is two things, the Russian invasion of Ukraine. First, it is the most frontal challenge to the post-Cold War world order created sort of serendipitously and partly by design by the United States largely after the collapse of communism, because, at that point, one of the things that was settled was the post-Soviet space.

And what Putin is, in a sense, doing is this is sort of buyer’s remorse on the part of the Russians. They were weak in the mid-1990s — I mean, amazingly weak. The Russian economy had contracted by 50 percent between 1990 and 1996. That’s more than it had contracted during World War II. So Russia, at a moment of weakness, felt it gave up too much and is trying to, in a sense, claw back a piece of that, regardless of the fact that it violates international law, treaties that it’s signed, norms that have been established since 1945.

Relatedly, it is a sort of last gasp of the last multinational empire in the world. If you think about it, this is not so uncommon in terms of buyer’s remorse, in terms of empires not wanting to let go of what they see as defining their core colonies that in a sense define who they are. The Ukrainians don’t want to be part of Russia’s empire. And if there’s one trend line you see over the last 100 years, it’s nationalism. It’s the power of people, once they have decided that they want to live free. That is an unstoppable force. And that is what Russia is against.

I think the rest of it is honestly commentary in the sense that there will be day-to-day ups and downs, and the Russians will do well one month, and the Ukrainians will do well one month. But I think the secular trajectory is that Ukraine is going to be an independent nation.

EZRA KLEIN: It felt to me — and tell me if you think this is wrong — that I was hearing more about possible shapes of end games, of resolutions, of settlements a year ago than I am now. There’s a strange sense in which people seem to have settled in to a long, protracted war of attrition. Do you think that’s right? Is that what you feel in the commentary?

FAREED ZAKARIA: Yeah. I think you’re exactly right. And I think it’s probably for a few reasons. One is what we have realized is that neither side is strong enough to completely prevail, dominate, in this very quickly, yet neither side is so weak that they feel the need to capitulate. And that creates this dynamic where, as you say, it feels like this is going to be a long struggle.

I think it’s also fair to say what we have been surprised by is the absolutely implacable nature of Ukrainian nationalism. That people have realized, look, the Ukrainians are not going to give up. They are not going to give up easily. They are not going to settle for something that doesn’t feel like they have essentially maintained their independence. They’ve surprised on the battlefield on the upside.

So you put all that together, and I think you have a scenario where everyone is waiting for this Ukrainian counteroffensive. My guess is, as many people are saying, it will surprise on the upside as they have in the past. But I suspect it will not win the war. And that therefore, by the end of this year, you may begin to see a return to some of those conversations.

But because the conflict has become so dark, the Russians have done things that are really extraordinary, bombing civilian facilities and water treatment plants and hospitals, it’s difficult to imagine how these two sides come to an agreement, a settlement, recognize each other. I think this ends more like the Korean War, which technically hasn’t ended. It just is the two sides stopped fighting. There is a demilitarized zone between the two armies, which is exactly why it’s called the DMZ. But there’s never a peace treaty signed.

EZRA KLEIN: One dimension of the war that you hear, again, less about now than you did a year ago is the grip the Western sanctions have on the Russian economy. And early on, there was a sense that these were unexpectedly punishing. They began — the sense was they were maybe mild. Then very quickly, as Ukraine showed a ferocious level of resistance, they ramped up. Now, we were choking them off in the financial sector. There is certainly a sense that Russia is managing to limp along without the kind of punishing depression that would really put a lot of pressure on Putin.

I have two questions on this, but the first is, why are the sanctions underperforming?

FAREED ZAKARIA: It’s a great question. And there are two reasons I think. The first is we designed the sanctions so that Russia could continue to export energy. Russia could continue to sell oil and natural gas and also sells a lot of coal. And the reason is if Russian oil, natural gas and coal were completely shut out of the world markets, it would trigger a global recession. Oil would go to $200 a barrel, because all that Russian supply taken out of the market would mean that demand would vastly exceed supply. You would suddenly have huge price spikes. Much of the developed world would go into a recession, maybe even worse.

So we designed the sanctions to sort of force the Russians to have to sell at a discount, bid less than they could make. So they’re getting a lot of revenue. Russia is a huge exporter of energy, perhaps the world’s largest depending on how you count it. So that’s one part of it, which is an inevitable reality about Russia’s role in the world economy and in the energy economy.

The second — and I think this is the more unusual one — is there’s a big world economy out there now. We, I think, still have in our heads the idea that if the United States and Europe and Japan cut you off from the world economy, you’re done. But it turns out, about 50 percent of the world economy is now the so-called emerging markets. And they’re not abiding by the sanctions.

So the reports I’m getting from Russia that, for example, Starbucks has left, as did a thousand Western companies. But if you go to Russia and you go to the corner store where Starbucks was, there’s a coffee shop there. It’s called Star Coffee. It’s owned by Russians; they sell coffee for about the same price. I don’t know if it says good or bad. But many of those abandoned Western businesses have been taken over by Turkish businesses, Chinese businesses, Russian-owned businesses. So there’s a whole rest of the world economy out there that is still playing with Russia.

In fact, there’s some concern that the Russians are essentially evading the sanctions by importing things through Turkey, for example. The Turks buy something from the West. The Russians buy that same thing from Turkey. How do you prevent that?

All that said, the piece that has been very effective is the freezing of the central bank reserves and the denial of technology. It is absolutely clear that Russia is crippled by the lack of access to Western technology at the very high end, particularly of the digital economy, high-end computer chips, for example. It is a remarkably narrow funnel. You’re basically getting the stuff from three or four companies that do chip design, one company that does chip manufacturing, A.S.M.L. in Holland. And all those are essentially in the West-plus. What I call the West-plus, meaning the West plus Japan, South Korea, Singapore.

EZRA KLEIN: And so the hope, I think, in the West, at a certain point, was that these sanctions were going to be tight enough that Russia, if it couldn’t win quickly, it would not want to hold on slowly. Again, my sense is that’s not coming true. The sanctions are tough on them. They’re degrading their military, which is I think often an undernoticed important dimension of the sanctions. But the idea that they’re going to constrict enough to force Russia into settlement, because it can’t have this happen to them for three or four or five years, I don’t get the sense people are still optimistic about that.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Yeah. I think that this is one of the biggest flaws in the way we conduct international affairs ever since the end of the Cold War, which is we want to do something. We either don’t want to make the commitment, or we can’t make the commitment, or it’s too expensive or whatever to make the commitment to do something very dramatic, like military action. And so we do sanctions.

And they very rarely work in the sense that the regime in question changes its policy. In some cases, the sanctions are almost designed, even if not explicitly, to change the regime. And that certainly doesn’t happen.

We need to focus a little bit more on that central conundrum, which is sanctions tend to empower the regime in place.

Look at what the Iran sanctions have done. They have empowered the most conservative elements of Iran, the Revolutionary Guard, because they’re the guys that do all the smuggling. They’re the guys that have now control the key choke points which allow selective foreign goods in through medical exemptions or educational exemptions or whatever it is. It’s all the state. So you, in a sense, empower the state, and you disempower society, which are the broad forces that would be empowered by commerce, contact, capitalism.

And that dilemma proves to be very powerful. Look, there’s a famous story of Fidel Castro saying, I think, bizarrely to Sean Penn that if the Americans were to take the sanctions off, he would clamor for their reinstatement. The implication being the sanctions is what gives him a lot of his power and legitimacy that he’s standing up to the Americans.

Look at Venezuela. The sanctions there haven’t worked. Look at Iran, they haven’t worked. So we’re trying it with Russia. I don’t — I actually support the sanctions in Russia, because they do put pressure on the regime. But you’re not going to change Putin’s calculus. The only thing that can change Putin’s calculus is defeat on the battlefield.

And so in my mind, more important than the sanctions are give the Ukrainians all the weapons they need, give them all the training they need, do it fast and allow them to win on the battlefield, because, historically, that’s when countries do change course, when they’re bleeding soldiers and money on the battlefield.

EZRA KLEIN: So you predicted where I was going to go — there’s what we don’t give Russia and what we do give Ukraine. And we’ve drawn all kinds of lines and lines that have been moving about what we will and won’t give Ukraine in terms of armaments. They want more advanced technology, better fighter jets, et cetera. And we have consistently given them some of what they want and not all of what they want.

How would you describe the lines we’ve drawn? Why we drew them there, and whether drawing them there was wise?

FAREED ZAKARIA: So the administration is juggling something difficult. And I think they’re handling it pretty well, which is, you’re trying to do two things. You’re trying to support the Ukrainians, make sure that they have a tactical and strategic advantage as much as possible, make sure they have a kind of almost inexhaustible supply of things like ammunition and money. And the United States has, by far, been the most generous on both.

But at the same time, you’re trying not to trigger a conflict between Russia and NATO, between Russia, therefore, and the United States. This was a line we tried to tread very carefully during the Cold War. That’s why there were so many proxy wars in Central America and Southeast Asia, because the superpowers did not want to engage directly for fear that could lead to an inevitable nuclear escalation.

I think that’s a legitimate concern. I think the Biden people are thinking through that so seriously. And so some of the lines are they’re telling the Ukrainians, please do not use American weapons or use NATO weapons to attack Russia itself, attack Russian forces in Ukraine so that you are effectively repelling the invasion rather than invading Russia yourself. Obviously, the line is not perfect, but I think that’s a very sensible line.

Separately, there’s the issue of how much can the Ukrainian army absorb. If you talk to people in Washington, and these are people who I think are trying to do the right, thing they argue, look, there’s a limit to how fast the Ukrainians can learn to use the most sophisticated American weaponry, such as our advanced fighter jets, such as our best tank. And it does make some sense to make sure that those weapons are going to be used effectively before you give them.

So on the whole, I am not one of those people who thinks the Biden administration has been too slow, too little, too late. They’re trying to do it in a serious responsible way. Could it be 10 percent, 15 percent faster? Maybe, I don’t know. But I think in general they’re trying to balance the situation and have been doing it pretty well.

EZRA KLEIN: When I listen to what Ukrainian political leaders and world leaders are saying, though, the absolutely consistent, never-ending message is that they are not getting enough. So I take it that Washington says they’re doing plenty, but it’s also true that we’ve been changing what we’re giving them. And I don’t think that’s all about absorption capability. I mean, some of it we just thought or said — whether we thought it or not, I don’t know — that if we gave them this kind of weapon, Russia would take that as an escalation that might lead to a different kind of reprisal or a different kind of calculation from Putin.

And the argument I’ve heard about this is that not giving Ukraine the kind of advanced weaponry that could help them really win the war is not actually a way of deterring Putin. This idea that we’re going to balance this out when Russia actually has done the cross-border incursion and Russia actually does still have more manpower than Ukraine, that we are making a mistake in the calculus here, that Putin has already escalated, that he is already terrified of defeat. But allowing him to stay in this middle ground is allowing an extended equilibrium that just creates more constant danger as opposed to an actual resolution.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Look, if I were a Ukrainians I would be arguing, making exactly that case. And I would argue forcefully for more weapons sooner, as Winston Churchill argued passionately that the United States was not giving enough weaponry to Britain in ’41 even. But the U.S. is a global power. This is not the only area it’s engaged in. It has to make sure that it has these broader strategic interests in mind.

I don’t get the sense that, as I say, they could — maybe there could have been some more sped-up version of what they’re doing. But I do think that concern about how far you go in terms of an outright invasion of Russia by a NATO-assisted force is a legitimate concern. I think that the Russians have not actually done as much as they could have done.

I mean, Russia has the largest nuclear arsenal in the world. It has a huge army. It has the capacity to do much more damage in Ukraine proper. Most of the damage they’ve done has been in the parts of Ukraine that they believe should be incorporated into Russia — the Donbas — and that band of Ukraine. They could unleash much more havoc on Ukraine itself. Now, they would pay a huge price. But I don’t think it’s fair to say that the Russians have done everything they can. In fact, that’s what scares me. I think the Russians could go up this escalation chain.

EZRA KLEIN: There is a sense early in the war that this was leading to, not just a newly united West, but in particular a United Europe led by a more muscular Germany. There’s a lot of excitement that Germany was not just funding Ukraine, but also saying it was going to spend a lot more on its own defense. Has that vision of a stronger Europe led by a more assertive Germany panned out?

FAREED ZAKARIA: Absolutely. I think that the thing that has always kept NATO vital is the sense of a real threat. At the end of the day, alliances cannot operate in a vacuum. And after the Cold War, there really was this sense of, well, you know what was NATO about? What was the West about? The West has always existed as a civilizational entity. It’s always existed in cultural terms. But in political strategic terms, the West really only came together as a meaningful concept in response to a threatening East, the Communist world, particularly the Soviet Union.

When that went away, the West as a strategic idea did lose a lot of its sense. And you could feel that late NATO flailing around, trying to figure out where to what to do. This has revived the core purpose of the West as a strategic concept. And I think you see it most importantly in this transformation of Germany.

The Germans, for obvious historical reasons, have been very reluctant to have a significant defense posture and even to speak about defense issues and things like that in a larger sense. Merkel was, for example, the most remarkable figure in this regard. She was clearly the most powerful figure in Europe. But she was very hesitant to put herself out there as the leader of Europe, the leader of the world.

When Time magazine chose her as their person of the year, she not only refused to give them an interview. She wouldn’t even sit for a photograph. And I remember asking — I think it was Nancy Gibbs, the editor of Time at the time — what was the last person who refused to give you a sit-down for a portrait when they were named person of the year? And she said, well, it was 1979, Ayatollah Khomeini.

So the Germans were very reluctant to be seen as these big actors on the world stage. And that’s changed. I think one of the things that cripples that united European front is that Britain is no longer part of the European Union. But otherwise, I do think the West has come together. And the United States has become — there’s kind of a de facto U.S. leadership that is much less contested than it was. Macron made waves when he talked about where Europe should go on China. But right now, the pressing issue is Russia. And on that, the Europeans are entirely united and happy to have the United States lead the alliance.

EZRA KLEIN: We’ll talk about the U.S. and Ukraine, because you’re having more internal division over U.S. support for Ukraine now. Ron DeSantis called it a, quote, “territorial dispute,” which is a kind of language that is a very clear signaling about his take there. There is a recent economist YouGov poll that found a plurality of Republicans now oppose funding Ukraine. What do you make of the Republican Party’s division and it sometimes feels like mounting turn against U.S. support for Ukraine?

FAREED ZAKARIA: I’m very worried about it. And I think that if you were to look at it in historical terms, what is happening is the Republican Party is returning to its more traditional position on foreign policy, which has been isolation. The Republican Party was the party of isolationism in the ’20s and the ’30s. And this was the most bitter debate that took place in America in the last hundred years on foreign policy was not Vietnam. It was entry into World War II. And the Republicans were staunchly on the side of isolationism then.

So that’s just 60 or 70 years ago. The Republican Party is returning to those roots. Trump, as often, in this case, is the kind of weird, intuitive guy who figured out where the base was. DeSantis is trying to follow it. If you look at the people who still support an internationalist foreign policy, my fear is many of them are kind of holdovers from a different world — the Lindsey Grahams of the world.

But if you look at the young hotheads, where the energy and action of the party is, unfortunately, it looks like a very isolationist party. And I think that over time — we’ll see how Ukraine works out, because commitments have already been made, and that Mitch McConnell matters a lot, and people like that matter a lot. But over time, the Republican Party is becoming the party of isolation, which means that having the United States fully engaged in the world, which I believe is profoundly important for the United States and for the world, is going to become a very partisan issue in a way that it has not been since 1942.

EZRA KLEIN: How is China’s attitude towards, and role in, the war in Ukraine changed?

FAREED ZAKARIA: It’s very difficult to tell to be honest. People who claim to be able to read what is going on in the minds of five people in Beijing and really one are, I think, exaggerating. But it does appear that they started out with a much more comfortable sense that Russia was an ally. They were going to support Russia. Russia was a big power. It would be able to do whatever it wanted.

The Chinese have a very realpolitik conception of international affairs. There was this one moment where Chinese ambassador had an ASEAN meeting, I think it was, let slip something that you’re not supposed to say. But at one point, when he was being — there was pushback on something the Chinese wanted, he said, look, strong countries, big countries are meant to tell little countries what to do. That’s the way the world works. And then he apologized for it and took it back.

But I think that’s a very revealing statement. The way the Chinese view it, Russia is a big, strong country. There’s this little country on its border, Ukraine. Of course, Ukraine has to be subservient to Russia. And that’s the natural order of things. And that will be established.

I think they’ve come to realize that they underestimated the degree to which the Ukrainians would oppose. They underestimated the degree to which the West would effectively unite and oppose the war. And so what you notice is that they are — first of all, they were not as many profuse statements of love and affiliation. Xi Jinping does not seem to be a very effusive and emotional man, but he has often referred to Putin as something like my dear friend, my very best friend or versions — variations of that.

EZRA KLEIN: And they talk about staying up all night talking when they’re together, it’s very —

FAREED ZAKARIA: Exactly. It’s very bro-like.

EZRA KLEIN: Yes.

FAREED ZAKARIA: And from two people who do not seem — particularly, Xi, who seems this very formal, measured guy.

EZRA KLEIN: Just imagine them in their jammies.

FAREED ZAKARIA: [LAUGHS] And by the way, I think that’s some key to understanding the alliance is a personal one. It’s not just strategy, because the Russians and Chinese have often had difficulties. But these two people are united in two important things. They believe that when regimes lose faith in themselves, as Gorbachev lost faith in the Communist regime, that that is the moment when you crack and crumble. And the second is that the U.S.-led global order must be diminished, eroded, attacked. And so that keeps them very strongly together.

But the Chinese are saying less of that kind of stuff. There are these overtures to Ukraine, which I think are mostly P.R. But the fact that they felt like they had to do some P.R. tells you that they feel like plan A was not working. So I think just as Russia went to a plan B after not being able to conquer Kyiv, I think the Chinese are on a plan B. And the plan B Now is to try to appear to the real audience, which is the global South, that they are not quite in the same category as Russia. They are the neutral power. They keep making the point that they are actually neutral on this war.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to put a pin on that point that the real audience there is a global South, because I want to talk at some point about the nonaligned nations here. But this was a way in which Xi’s meeting with Zelensky struck me at least as important, that the fear that people have had for a long time is that China would become to Russia what America and Europe are to Ukraine.

And China boasting a little bit on the world stage, that they’re now talking to both parties, seem to make them twisting into a much more pro-Russian stance a lot less likely, that in terms of how they want to be seen. They want to be seen as a broker, not as the weaponry supplier for Putin.

FAREED ZAKARIA: I think it’s a slight shift. They are still pretty committed to the Russians. The man they sent as the negotiator between Russia and Ukraine was the former Chinese ambassador to Russia, who was well-known to be a deeply pro-Russian diplomat. They’ve never even simply acknowledged that what Russia has done has been to violate Ukraine’s sovereignty in a completely illegitimate manner, which is kind of so strikes me as rule number one in all of this.

But I think you’re right; it’s an important shift. And part of it is about this issue of trying to come across to the Brazils, the South Africas, the Indonesias of the world, as less culpable as the Russians are.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: My read is that tensions between U.S. and China are substantially higher than they were a year ago. That they’re even higher now than they were under Trump, where the rhetoric was high, but there’s always a feeling that it wasn’t being taken quite that seriously. But that now, something has actually shifted in the firmament. And there’s a much deeper sense on both sides that we are in a conflict, even if the boundaries of that conflict are not well-defined. Is that how you read it?

FAREED ZAKARIA: Yeah. I think that’s exactly right. And I think it’s for two reasons. One, the Chinese had made a bet that Trump was an aberration, that he represented, as with so many things, a kind of strange personalistic, populist moment. And that when Biden came into power, you have a kind of return to essentially the Obama-Bush policy, which was broadly consistent.

I mean, U.S. policy toward China was remarkably bipartisan from 1972 all the way up, really, to Trump. It had been fairly consistent. But it turned out not to be true that Biden represented a version of the Trump policy better executed in many ways and more effective. And particularly, the technology bans have really come to bite.

So the second part is that this stuff is exacting a price. I think that the Biden people have made several crucial decisions that are correct, particularly on the technology front. But they have also needlessly provoked the Chinese in ways that, I think, are largely an expression of the domestic politics of the moment.

So take for example, today’s news, the Chinese refused to meet at the highest level on a military to military basis, chairman of the — I think the Secretary of Defense with their equivalent. And the Americans seem chagrined about it. Now, the Chinese guy who they were trying to meet with is under sanctions from the United States — personally under sanctions from the United States. What did they expect? You couldn’t get a third world country to agree on those terms. And they’re asking China, which thinks of itself as, in some ways, a peer of the United States. So there’s that disconnect that is still, I think, unfortunately, part of the U.S.-China relationship, as I say, needlessly, making things more dangerous.

But some of the core policies, particularly around technology or on building alliances with Asia, the Biden people have done the right thing. They’ve done it very effectively. And that’s what’s, I think, unnerved the Chinese.

EZRA KLEIN: One of Speaker McCarthy’s early moves when he took the gavel was to create this House Select Committee on China. And it was one of the things he did that Democrats loved and Democrats wanted to be on the committee. And you watched the first hearing of that. Tell me how you understood the tone, the message, what was different between the Democrats and Republicans and what wasn’t. How would you describe that hearing?

FAREED ZAKARIA: Overall, what it made me realize is we all spend our time talking about how terrible it is that there is no bipartisanship in Washington. And I watched it and thought, oh, my God, this is what happens when you have bipartisanship in Washington. You have unthinking groupthink. You have a kind of herd mentality. And that’s what really was going on with this. It became a competition of who could bash China more. It became largely devoted to a kind of existential argument about really why the Chinese Communist Party should be overthrown. That was the subtext of the entire hearing.

And what I worry about it is when we get into those kind of moments in American history, where, first of all, we think the enemy is 10 feet tall, we think we are existentially threatened, we do very bad things. I mean, think of the period in the ’50s when we thought this about the Soviet Union and McCarthyism and the paranoia about the missile gap and all those kind of impulses that led us into Vietnam, that led the C.I.A. to try to overthrow dozens of regimes around the world, mostly unsuccessfully, but with huge lasting impact in terms of how those countries perceive the United States. One of the most tragic failures of American foreign policy — because all those countries thought of America as very different from the Europeans as being anti-colonial. And very quickly by the late 1960s, the United States was actually in many ways worse, because we had been intervening so much in these places.

Think about after 9/11, the run-up to the Iraq War, the war itself. We lose the capacity to think. We lose the capacity to assess. And so one of the things that I’ve been trying to articulate is the idea we need to rightsize the Chinese threat. The United States is still way more powerful than China. We are the dominant power in the international system. It’s a very complicated international system, because we can’t exercise influence like we used to be able to for all kinds of reasons we can get into.

But China is just not this overwhelming threat to us. If we can rightsize it, if we can act with a certain degree of confidence and calm, and surety we can put together a building blocks that deter China, give it the opportunity if it wants to integrate into the world, preserve our interests. We need to run fast. We don’t need to run scared.

EZRA KLEIN: It felt to me a couple of months ago that there was a sense in the Biden administration they’d gone a little bit too far. And so Blinken was going to go to China.

And then this balloon, this Chinese balloon floats across the U.S.

And it’s clear at the beginning the Biden administration doesn’t think this is a very big deal. And then the chorus of pressure from Republicans starts up. And every news network is following the balloon on live balloon cam.

Tell me now with a few months of distance, first, what you think or what the people you talk to think happened with that balloon. What was it? And why did it end up floating in this very obvious public way across U.S. territory? And then what do you think the consequences of that episode have been?

FAREED ZAKARIA: The best I can put together is it was some kind of a — let’s put it this way, a dual-use balloon. It was a meteorological balloon that also had some espionage capacity. It did seem to veer off course. I think it is one of several balloons that has been sent around various places around the world. And the Biden administration didn’t think it was as big a deal, because, look, the Chinese have hundreds of spy satellites up in the air that are orbiting the Earth 24/7, have taken hundreds of thousands of photographs of every sensitive sites in the United States.

EZRA KLEIN: They’re in a lot of our computers.

FAREED ZAKARIA: They’re in a lot of our computers. There is some marginal information you can get from a low-flying balloon, but from everything I can gather, not that much. And of course, it’s important to always remember, we do this much more than they do it. So we’ve got all this capacity. And so nations spy on each other. And so they were trying to keep it, as you say, they were not as perturbed about it.

And then the drumbeat begins. And then it turns it. And maybe this is a wonderful example of modern politics, where, because it’s visual, because you can see it, because CNN can track it —

EZRA KLEIN: It was so bad that it was so visual. It was like a low-speed car chase. It was like the O.J. Simpson chase of espionage problems.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Exactly. And every minute it’s up there, people are like, why is he not doing something? And so almost to compensate for that, the Americans shoot down three other balloons, which as far as we can tell, what, $20 weather balloons and some meteorological club had put up in the air. I don’t think they got any compensation from the U.S. government. And by the way, we used — I believe there were $300,000 sidewinder missiles to hit these $20 balloons.

And if you recall, we were going to be shown all the espionage capacities of the Chinese with the first one that was taken down. I’m still waiting. And from what I’m told, there’s not a lot to show, that, yes, it was probably dual-use. But I thought we were going to be shown something that made it absolutely clear what the Chinese were doing. None of that happened.

EZRA KLEIN: So in the aftermath of that, the U.S. cancels Blinken’s trip. To my knowledge, it has not been reset. As you said, we were having trouble having the kinds of high-level meetings we would like to have with the Chinese despite other escalatory positions on both sides. It seemed to me, and other people who know more about this have said to me, that the balloon just came at a terrible time. That there was a moment of attempted thaw. And there have been some things after that, a speech by Janet Yellen and others.

But that to the extent, there was this moment of trying to retract the relationship. The balloon was this escalation on both ends. It hardened the politics on both sides. And it has just made whatever was being attempted there a lot harder. Do you think that’s right that there was a real consequence to that? Or did that in the scheme of things not really matter?

FAREED ZAKARIA: What it revealed was that the relationship was very fragile. And that a small thing could take it off course. I think that there would have been another balloon. In other words, something like this would have come up. If the relationship was as fragile as it seems to be, something or the other would have derailed it.

EZRA KLEIN: We crashed a spy plane in China in 2001.

FAREED ZAKARIA: The E.P. — whatever it was called — incident with the plane crash in Hainan Island, I think it took 11 days to resolve. Colin Powell was Secretary of State, and he issued an apology. It was famously translated into different ways, where you could translate it to mean regret, you could translate it to mean apology. It’s inconceivable today that we would be able to resolve something like that. It’s inconceivable that Blinken could get away with issuing an apology or regret to the Chinese. So that’s what worries me about where we are with U.S.-China relations.

Look, we are going to be competitive. We’re going to be competitive in the economic realm. We’re going to be competitive in the geopolitical realm. But we want to find a way to have a working relationship with the country that is the second most powerful country in the world, which is, by the way, our third largest trading partner. We trade $700 billion of goods with China every year.

We want to have a good working relationship, so that when moments like this happen, there is a mechanism to resolve them. There is a path to resolve them. There’s channels of communication open. So that things don’t happen that are accidental. Things don’t happen that push you into a corner where you can’t get out. And that’s my fear on both sides. There is so much nationalism now built up that it’s difficult to imagine how you can, quote unquote, “make a concession to China.” That’s why Biden has not removed the tariffs on China.

The Chinese have politics, too. And there’s a reality to how much they can also do, even though it’s a dictatorship. The dictators stay in power partly by judging how far they can move things. So that places us in a very bad situation if, as you say, something like that spy plane incident were to happen again.

EZRA KLEIN: So another issue that’s pretty live right now in terms of our relationship with China is TikTok. And I have really strong opinions on this one but rather put my own spin on the ball. The governor of Montana is trying to ban TikTok outright, and not because social media is bad, but because, in his view, China is bad. And TikTok could be a tool of espionage, of influence, particularly, of other kinds of problems. What do you think of banning TikTok?

FAREED ZAKARIA: So as a father of two sort of teenage girls, I delighted the prospect of TikTok being banned, because I have no doubt in my mind that TikTok is harmful. Not TikTok particularly, but social media in general is harmful for teenagers. I believe all that research that I have now studied with some degree of seriousness, that Jonathan Haidt and others have put out. And TikTok is particularly bad because it’s particularly good. By which, I mean it’s particularly effective, in fact, stunningly effective.

But I am very troubled by the argument that it should be banned in general, and that it should be banned because it’s Chinese, because it fundamentally gives up on the idea of the United States as a free society. Let’s say that the Chinese are using TikTok to subtly pass information to us that is anti-American. Do we not want to live in a country where the Chinese government can publish pamphlets that tell us your system of government sucks, ours is much better? We’ve been getting that kind of information since the founding of the Republic.

The idea that we should ban information that is being produced by whomever and whatever form that tells you that America is a bad place, that other countries are better, that our system is right, it strikes me as giving up on the idea of America. So that’s the argument that TikTok is sort of subtly spreading Chinese propaganda. Fine, let them. I mean, we have to be a strong enough country to withstand it.

Secondly, that they’re eavesdropping. This is one of those arguments that the more you push, the more you try to kind of understand what it means, it sort of falls apart. All these companies, social media companies collect data. They all sell them to third parties. The Chinese government would not need to create a company then have the luck of it being super successful, and then use that company to extract data. You could just buy it from Facebook. You could buy it from Google. You could buy it from Amazon. For all we know, they are doing that.

And by the way, as you say, there is a very extensive Chinese cyberspying operation already underway. What they would gain from using TikTok to determine what dance videos teenage girls like? I don’t want to trivialize it, but my point is whatever real information they could gain about people’s preferences, their voting behavior, they can get all that anyway.

* Well let me take the other side of it, particularly on the attentional issue. So we don&#39;t tend to let governments we have a hostile antagonistic relationship with control critical infrastructure, different kinds. We wouldn&#39;t let a country we were not in good relationship with hold a bunch of electrical utilities. We wouldn&#39;t let them run nuclear security. We didn&#39;t like the Soviet Union own television stations here.

To me, part of the argument that makes me friendlier to banning TikTok is that this is attentional infrastructure. And attention is critical. I take your point on the pamphlet. And I would have no problem with the Chinese government placing op eds, running its own newspaper, on some level, publishing a book that was available at bookstores, or you could buy on Amazon. But because we don’t understand how the TikTok algorithm works, we don’t know what people are seeing.

And I don’t think it’s as easy or as narrow in a way as what you would get on there is propaganda meant to make the Chinese government look better. To your point about how Putin understands meddling in other countries to be valuable to him, he’s not meddling in a way to make us like Russia. He’s meddling in a way to take moments of chaos and division and try to make them profound and deep enough to weaken America. So you imagine something like a more contested version of the 2020 election.

Think the 2000 election and the 2020 era, when we have much more polarized parties. And now, on TikTok somebody turns up the dial on just rampant conspiracy theorizing and things that get Americans ever more at each other’s throats. And we don’t even really know that it’s happening. It’s just a kind of attentional dark matter that is making us hate each other more or is making Americans turn towards Trump again or whatever it might be.

The thing that worries me about it is because we can’t track what is happening on it, it could be used for much more sophisticated kinds of attentional manipulation than simply the Chinese government has dropped a bunch of flyers and say, from the Chinese government, China is great.

FAREED ZAKARIA: I think that the problem with that argument is it feels like we are in this digital world, where we can’t track any of this stuff anymore, just that’s the nature of it. And that’s even before you get to A.I. It’s just too diverse. It’s too disaggregated. It’s — the fundamental shift that’s taking place in information is that you were going from a one-to-many broadcasting system to a many-to-many network system.

And when you have a many-to-many network system, there is no central node. It’s all happening at a disaggregated distributed level where the algorithm is noticing what you like and giving you more of that, and noticing what I like and giving me more of that. So it’s very difficult to imagine how you would control any such digital products. So if you have a problem with TikTok in that sense, what comes next? Do we ban Chinese cars, because Chinese cars after our cars are essentially now digital products. They are software on wheels. And the cars know where you go. And maybe there could be listening in on you.

So there is that sci-fi prospect that you can raise about almost anything. And so are we then talking about a complete decoupling of the U.S. and Chinese economies? And are we just comfortable with doing or just with China? Are there other countries wouldn’t want to involve?

And I do come back to the fundamental question, which is, are we not comfortable with information from whatever source in whatever form that criticizes us, that enrages us, that does whatever it does that information is always done?

It feels to me like the distinction you’re making between books and pamphlets on the one side and TikTok on the other is you’re saying, they can do this stuff as long as I don’t think it’s very efficient. If it’s very effective, I’m against it. But if it’s ineffective and inefficient by using books and pamphlets, it’s OK.

EZRA KLEIN: I kind of think that is a distinction that I’m making. [LAUGHS]

FAREED ZAKARIA: That’s not a very philosophical distinction. How do you — So you can imagine people saying like, we’re going to allow China to do whatever we want until it gets very good at it. And then — and by the way, this is exactly what the Chinese think. The Chinese think that the United States was perfectly happy to have China integrated into the world economy until they started creating companies like Huawei, which were super good and actually had better 5G technology than we did. And then we suddenly said, oh, by the way, none of the old rules apply.

EZRA KLEIN: But I think there is an argument for this. And in a way, weirdly, China doesn’t just think it about us, but they think it for themselves. One thing that is interesting about the TikTok example is it isn’t like China lets Facebook operate in the country. It isn’t like you can have unfettered access to Twitter or LinkedIn or really any kind of major American media or digital media, a Google search. So they’ve developed their functionally almost own internet with its own mediating players. And there are moments of overlap. But it doesn’t look using the internet in China like using it in America.

And precisely, because they think that would be dangerous for them. And I don’t think you have to be out and out an authoritarian government to think that there are dangers with having the attentional structure of your society controlled by companies that can easily be influenced, heavily influenced, by the government you’re in a very antagonistic relationship with.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Well, but think about what you’re saying. You are looking admiringly and longingly at the Chinese Communist Party’s totalitarian control of information and saying, gee, I wish we could have more of that in the United States.

EZRA KLEIN: No. But I’m saying I think they might have or of a point, I think the idea that China can’t be right about anything.

FAREED ZAKARIA: But it feels to me like this is pretty fundamental, this question of whether you believe in free flows of information. Look, I think the 15 percent to 20 percent that you’re describing is actually very well taken care of by the Europeans. The Europeans have much stronger regulation on the internet than we do, particularly on social media. And what they’ve been trying to do is, first of all, all the data has to be housed in country, all the data has to be monitored. Google operates under those constraints in Europe, for example.

I think that the kind of compromise that ironically the Trump administration was trying to reach with TikTok made a lot of sense. Yes, of course, the information should all be housed in the U.S. It should all be monitored. It should not be possible for there to be some kind of secret manipulation of it. Technologists who I’ve talked to say that that is essentially what the European regulations achieve. And you could achieve something quite similar.

But I just feel very reluctant to give up on the idea of freedom in this very core space. I don’t want the response of the United States to China’s creation of its own hermetically sealed internet to be that we create a hermetically sealed internet. I have always had the view that the United States has succeeded in part because we air our dirty laundry in public. We allow ourselves to see everything and deal with all the messy dysfunctional realities that that produces. And out of that comes an ability to move forward much better than societies that don’t talk about these problems that in some way repress, suppress them. It sometimes feels like a sewer. But what you’re seeing is real. It’s there. You can’t pretend it doesn’t exist.

EZRA KLEIN: So now, let me flip this, because I’ve been taking the hawk position for a bit. I’ve in many ways felt much more comfortable with the idea that the U.S. should have curbs on the level of Chinese technological penetration of the U.S. than that the U.S. should curb China’s technological advancement itself. When I think of, not just provocation, but the level of enmity suggested by a decision to say, hey, we’re not going to have TikTok here, rightly or wrongly. That’s one level. To say, we are going to try to hold you back from the technological frontiers of, say, semiconductors, which is what we have said now.

Even if that is a good move — and I think you suggested earlier you support it, and I have very mixed feelings, and I’m not saying I don’t support it — that has struck me as a genuine phase shift of the relationship and as something where when you imagine how China is looking at us and how they will treat us and understand our relationship to their rise that it really does make good on, I think, every fear they have had, that we are going to try to stop them from becoming the preeminent or even a preeminent world superpower. And to say we’re going to try to hold you back is very different than saying we’re going to try to protect ourselves.

FAREED ZAKARIA: So I actually think that this one is entirely justified, because this is a case where what the United States is concerned about is that the Chinese military, which is, at the end of the day, a competitive military particularly in the South China Seas and around Taiwan, a competitive adversary, is going to acquire technologies that allow it to prevail to enhance its military capacity. And we have always been very sensitive about the idea of militaries that we were not comfortable with acquiring super-advanced capabilities.

There are still in place today sanctions that do not allow the United States to transfer certain technologies to India, because India was not a signatory to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, partly as a result of Cold War stuff, where the U.S. was pro-Pakistan and anti-India. So it’s not such a leap to say that you don’t want China to have this most advanced capacity.

And I think what the administration has done has been to try to use a surgeon’s scalpel to really take the high end of it and cordon that off. Remember, the semiconductor chips that are being denied to China, I think, constitute less than 5 percent of the market. They may actually be even less than 3 percent of the market. So 95 percent, 98 percent of the market is open. It’s where — we buy a lot of Chinese chips. The stuff that goes into washing machines and all that is much of it is Chinese, much of the assembly of computers is.

But what we are saying is that the very high-end, the stuff that really could make a decisive difference on the battlefield, we’re not comfortable with you having it. It is true that the ancillary effect is that it also does slow down Chinese growth.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah. It isn’t just battlefield. I mean, these are the chips that power A.I. They’re the chips that power cloud computing. I mean, they’re not just dual-use in the way that the weather balloon, the Chinese balloon is dual-use. I mean, they really are used for non-military.

FAREED ZAKARIA: But also military.

EZRA KLEIN: But also in military, yes.

FAREED ZAKARIA: So the way I would put it is the goal is military. The side effect is — and by the way, they will still be able to do a lot of this stuff, I mean, because you can put chips together. If you don’t have a 5-nanometer chip, you can put 2/10 together. And you’re using more computing power. You’re using more energy. It’s a much more inefficient process. So it’s slowing them down. It’s not killing the Chinese industry as far as I can tell. But I think that’s entirely justifiable.

The one that was more difficult for me, honestly, was Huawei. The thing, I think, we didn’t realize that the degree to which trying to ban Huawei became for them a sign that we were trying to keep them down. Because Huawei was, in many ways, one of the great institutions, a great pride in China. It was a private company that had made it on its own, was outcompeting every Western company at the very high-end technology. I’m not saying we shouldn’t have done it. I’m just saying that for the Chinese, that became a sign of exactly what you’re saying, that this is not a case where the West wants to compete with us. They want to cripple us, so that we can’t grow.

EZRA KLEIN: When we talked last time, you said that a major strategic objective for America should be trying to split China and Russia. In the years since, have we been even trying to do that in your view?

FAREED ZAKARIA: No. And I still think it’s a mistake. I think that could much more easily isolate Russia by trying to improve communications with China. But we do it in this way, as I say, with one arm tied behind the back, where we say we’d like to meet with your top defense official — oh, by the way, he’s under sanctions. And how can you have a serious working relationship with the country under those conditions?

That’s where I feel like we have lost the space to maneuver. I mean, this is part of a broader issue, which is, I think, we don’t think a lot about how the world looks like to other countries, how the Chinese would take a response like that. This is one of the reasons why we’re constantly surprised by the Indians. Take for example something like global warming. We keep saying what the Chinese are not doing anything on global warming, because they are horrible anti-American dictators.

Well, the Indians, who are the pro-American democrats, their position on global warming is essentially the same. It’s as hard to get them to do anything. And in fact, the Indians are very ornery on all kinds of things. And part of that is that we don’t understand what the world looks like from New Delhi or from South Africa.

And one of the things we’ve lost in the last 20 or 30 years because of American dominance is we used to a lot about foreign countries. If you look at the people who made their way up the American foreign policy hierarchy, a lot of them were deeply schooled in languages and cultures of other countries.

George Kennan being the perfect example — spoke fluent Russian, had spent years in Russia, understood the society. You’d be hard pressed to find a lot of people like that in America today.

Mike Gallagher, the guy who runs the China committee, you mentioned, in the House — I believe I have this accurately — has never been to China. If you were to ask yourself the people who are making policy toward China in the United States right now, how many of them speak Mandarin? You’d be surprised at how few people know these countries. And that creates a kind of structural tenure for American diplomacy.

And then we’re surprised that — one of my favorite examples is Turkey. This is going back to the Iraq War. We thought of Turkey as this compliant American ally that basically depended on the U.S. for its military assistance. We had lost sight that Turkey had become this consolidated more democratic, more successful, more proud country. And this is almost literally true. We forgot to ask it whether we could use Turkey as a base to invade Iraq. Most people forget Iraq was meant to be invaded on a two-front invasion, from the South and Kuwait up and then from the north through Turkey down.

The Turks surprised the U.S. and said, no, we are now a functioning democracy. This has to go to parliament. And I think it lost in parliament by a couple of votes. So that’s a perfect example of how we haven’t noticed, what I call in the post-American world, the Rise of the Rest. It’s this fundamental change that’s taken place in the international system, where these countries are no longer willing to be pawns on the table. They want to be players in their own right. And we say the right thing sometimes, we mouth the clichés, but we don’t really understand these places.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: There was a great issue of Foreign Affairs that just came out, and I really recommend people go buy it or read it online. Because it was all about the view of America, of the West, from what it called the nonaligned nations, right? So depending how you want to count, and depending on which vote nations representing two thirds of the global population, they’ve not been with us in Russia. They are not necessarily with Russia either.

But they have not bought into the Western narrative that what Russia has done is an unforgivable breach of the system, the sanctions are a good idea, et cetera. And one of the really interesting essays in that issue was a piece by Nirupama Rao, who is a former foreign secretary of India.

And there’s been all this frustration in America that India has been nonaligned around Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. And she says India’s, quote — and I want to read this for a minute here — “refusal to speak up in Kyiv’s favor has brought it under intense scrutiny and questioning by friends and partners in the West. But India rightfully sees these critiques as hypocritical.

The West routinely cuts deals with violent autocracies to advance its own interests. The United States is improving ties with Venezuela to get more oil. Europe is signing energy contracts with repressive Arab Gulf regimes. Remarkably, the West nonetheless claims that its foreign policy is guided by human rights and democracy. India at least lays no claim to being the conscience keeper of the world.”

And so to your point about how the rest of the world sees us — something that comes up again and again in these essays, and particularly in India’s view — is that we talk about a rules-based order, we talk about a values-based foreign policy, but we only follow that, really, when it benefits us. And so the requests of other countries should go against their own interests — maybe in this case, cheap Russian energy — to back that order rings a little bit hollow.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Yeah. And you’ve pointed to, I think, a very profound problem that we face. One of the central challenges of American foreign policy, for the next 20 to 30 years at least, is how do you sustain the Western-led rules-based international order in the absence of the kind of American dominance that the United States has had? As American dominance fades, what happens to this edifice that we’ve built, that I still believe has been profoundly better than any alternative international system that we’ve — the very fact that Putin’s invasion of Ukraine has galvanized so much of the world — not all of it — is that it’s rare.

I mean, since 1945 — there’s a wonderful book by two Yale Law professors which points this out — the number of forcible annexations is down to a handful of times in 75 years. If you go and look at the 75 years before 1945, I mean, it happened so routinely that you could barely count how many times that had happened. So this order is a better order than anything we’ve seen before.

But we don’t seem to realize exactly what you say, which is the hypocrisy that attends the idea that we can constantly deviate from it. We get to invade Iraq. We get to not sign on to the International Criminal Court.

We do things like — we are accusing China in the South China Seas of violating the law of the Seas Treaty, a treaty to which we are not a signatory. And so there’s so much of that kind of inbuilt hypocrisy that we have gotten so used to, that we don’t even bother about it.

Bob Kagan, the writer, once tried to rationalize it by saying, it’s like we are the gardener that is maintaining the Garden of Eden. But to maintain that beautiful garden, that wonderful, peaceful space, the gardener can’t follow the rules. The gardener has to be the thug who enforces the — well, I mean, that’s a very self-serving way of looking at it.

The way that most countries look at it is, when you want oil, you go to Saudi Arabia, and you don’t worry about the fact that it’s a medieval absolute monarchy. When you want to change your policy, as you say, on Venezuela, you suddenly decide, oh, we were trying to overthrow you last year. This year, we want to buy your oil.

And we do this all the time.

And then, when the Indians do it, we shriek, and we say, how dare you? You’re supposed to be a democracy — or South Africa or Indonesia — rather than recognizing that they all have their interests.

I mean, the Indian case is particularly complicated, because the Indians buy most of the advanced weaponry from Russia. Now, why do they buy most of their advanced weaponry from Russia? Largely because the United States wouldn’t sell it to them. During the Cold War, the U.S. was allied with Pakistan. The Indians also violated the N.P.T., which, by the way, so did the Pakistanis.

EZRA KLEIN: Nuclear —

FAREED ZAKARIA: The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, by testing nuclear weapons. And so the Indians have developed this dependency. But there’s a larger issue also, which is, the Indians have always relied on Russia for unwavering support on something like Kashmir, which is the disputed territory between India and Pakistan.

And they know that the Russians will be the reliable veto in the U.N. Security Council on that. So they’re not going to burn their bridges with the Russians all at once. They’ve distanced themselves a little bit. They’ve done some things.

A better way to put it would be this. America has never understood nationalism. You know, one of our biggest problems is that we look at the world and we say to ourselves, but we’re bringing you all these wonderful things. Why don’t you just take them and let us shower you with these benefits and tell you what to do?

And we don’t understand how strong that desire of doing your own thing is, whether it’s in Iraq, whether it’s in Vietnam, whether it’s in Cuba. We don’t understand how the resistance to external domination can be so powerful.

There’s this very famous, perhaps apocryphal, story — when Lord Mountbatten, the last viceroy of India, says in frustration to Gandhi when they are negotiating independence. We can’t just leave India. If we leave India, it will be chaos. And Gandhi looks at him and says, yes, but it will be our chaos. And that sense that something imperfect that is ours is better than something even better that might be provided by a foreign domination.

EZRA KLEIN: But this is something you would understand better about the sociology of the American foreign policy establishment. I’ve tended in my career to cover domestic policy. I can tell you a lot about the weird psychology of American domestic policy fighting, but I’ve been doing particularly more reporting over the past year or two on America and China.

And I’m constantly told, when I ask, well, why don’t we want this? What gives us the moral standing to say China should not become powerful in this way, or we should not permit this, or — and I’ll hear, well, China doesn’t really support the rules-based international order. We’re trying to protect the rules-based international order.

And then, I’ll say, OK, but Iraq, and OK, but these treaties. And I mean, nobody thinks, globally, that we follow that order. And I would say that the consistent response I get from people who genuinely, I think, believe with all their heart in that order, and also supported a number of deviations from it, describe it as, yeah, well, nevertheless.

And I genuinely am puzzled by it. Because every contact I have ever had with foreign policy representatives from other nations — our deviations loom very large in their minds. I do believe there is a belief among American — at least liberal foreign policy establishment — that the rules-based international order is the great achievement in foreign policy of America.

And yet, the damage of deviation after deviation — it really goes unremarked. And it continues — I mean, many in Europe think, I think, fairly correctly, that we are, at this point, operating with Buy American provisions and trade provisions that are beginning to look a lot like World Trade Organization violations, so that for everything we talk about free trade, the direction of industrial policy in America, which I support in a lot of ways, but it undermines a lot of what we’re saying about friend-shoring and about the kind of world we seek to build.

There just seems to me to be a very deeply unresolved tension in the way that we don’t justify our foreign policy based on Pax Americana. We justify it based on a rules-based order that we abide by sometimes and not others. And you know, you read this “Foreign Affairs” issue, but it’s obviously not just there. And the damage those contradictions do to our ability to mobilize other countries to defend this order that we say we’re defending seems much larger than we’re willing to admit or face up to.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Yeah. I mean, you’re highlighting, really, a central, central issue. Because as you put it, we don’t justify our policy on the basis of Pax Americana. We don’t justify saying, we’re the United States, we want to be the dominant power, and we want a world that allows our interests and our power to be protected and enhanced.

We try to articulate a set of ideas that could capture the imagination of the world, and that’s always been the American way ever since Franklin Roosevelt. And you know, those have, to a large extent — in the ’40s and ’50s, the whole decolonizing world was looking to America. And people like Ho Chi Minh would make overtures to the Americans.

So there is a power in those American ideas, because we do think in those broader terms. But we then never seem to understand how serious it is that we are violating these ideas, these rules, and we never try to explain it. We never tried to do the diplomacy that was surrounded.

So for example, forget even the naked protectionism of the Biden administration, which I think is clearly a violation of the kind of free-trade order that we’ve created. Take something like the freezing of Russian assets and the use of the dollar in that way.

At one level, I totally support it. But I have been urging Biden to give a speech saying, look, we understand that this seems like a very arbitrary use of power that goes against the rules that countries’ foreign reserves are sacrosanct.

We have only done it in this very unusual circumstance, where a country decided in an unprovoked fashion to invade its neighbor. That is the core violation of the rules-based order. And because of that, in order to fight that fire, we have used a little fire ourselves.

We assure you we would never do something like this on a routine basis. This is a kind of one-off. We don’t try to even articulate it that way, and that’s where some of the arrogance comes in.

We don’t think to ourselves, we need to explain these things. And forget our enemies. When Trump pulled out of the Iran deal, because of the power of the dollar, he kept in place American secondary sanctions.

So even though the rest of the world wanted to trade with Iran, they couldn’t. And that has so frustrated the Europeans —

EZRA KLEIN: Because we would sanction them for trading.

FAREED ZAKARIA: Right. It’s a very complicated — but basically, if the Americans say, we will sanction you for trading, even though you’re part of the Iran deal, effectively, they have to be cleared through the New York Fed. This is what I’ve called our last true superpower weapon.

And because of that, the Europeans got so frustrated, because they thought that Trump’s pulling out of the Iran deal was totally unjustified, unilateral, entirely a violation of the rules-based order. They set to work trying to find some alternative to a dollar-based system. You know, we have a system called SWIFT, and the Europeans have been trying to set up a different one.

Now, I know all the economists tell me, it’s not going to work. The dollar is inevitably the currency of last resort. That may all be true, but what does it say when your closest allies are now dead-set on a project that for them may take decades but they believe they will fulfill to wean themselves off the dependency on the dollar because they don’t trust that you will use that weapon in a fair, rules-based manner, that you’re going to use it arbitrarily, capriciously, and for, as you say, America’s narrow, selfish interests.

I feel as though if we’re not careful, we will find that the thing that destroyed America’s dominant position in the world, America’s ability to lead the world, to shape a rules-based international system, was not some great external threat like China. It was us. It was the mistakes, the arrogance, the parochialism, the hubris. All that combined will prove the much more potent weapon that undermined American hegemony than the Chinese or the Russians.

EZRA KLEIN: This feels to me like the year that, narratively — and probably in reality, too — India began moving towards superpower status. I think that the estimation that it’s now the most populous nation in the world was a big moment of pivot in how it was seen. It is growing faster, say, than China. It is much younger than China.

Modi is a very complicated and very checkered figure, but he does seem to have been successful in getting things built in India at a really astonishing rate. The digitization of a lot of Indian infrastructure and money and other things is a truly huge accomplishment. You’ve written some pieces about trips you’ve taken recently and the reasons you have optimism there. Give me a bit of your overview of what has shifted in India, such as their role in the world is shifting.

FAREED ZAKARIA: I think that now, with so much hype about India, I sometimes feel like I almost have to tell people when they’re going to go, just brace yourself. It is still a very poor country. You know, India’s per capita GDP is still under $3,000 a year. China’s — just give you a quick — I mean, Chinese economy is five times larger than India’s.

So there are a lot of things that have changed and a lot of positive currents that have taken place, but it’s important to keep that framework in perspective.

I think what has happened in India is there has been a shift away from the old, statist, state-planning, socialist economics that began in the early 1990s, that has been galvanized in a way that only can happen in a democracy where you had alternations of government, so that the opposition initially criticized it, then they came into power, they now have implemented many of the same changes that have been two or three changes of government.

And a certain amount of critical mass has taken place. Many of the things that have been taking place in this government were planned in the previous government, the Congress government. For example, the digital infrastructure, Aadhaar, was actually an innervation of the previous government but has come to fruition under this one.

EZRA KLEIN: Could you just briefly explain what Aadhaar is?

FAREED ZAKARIA: So the Indians innovated, in a way that we could all learn something around the world from, in creating a biometric ID system, where basically, 99.9 percent of Indian adults now have a biometric ID. They have a code.

And what they’ve done is created a kind of digital ID that — for example, I think the easiest way to explain this would be, you’re given this number at birth, or if you are an adult, you applied for it, and they were able to get it to everybody. If you want to open a bank account in India, it now takes 90 seconds.

You know, and so you can imagine all kinds of applications where the initial platform is government-owned, open to everyone, and free, which allows you to build all kinds of new digital infrastructure, businesses on it. Everything else that exists on that scale is a private monopoly.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to underscore how impressive an achievement that is — to get a digital ID to 99.9 percent of Indian adults in just a few years. So how do you assess Modi as a leader or a manager, having helped shepherd a massive project like that through?

FAREED ZAKARIA: Modi is an extremely competent manager. I don’t think he is the kind of Thatcherite reformer that people were expecting. That’s not his mentality. When I’ve spoken to him, the sense I always get from him is he wants real competence, real accountability, but he doesn’t believe that the big state-owned banks should be privatized. He doesn’t believe — that’s not his ideology.

His ideology is, I want India to be strong, the Indian government to be strong but competent, delivering, executing well. And he’s done that. He’s done that remarkably well. In physical infrastructure, he expanded the digital infrastructure.

And those two things, really — the two infrastructure booms — the digital side, where India is really the world leader. India has the only billion-plus internet platform that is not privately owned. Every other global billion-plus-person internet platform — Google, Facebook — are all private.

And what that means is that the whole Indian private sector builds on that public edifice, which means it’s a much freer, much less monopolistic, much more open, much more efficient system. So they’re a real world leader in that.

And the second is the public infrastructure, where India’s famously been terrible at, but is getting much, much better. And you could see it. For the first time when I went to Mumbai — you know, I’ve been several times, but it kind of caught my attention this time — you look around, and the number of cranes you see reminded me of Shanghai 20 years ago.

You know, you’re suddenly seeing that kind of burst of infrastructure. And all of that is lifting the country up. Now, there is a reality, a dark side to some of this.

Modi is very efficient, and he’s very skillful, even on foreign policy. There is also a Hindu-nationalist agenda that certainly has left Indian Muslims feeling very dispossessed and persecuted — Christians, in some cases, some lower castes, the South, because of a certain — the certain kind of Hindu nationalism that is very Hindi-oriented, Hindi being the dominant language in the North. A simpler way to put it — it’s a very particular nationalist project that leaves a lot of people feeling excluded.

EZRA KLEIN: As Modi has consolidated power, has his Hindu nationalism and that of his party gotten worse and more intense or moderated?

FAREED ZAKARIA: More intense, without any question. He’s one of the most effective politicians I’ve ever seen in my lifetime. He is really brilliant in some ways.

The last phase of Hindu nationalism under — there were two previous leaders, Advani and Vajpayee. They came across a problem, which was — it was seen fundamentally as a kind of upper-caste project. And the Indian lower castes, who make up 50 percent of the Indian population, didn’t really buy in. And that, ultimately, is what undermined it.

Modi found a way to resolve that tension, in some ways, by doing very clever alliances with lower-caste parties, in some ways, by reminding the lower caste that at the end of the day, they were all united as Hindus against the Muslims. You know, so there’s a certain bit of what Southern politicians used to do with ***working-class*** whites, of saying, you may be poor, but don’t forget, your social status is one step above you-know-who.

So there’s some of that going on.

Part of it is they’ve run — made very digitally savvy, very good at what they do. But they have been able to, as a result, have a freer rein on rewriting of textbooks, rewriting of history, renaming of towns, ignoring or bypassing — I mean, Muslims have been in India for 1,000 years. And if you look at some of the symbols of the new India, the new Indian parliament, you’d be hard-pressed to find many visual instances of that.

EZRA KLEIN: There’s an interesting section in Rao’s essay where she talks about how, look, India and China have this very complicated relationship. In fact, there have been periods between them that have left Indian soldiers dead. And they are somehow managing this competition, cooperation, and are very much in competition for what they both seem to see as leader of the Global South.

You talked about that as being one of the key audiences now. And India very much seems to see at least its great foreign policy goal now as being understood to be the leader of the Global South. Is that plausible? And how does that competition relate to the role we want to play there?

FAREED ZAKARIA: I think fundamentally, the Indians don’t really want to be leaders of the Global South. Because India is still, basically, not that interested in the global role. China is. India is, partly because it’s much — in relative terms, much poorer, still moving its way up the developmental ladder. But I’ve always thought that India reminded me of America in the 19th century, which is this big, messy, chaotic democracy that’s largely internally focused.

It’s not that interested in what’s going on in the rest of the world. And to the extent that it is, it’s largely focused on India’s interests and very comfortable with being completely honest about that very narrow preoccupation. If you read the Indian newspapers, what is astonishing to you is, you read these big fat newspapers, full of everything, and they’re still, for the most part, free, even though somewhat intimidated.

There’s almost nothing about the international world. And it’s particularly true if you read newspapers in Hindi or a local language, which is what the vast majority of Indians read. There’s just very little interest in the outside world.

EZRA KLEIN: What is our direct relationship there shaping up to be? And noting — to something you were saying earlier about sanctions, before Modi became leader of India, he was under American sanctions. So I get the sense of some internal consternation that we’ve not been able to hold India closer to us during the Ukraine conflict.

But there’s also real fear about what Modi represents in India. So we’ve talked a lot about how American-Chinese relations have dissolved into something worse. Obviously, we’re not there with India, but does that seem like a relationship we are building towards it being closer, or that we are on track for it to become more troubled?

FAREED ZAKARIA: No, I think ultimately, the United States and India will have a closer relationship, a deeper relationship, and one that will be enduring. Because the fundamental bonds that will tie India and the United States together are going to be society-to-society bonds, not state-to-state bonds. India is one of the two or three most pro-American countries in the world.

I think India, Israel, and Poland — usually, in the 70 percent-plus say they like — have a favorable view of America. And it’s palpable if you go to India. Every businessman wants to do business with America. Every kid wants to find some way to get to America for education.

The magnet of America is very powerful. English is an Indian language, even though probably only 10 percent or 15 percent of Indians speak it. But there is still the sense that it’s — India is very comfortable in the world of English, and so they can access America and American culture very easily. And by and large, America still has a very attractive image for India.

The complications come at the state-to-state level, where there is — as I said, the Indians are more focused on India’s interests, understandably so. But I think those are also changing. Because the Indians are realizing that the United States has made a fundamental strategic decision.

You know, you could look at Bush’s overtures to India, where he sort of accommodated India on the nuclear issue in a way that the Indians had been asking for three decades, and finally, the Americans did. You could see that as a one-off. But now, you’ve had three administrations basically all making the same overtures, so the arrow is moving in the direction of closer and closer relations.

And the second part is, I do think, as China rises more, this is going to be a tough relationship for the Indians and Chinese right now. I mean, they want to play exactly as you said. They want to balance the two.

Part of that is economic necessity. And in this regard, India is a metaphor for the world. So for India’s growth, an economic relationship with China is essential. But the Indians also know that they have a real strategic problem with China.

They have a border dispute that is very real and very alive and has not been resolved, and they came to blows, literally, a few years ago. And for that, they need the United States. And so they are going to try to have their cake and eat it, too, and they’re going to try to balance these things.

But if I were to guess, the directionality will be that there will be more difficulty between the India-China relationship, which means the India-U.S. relationship, even at a state-to-state level, gets stronger.

EZRA KLEIN: Let me end on a question here about American goals, which is — so right now, Joe Biden has a Republican House. It looks like they’re going to resolve the debt ceiling at the moment. But he’s not going to get a lot done through that House.

It’s possible this is a — piles what-ifs on top of each other. But you could imagine him winning in 2024, Republicans keeping either the House or the Senate. And Biden, at his core, has always been a foreign policy guy anyway.

So what should his goals for America in the world be? If the rest of his term or terms was actually to be defined by foreign policy, what set of accomplishments or orientations would you have told him to have or would make him, to you, a success?

FAREED ZAKARIA: I think he’s done pretty well, so I don’t want to make this sound like it’s all criticism. But I think that what he has to do is pursue successfully the completion of the policy that he is following in Ukraine. Make sure that Russia’s invasion cannot stand — cannot be seen as, in any way, legitimized or justified, that Russia remains isolated until — if and when it would decide to accept the reality of Ukraine as an independent sovereign nation as its neighbor.

And that is a key building block to this larger project, which I do think is the fundamental one for the U.S., which is, how do you preserve, maintain, and enhance the rules-based international order as American power becomes less and less the key dispositive factor? And to do that, we get to the second task, which is we have to find a workable relationship with China.

Because if we don’t, the rules-based international order will collapse. If the two largest countries in the world, the two most dominant economies in the world, seal themselves off hermetically, that will lead to a collapse of the globalization that’s taken place over the last 30 years. You know, the last time something like this happened — and it’s not even a perfect analogy — is Britain and Germany at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th — two very powerful countries, deeply connected economically, that ended up in a geopolitical rivalry that essentially brought down the world.

So the stakes are very high in getting this right. And I feel like getting the right balance of some degree of deterrence and some degree of engagement we have not yet gotten, and I would hope that he can work on that. The biggest challenge he faces is not international in that regard. It’s domestic.

It’s, does he have the space to try to develop a sensible, sane policy toward China. And as our conversation has shown, it’s complicated, because there are elements where you need to push back, and there are elements where you need real deterrence, like around Taiwan. But there are also areas where you need to find some way to have a workable relationship.

EZRA KLEIN: And always our final question — what are three books you’d recommend to the audience?

FAREED ZAKARIA: I’ve been thinking a lot about this issue of nationalism and how we really don’t understand other countries and where they come from. And so the first one is Benedict Anderson’s “Imagined Communities,” which is still — I think it was written in the early ’80s, but it’s still this remarkable book that is able to explain why people are so nationalistic. Where does it come from?

He talks about how religion is at the heart of it. He talks about how modern communications are a part of it. One of the parts I remember, just thinking about our conversation, is the way in which he talks about how getting the news has replaced morning prayers as a kind of binding act that keeps communities together.

And I’ve been thinking about how getting our very separate news nowadays has created these two very different separate and distinct communities in America. I sometimes think when people go to listen to watch Fox, they’re not watching television. They’re going to church. They’re going — they’re hearing the catechism. That’s what they want. That’s what they need. And I’m sure you could make the argument on the other side.

And then, I thought of two books that get a country. So I don’t want to say the best book on China, but a book that I read about China that I felt really conveyed some of China’s past and present very well was a book called “Wealth and Power” by Orville Schell and John Delury, both great China scholars, great China watchers. And it’s really the story of China from 1850 to the present.

It begins with the Opium wars and ends, roughly speaking, with the Beijing Olympics. I think it’s a wonderful primer on China.

And for India, there are so many, but there’s a wonderful short book called, “The Idea of India,” by Sunil Khilnani, a young academic, probably not so young anymore.

But it’s wonderfully written. He writes gorgeously, and these chapters on India — and it just gives you a feeling for what it felt like to be this newly decolonized country, free for the first time to chart your own path. And I think that it’s really important to think about how so many countries in the world think of themselves that way, whether it’s a Nigeria or a South Africa.

They’ve come into their own for the first time. They are masters of their own destiny for the first time in so long. And that gives a great impulse for them to not feel like they’re being lectured to, dominated on, where decisions are being made for them.

EZRA KLEIN: Fareed Zakaria, thank you very much.

FAREED ZAKARIA: This is always such a pleasure, Ezra. Thank you.

EZRA KLEIN: This episode was produced by Annie Galvin. Fact-checking by Michelle Harris, Rollin Hu, Mary Marge Locker and Kate Sinclair. Mixing by Jeff Geld. The show’s team includes Emefa Agawu, Jeff Geld, Roge Karma and Kristin Lin, 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 Sonia Herrero and Kristina Samulewski.

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2023

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[***How Germany's Smallest State Is Leading the Way on Vaccines***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6573-WT41-JBG3-64F9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 14, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1372 words

**Byline:** By Christopher F. Schuetze

**Body**

BREMEN, Germany -- This northern port city, combined with neighboring Bremerhaven, makes up the smallest and by many measures the poorest state in Germany's federal system. In state comparisons of education or addressing child poverty, it consistently ranks dead last.

But when it comes to vaccines, Bremen is No. 1, with more than 90 percent of its population fully vaccinated. It has achieved its success in a country that has managed to vaccinate only slightly more than three-quarters of its people, and that voted last week against a bill that would have made vaccinations mandatory for people 60 and over.

''Bremen was so successful because they realized pretty early on that you've got to go into the neighborhoods, that you can't just have one central vaccination center, but that you have to go into communities and approach people,'' said Marieke Gerstmann, who runs a community health mediation center that advocates for vaccinations in one of Bremen's poorer neighborhoods.

What makes Bremen's elite vaccination status all the more striking is that immigrants -- who make up one-third of Bremen's population, the most of any German state -- are less likely to get vaccinated than people born in Germany, according to recent studies by the Robert Koch Institute, the national health authority.

''Our approach was, get to the people and connect with the community,'' said Andreas Bovenschulte, who is Bremen's mayor and also acts as the city-state's governor.

Mr. Bovenschulte credits a tight network of community elders, religious leaders, civic activists and city employees that was strong in Bremen even before the pandemic hit. Bremen's social ties are a necessity especially in underprivileged neighborhoods, he said.

Bremen's chapter of the German Red Cross quickly put together mobile vaccination teams, two brand-new vaccination trucks and nine old city buses -- which can serve as mobile vaccination clinics or post-shot recovery rooms.

''I've been preaching this for a while: You have to go and proactively approach people, you have to meet them and explain it to them,'' said Melanie Brinkmann, a virologist at the Technische Universität Braunschweig and a member of the expert commission advising the federal government on the coronavirus pandemic.

Because so much focus initially was on securing sufficient vaccine doses to cover the population, Germany's vaccination strategy initially overlooked those who would be harder to reach, Professor Brinkmann said in an interview.

''The last percentage points are the most difficult,'' she said. ''But some states really invested in consultations and did it well.''

On a recent sunny but bone-chillingly windy morning, one of the colorful vaccination trucks pulled into a desolate parking lot in front of a mall in the hardscrabble neighborhood of Gröpelingen. The truck, furnished with a heater and a noisy coffee maker, was parked next to one of the decommissioned buses that offered a place for the recently vaccinated to rest.

Bülent Aksakal, a community health worker fluent in Turkish and German, had made the rounds in the area the week before, telling people to circle the day on their calendar. Interest was low, because many people had already gotten their shots.

Najlaa Kanbar, 21, who is from Idlib, Syria, had missed Mr. Aksakal's entreaties but saw the truck with offers of vaccination written in seven different languages on its side as she walked by with her three young children. She also noticed that there was no line and thought it was the perfect time to get her second shot.

Unlike other states that did little more than make the vaccines available, several dedicated community organizations in Bremen explained the vaccines and persuaded people to get them.

A caveat on Bremen's official 90-percent-plus-coverage figure: Its numbers, like those of other population centers, may be skewed by residents of surrounding communities coming and taking advantage of Bremen's vaccination offers. Because no national vaccination database exists, it's hard to know to what extent this added to the numbers in Bremen, for example, or second-place Hamburg.

Mr. Aksakal, the community health worker, said he had spent the last 11 months visiting day care centers, sewing circles, language schools and integration courses, explaining how the vaccine works, why it was important and what side effects could be expected. ''Honesty is always the best policy,'' he said.

As opposed to conspiracy theories, people in immigrant communities ''worry more about practical considerations, side effects and bureaucracy,'' said Mr. Aksakal.

In Bremen-Osterholz, another ***working-class*** neighborhood in the eastern part of the city, a team of eight women, all of whom speak at least two languages, try to persuade people to get vaccinated. The community health workers -- who are funded by a university -- are just a small part of the warren of social workers, nonprofit groups, independent community projects and private people that have been activated to help promote vaccines.

''There was already a strong network, with many active people raring to go,'' said Ms. Gerstmann, who runs the team.

Patience Bonsu, who was born in Ghana and is one of the counselors, says that when it comes to the often delicate matter of vaccinations, a connection to the relevant migrant community is invaluable.

As a counselor at a women's center, Ms. Bonsu, who speaks English and Twi, a language spoken in Ghana, in addition to German, uses her position to bring up vaccines when talking to the mothers about other issues.

''The trust issue is very, very important at this moment,'' she said.

With access to their home communities through social media, many migrants are also exposed to disinformation that leads to fears and questions about vaccination.

''Many in the African community initially thought the virus wouldn't affect them because there were so few reported cases in Africa,'' said Ms. Bonsu. ''But then people from the community here started getting sick.

''I think that a lot of people, especially from the African community, feel more comfortable asking me questions,'' said Ms. Bonsu about her work over the past year.

The city's outreach has gone beyond just explaining vaccinations. Ilker Kabadayi, a mosque elder at the Fatih mosque in Gröpelingen, said he has had local community health workers come in to help explain the Covid social distancing rules.

None of it can be taken for granted. Five months after Chancellor Olaf Scholz started pushing for a general vaccine mandate for all adults, lawmakers rejected a watered-down proposal last week. The parliamentary vote was a setback for a country that once prided itself on sound pandemic management, but Bremen is ahead of the game.

Clutching a pack of brochures and smiling at potential vaccine recipients, Sabrine Rehifi stood outside the vaccine truck in Gröpelingen. When it gets busy, it is Ms. Rehifi's job to help keep the line orderly and make sure everyone has the proper forms; when it's slow she tries to engage passers-by, which as a speaker of five languages -- including Arabic and Swahili -- she is well positioned to do.

When Ms. Kanbar approached, Ms. Rehifi greeted her in Arabic. Once she realized that Ms. Kanbar's German would not suffice to fill out the forms required to get the shot, she accompanied her onboard to translate.

''By the time they come here, they've usually already made up their mind to get their vaccines,'' Ms. Rehifi said.

But despite the staff's best effort, Ms. Kanbar's 2-year-old son started to cry and then wail as the registration went on, which in turn caused his older sister to join in before the staff could bring cookies to to console them.

''To get downtown with three kids with public transport, that's actually quite a challenge,'' said Peter Zeugträger, who runs the local vaccine operation, over the din. Without the outreach program, Ms. Kanbar might have spent hours traveling to the vaccine center in the central part of the city.

Unfazed by the wailing, Ms. Kanbar said she was happy to be able to get the shot so easily.

''My husband will come by as soon as he's off work,'' she said before rolling up her sleeve.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/world/europe/germany-covid-vaccine-strategy.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/world/europe/germany-covid-vaccine-strategy.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Najlaa Kanbar, a Syrian mother of three, getting a Covid-19 shot at a mobile vaccination site in Bremen, Germany. Community outreach efforts like mobile clinics, left, have helped the state of Bremen fully inoculate more than 90 percent of its population. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAETITIA VANCON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

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[***Black, Female and Changing What a Barrister Looks Like***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6163-XFM1-JBG3-637B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10; THE SATURDAY PROFILE

**Length:** 1214 words

**Byline:** By Megan Specia

**Body**

Alexandra Wilson is working to change England's legal establishment, and perceptions about who belongs in it, from the inside.

LONDON -- It was looking like a typical day at the office for Alexandra Wilson as she arrived at a London courthouse ready to defend someone accused of theft.

She tied her hair into a neat knot, shrugged on her black robe and pulled on a white horsehair wig -- the official garb of Britain's barristers, the lawyers who argue most cases in court.

But once she was in the courtroom, things went off script. In a patronizing exchange that was rude at best and hostile at worst, the prosecutor, an older white man, scoffed at Ms. Wilson, chided her for speaking with her client and tutted at her requests for details on court documents.

Unfortunately, it was an all too typical day for Ms. Wilson in a profession where, as a young Black woman, she often finds herself fighting for recognition and respect.

''It certainly does happen to a lot of Black barristers,'' she said after the encounter. ''My ability is underestimated, quite a lot.''

Last month, in an incident that made headlines in Britain -- and spurred a public apology from the acting head of the country's court system -- Ms. Wilson was shouted at for entering the court to defend her client, one of three times that day she was assumed to be a defendant.

Ms. Wilson wrote about the encounter in a Twitter thread that soon went viral, and said the incident underscored broader issues in the justice system.

''For me, it was a real insight that Black people are being criminalized from when they are first laid eyes on,'' she said. ''How can I reassure my clients that it's a fair system if people are already making their mind up from seeing a Black person that you are likely to be a criminal?''

That is part of her drive to be here.

''I thought the best way to make a difference was to be a part of the system that is so problematic and to make change from the inside,'' she said. ''It's one thing calling out all of the problems, but we need to actually think, 'How are we going to solve this?'''

As the 25-year-old daughter of a Black Caribbean father and white British mother from ***working-class*** roots, she is still a rarity in the cavernous halls of England's courts.

Her unabashed observations about race and class have drawn a following of thousands on Twitter, inspired a book about her experiences and driven her to found a community for Black women in the legal professions. Just over a year into her career, she's only getting started.

A tweet she posted a few months before becoming a practicing barrister in early 2019 that included a photo of her in her official attire and the note ''THIS is what a barrister looks like'' was the first to draw attention.

The most recent statistics on diversity among Britain's barristers, from the Bar Standards Board, the profession's regulating body in England and Wales, are grim. Nearly 100 years after the first women became barristers in 1922, women account for just 38 percent of the profession and 16 percent of the most senior barristers, known as Queen's Counsel. And Black barristers account for just 3.2 percent of all barristers and 1.1 percent of the most senior ones.

A 2018 report from the Bar Standards Board noted that Black prospective barristers encounter significantly higher barriers to entering the profession than their white peers and are less likely to be taken on as trainees.

Yet Black people are overrepresented in the prison population, data from the Justice Ministry shows, with Black people making up about 12 percent of the prison population but just 3 percent of the total population in England and Wales.

The result, Ms. Wilson noted, is criminal courtrooms where those in positions of authority are overwhelmingly white and defendants are disproportionately Black.

''If you've got an overrepresentation of Black people on the wrong side of the law, being pushed through the system,'' she said, ''and they don't see any Black people representing them, how can they trust us?''

Ms. Wilson confronts the skewed dynamic head on in her book, ''In Black and White,'' a memoir that details her experience as a barrister and her journey to get there, while unpacking the issues of race and class in a justice system long dominated by rich white men.

She thinks the time is right for Britain to address racial inequality after the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis set off protests and a global conversation about race, including in Britain.

''I think we like to think of ourselves as this post-racial society where race doesn't exist and we all live in racial harmony, and frankly, it's not true,'' she said.

She specialized in criminal and family law practice in the hopes of maximizing the impact she can make, and is a founding member of One Case at a Time, an initiative to fund and provide legal representation for people of color.

''We can't just fool ourselves into thinking that everyone has the exact same life chances and everyone is on a level playing field, because they are not,'' she said.

Ms. Wilson grew up the eldest of four children in Essex, an area of southeastern England bordering London. Her father is first-generation British, born in England to Jamaican parents who immigrated to the country with a wave of other workers from the Caribbean as part of the ''Windrush Generation.'' Her mother came from a British ***working-class*** family and grew up in social housing.

Both went on to received their college degrees as adults and are both now teachers, and Ms. Wilson credits her own ambition and perseverance to them.

When she was 17, the death of a close friend who was stabbed in London in a case of mistaken identity forced her to take a hard look at the system.

''For me, that was the first time I really started to appreciate how important color was,'' she said, ''because I had absolutely no doubt if he had been white, he wouldn't have been killed that day.''

She followed his case through the courts and began to look into other cases, too. After his death, she knew she wanted a career that allowed her to address racial inequities in the justice system.

Yet she had to fight for her place every step of the way. When she told teachers that she wanted to apply to the University Oxford, one told her mother that she was ''too ambitious.''

When she graduated from Oxford -- after studying in classrooms where she was often the only Black student -- and applied for a legal traineeship, peers told her it would be impossible. And when she became a barrister, they said she wouldn't fit in.

But last year, when she picked up the formal garb of her new profession -- her new wig in a tin case with ''Alexandra J. Wilson'' in gold lettering on the front -- with her grandmother by her side, she knew they were wrong.

Now, she wants to lift up other women of color who are making their way into the profession. This year, she founded Black Women in Law, a community for aspiring lawyers and women already in the field. The group has close to 600 members who connect for conversations, advice and mentoring and organizes online events for schools.

''It's so important that kids see Black female lawyers,'' Ms. Wilson said. ''I didn't, and I wanted to.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/30/world/europe/alexandra-wilson-barrister.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/30/world/europe/alexandra-wilson-barrister.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: ALEXANDRA WILSON (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMARA ENO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2020

**End of Document**



[***G.O.P. Primary Wins in Nevada Set the Stage for Trump-Centered Battles This Fall***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65PJ-27R1-DXY4-X0GY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 16, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 19

**Length:** 1689 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Weisman and Jazmine Ulloa

**Body**

The Nevada primaries capped a series of elections on Tuesday that saw key wins for Trump-inspired candidates in South Carolina and Texas.

Republican voters in Nevada on Tuesday elevated conservative candidates who have ardently embraced Donald J. Trump's false claims of election fraud, turning a key swing state into a contest this fall between embattled Democrats and Republicans who insist President Biden stole the 2020 election.

The victories in the Nevada primaries for Mr. Trump capped a series of elections on Tuesday that saw one South Carolina Republican lawmaker who had crossed Mr. Trump go down in defeat, another survive her Trump-backed challenge and a Hispanic Republican grab a South Texas House seat vacated by a Democrat.

Those results gave mixed signals about Mr. Trump's continuing grip on the party even as the scrutiny of his actions following his 2020 defeat intensifies. At the same time, the elections on Tuesday suggested that Republicans remain on course for strong gains in November's midterms.

By flipping the Rio Grande Valley seat of former Representative Filemon Vela in Texas, Mayra Flores became the first Republican to represent the majority-Hispanic district in the seat's 10-year history, and she became the first Republican Latina the state has ever sent to Congress.

In the sheer number of tossup contests, few states will rival Nevada this fall. Republicans see chances to unseat a host of Democrats, including Gov. Steve Sisolak; Lt. Gov. Lisa Cano Burkhead; three Democratic members of the House; and Senator Catherine Cortez Masto.

Among the Republicans who won their primaries Tuesday were Adam Laxalt, a Senate candidate and former Nevada attorney general who led Mr. Trump's efforts to overturn the state's 2020 election results, and Jim Marchant, a secretary of state candidate who has pressed conspiracy theories about voting machines and hopes to oversee the state's 2024 election.

Election night on Tuesday started with the defeat in South Carolina of Representative Tom Rice by a Republican primary challenger endorsed by Mr. Trump, even as another South Carolina Republican, Representative Nancy Mace, survived.

Both Mr. Rice and Ms. Mace had crossed the former president as he struggled to maintain power after the Jan. 6 attack, which is now under the spotlight of congressional hearings. Mr. Rice, a staunch conservative in a conservative coastal district, was one of 10 House Republicans who voted to impeach him for inciting the riot. Ms. Mace, in her first speech as a newly elected freshman, said Mr. Trump bore responsibility for the deadly mayhem, though she did not vote to impeach him.

In turn, Mr. Trump backed Katie Arrington, a former state lawmaker, to take on Ms. Mace and State Representative Russell Fry to challenge Mr. Rice. Mr. Trump, who turned 76 on Tuesday, called on South Carolina voters to deliver him ''a beautiful, beautiful birthday present'' -- twin defeats of both Ms. Mace and Mr. Rice.

The South Carolina contests had their own dynamics -- Mr. Rice was defiant and contemptuous of Mr. Trump to the end, while Ms. Mace tried hard to regain the good graces of Trump administration officials if not Mr. Trump himself. The outcomes of both races could hold deep meaning to the party as it considers whether to renominate the former president for another White House run.

''This took a little bit of time, but we are finally here,'' Ms. Mace told those gathered for a victory party in Charleston, as she thanked Ms. Arrington for ''stepping into the arena.'' She added, ''this is going to make our campaign even stronger in November.''

The elections on Tuesday represented something of a midpoint in a Republican primary season that has delivered decidedly mixed signals to party leadership. Mr. Trump has claimed some significant wins, propelling his chosen Senate candidates to primary victories, such as J.D. Vance in Ohio and Mehmet Oz in Pennsylvania. However, his endorsed candidates have lost primary showdowns for governor in Georgia and Nebraska as well as a key secretary of state race in Georgia.

Still to come are contests that rank high on his vengeance list, such as Representative Liz Cheney's primary in Wyoming on Aug. 16. Ahead of Arizona's Aug. 2 primary, Mr. Trump has backed Kari Lake, a promoter of his false stolen-election claims, to be the state's next governor. To take on Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona, he picked Blake Masters, who was caught on tape promoting the conspiracy that one-third of the people outside the Capitol on Jan. 6 were F.B.I. agents.

In South Carolina, Mr. Rice was only the second of the 10 impeachment Republicans to take his case for re-election to the party's primary voters, and he was the first to lose. The other, Representative David Valadao of California, clings to a slim lead over a Trump-aligned challenger, as vote counting continues after the primary there last week. Mr. Rice's defeat means half of the 10 will not be returning to Congress next year, with other contests still to come, including Ms. Cheney's uphill climb.

Ms. Mace's run for re-election had split the Trump community. The Trump administration's most prominent South Carolinians -- former Representative Mick Mulvaney, his budget director and acting chief of staff, and former Gov. Nikki Haley, who served as United Nations ambassador -- both backed Ms. Mace against Ms. Arrington, who was a proven gamble for the party since she had lost the seat to a Democrat in 2018.

Ms. Haley, who is considering her own run for president in 2024, had scrambled to endorse Ms. Mace before Mr. Trump could endorse Ms. Arrington, a move that established some independence without openly crossing the former president.

''It's a great day in South Carolina!'' Ms. Haley proclaimed with Ms. Mace's victory.

In the Republican upset in South Texas, Ms. Flores won a special election to fill the remainder of Mr. Vela's term until the end of the year, becoming one of three Latinas to ever represent the state in Congress. The seat will once again be up for grabs in the November general election. Yet even her temporary victory foreshadows broader Republican gains in the Democratic stronghold of South Texas.

Ms. Flores -- who was born in Tamaulipas, Mexico, and is the wife of a Border Patrol agent -- raised 16 times the amount logged by her closest Democratic competitor, Dan Sanchez. She appeared to have at least one celebrity supporter -- Elon Musk, who posted on Twitter early Wednesday that he voted for Ms. Flores, describing it as the ''first time I ever voted Republican.'' Mr. Musk's SpaceX operates a launch site in the district.

Ms. Flores had not received a formal endorsement from Mr. Trump, but she had campaigned as a Trump-inspired Republican focused on border security. Her campaign signs highlighted three words: ''Dios, familia, patria.'' God, family, country.

In one of her earliest campaign ads, she made her way through a thick field of flowering cotton in South Texas, as she blasted a Democratic Party that she said insists on selling Hispanics the idea that they should depend on big government.

''At 13 years old, I was working in this very cotton field every day, all day, in the hot Texas sun,'' she said, adding that immigrants like her came ''the legal way'' to pursue the American Dream. She called for a militarization of the border, embraced Mr. Trump's false claims of election fraud and often denounced the ''radical socialist communist agenda.''

In Nevada, Republican candidates largely sought to align themselves with Mr. Trump, taking hard right stances on abortion, guns, immigration and the teaching of race and gender in schools.

In the governor's race there, Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo won the Republican nomination and will face Mr. Sisolak in November. The sheriff had been criticizing the governor for his mask mandates and his handling of the coronavirus pandemic. Mr. Sisolak abandoned the state's mask mandate in February and has been heavily promoting Nevada's economic rebound and the billions of dollars pumped into the state from federal coronavirus relief packages.

In the Senate race, Ms. Cortez Masto will face Mr. Laxalt, the grandson of a former Nevada governor and senator. In an audio recording obtained by The New York Times, Mr. Laxalt told voters in March that he was already gearing up to fight election fraud in his race, explaining that ''we're vetting which group we think is going to do better.''

But it was Mr. Marchant, a former state assemblyman, who worries many Democrats the most. At events with the MyPillow chief executive Mike Lindell and other Trump allies, Mr. Marchant has embraced some of the most far-fetched and debunked electoral conspiracy theories. He has pressed for all ballots to be cast and counted by hand, and he organized the ''America First'' secretary of state coalition to elect candidates who have embraced false claims about the 2020 election.

As it has been in the past several elections, Nevada promises to be a battleground in the 2024 presidential campaign, and the person running the election will either be Mr. Marchant or Cisco Aguilar, a Democrat and former aide to the late Senate majority leader Harry Reid.

''Enough of the untruths. We need to focus on the truths in a bipartisan way,'' Mr. Aguilar told The Las Vegas Review-Journal.

Beyond those statewide offices, three Nevada House seats are deemed tossups for the fall, a potential windfall for Republicans as they seek control of Congress.

In Nevada, where Mr. Reid and the state's Culinary Union built an influential Democratic political machine, a racially diverse coalition of ***working-class*** and Latino voters has powered crucial Democratic victories in presidential elections since 2008. But the president's party tends to lose ground in midterm elections. That has been particularly true for Democrats in Nevada. Democratic turnout in the midterms in the state has tended to take a sharp nosedive, favoring Republicans.

Maya King and Jennifer Medina contributed reporting.Maya King and Jennifer Medina contributed reporting.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Mayra Flores won a special election

she is the first Republican Latina from Texas to go to Congress. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON GARZA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Among French Muslims, a Growing Feeling 'That We Are All Suspected'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615W-C991-DXY4-X3JG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 30, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1332 words

**Byline:** By Constant Méheut

**Body**

French officials' attack on ''Islamic separatism'' and the ''enemy within'' has Muslims questioning whether they will ever fully be accepted.

IVRY-SUR-SEINE, France -- At age 42, Mehdy Belabbas embodied the French republican promise of upward social mobility: the son of a Muslim construction worker of Algerian descent, he was the first in his family to attend graduate school and served for 12 years as the deputy mayor of the ***working-class*** city where he grew up.

And yet for the past two weeks, Mr. Belabbas has been thinking about just one thing: ''I'm wondering if I should leave France.''

Mr. Belabbas's thoughts stemmed from days of heated -- if not hostile -- public debate, largely fueled by President Emmanuel Macron's own ministers, that started in response to the gruesome beheading of a teacher by an 18-year-old Muslim extremist and was refueled by what officials believe was an Islamist terror attack in Nice on Thursday.

French officials have vowed to crack down on what the hard-line interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, has called ''the enemy within,'' closing a mosque, proposing to ban several Muslim groups the government considers extremist and even suggesting the elimination of ethnic food aisles in stores.

Mr. Macron, who began a campaign earlier this month against Islamic ''separatism'' from France's deeply held secular values, said recently that Muslims needed to develop an ''Islam of enlightenment,'' which many considered patronizing.

While these statements and others from French officials have engendered a backlash in some Muslim countries, they have mostly caused bewilderment among France's nearly six million Muslims, almost all of whom condemn violence but fear they are all being labeled terrorists.

''After this attack, five or six million people have to justify themselves,'' Mr. Belabbas said. ''But we just don't know what is expected of us.''

The knife attack in a Nice church on Thursday promises to deepen the confusion, despite Muslim leaders' condemnation of the killer. Naziha Mayoufi, a member of LES Musulmans, an association of Muslim groups and mosques, said she felt ''dread and infinite sadness for the families of the victims, for our Catholic friends.''

But she said that after the attack on Thursday, she feared politicians and commentators would feel even more entitled to label Islam an ''enemy from within.''

''As Muslims,'' she said, ''we pay the damages of those two forms of extremism.''

The bewilderment among France's Muslim community is particularly pronounced in Ivry-sur-Seine, the ***working-class*** suburb east of Paris where Mr. Belabbas grew up and where several thousand Muslims have integrated economically and socially since the 1950s.

''Everything that has been said and done suggests that we Muslims are all targeted, that we are all likely to be related to this new paradigm of 'separatism,' that we are all suspected,'' said Mohamed Akrid, the president of Annour, an organization that is overseeing the building of a mosque expected to be completed in 2023.

Since 2004, Muslim worshipers in Ivry-sur-Seine have had to make do with a dreary gym and a tent that the city hall has lent them to welcome the 2,000 or so people who attend Friday prayers.

Mr. Akrid acknowledged that Islam in France had been outflanked by radical factions that have a powerful influence on young people, especially on social networks. But he added that France's recent crackdown on Muslim individuals and groups accused of radicalism risked creating more confusion than fighting this pervasive influence.

Mr. Darmanin said that the 250 or so police raids last week swept up ''dozens of individuals not necessarily related to the investigation'' of the beheading but to whom the government wanted to send a message: ''Not a minute's respite for the enemies of the Republic.'' He later added that the raids had produced only seven legal proceedings.

''It's to convey a message,'' Mr. Akrid said. ''But to whom? To these people or to all Muslims?''

It was Mr. Darmanin's comments on ethnic food aisles in supermarkets -- such as shelves of halal products -- which he said could foster ''communitarianism'' and lead to ''separatism'' that raised eyebrows and seemed to suggest that a broader debate on integration was at stake.

''The confusion is hazardous, in the sense that you risk further radicalizing certain strains of Muslim society, especially young people, who may feel rejected by such comments,'' said Claire Renklicay, a restaurant owner of Kurdish descent who termed the combat against jihadism as ''a fight for humanity.''

Mr. Belabbas said that when he grew up in the ''Cité Gagarine,'' once an ambitious social housing project in Ivry-sur-Seine, ''the French model of meritocracy told us: 'If you work, if you study, if you respect the laws of the Republic, you will have the right to social mobility.'''

But ''that didn't necessarily mean that we had to eat like everyone else, or believe like everyone else,'' he said, adding that today's model instead implied that Muslim customs and practices were incompatible with the laws of the Republic.

Central to France's convoluted relationship with its Muslim citizens is the authorities' vow to defend those who publish caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad, as part of its strict laws on secularism that allow blasphemy. But many Muslims, from shoppers at the open-air market of Ivry-sur-Seine to the president of the French Council of the Muslim Faith, have stated their unease with the cartoons, arguing that there should be limits to offense when it comes to religious beliefs.

A poll published in early September indicated that whereas 59 percent of French people supported the publishing of the caricatures in the name of freedom of speech, only 19 percent of Muslims agreed.

Vincent Geisser, a sociologist specializing on Islam at the University of Aix-Marseille, said that the current debate reflected a failure of the French model of integration, which used to ''be coupled with a distancing or even a break with religion.''

He said that ''not only did it not happen, but the opposite has actually taken place,'' pointing to the thousands of French Muslims who had integrated into society while retaining their religious practices. This development is considered a ''republican betrayal'' by some political leaders.

In 2016, a report on French Muslims by the Paris-based Institut Montaigne showed that 70 percent always buy halal meat and that 65 percent are in favor of the hijab, the veil or head scarf that many Muslim women wear but which has sparked years of disputes in France.

For young Muslims who fail to assimilate, said Hakim El Karoui, the author of the report, ''the question is, 'Who am I?' And the answer is, 'I'm a Muslim.'''

He added: ''They're going to want to make the religious identity their first identity.''

But in the shock following the teacher's beheading and now the terror attacks, several prominent imams and representatives say they have grown aware of their responsibility to make sure a peaceful version of Islam is promoted in mosques and to call on Muslims to publicly support Mr. Macron's fight against ''Islamist separatism.''

Sitting next to the plans of the future mosque in Ivry-sur-Seine -- a modern 20,000-square-foot building that will include prayer rooms, classrooms and a library -- Mr. Akrid said that many young people were ignorant about religion ''and are going to educate themselves on social networks, at the mercy of manipulators.''

Mr. Akrid said that he agreed with the need for Muslims to enter the public debate and to work toward a better understanding of religious texts. But he added that France's assimilation policy, which tends to deny differences, could contradict such a role.

''We are asked to do two contradictory things at once,'' Mr. Akrid said. ''To step aside and to show up.''

Elian Peltier contributed reporting from London.Elian Peltier contributed reporting from London.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/29/world/europe/france-terror-attack-muslims.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/29/world/europe/france-terror-attack-muslims.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: In the Ivry-sur-Seine mosque. Officials' attacks on ''Islamic separatism'' confuse French Muslims. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 30, 2020

**End of Document**



[***‘What a Barrister Looks Like’: A Young Black Woman Paves the Way; The Saturday Profile***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615X-2XN1-JBG3-61D0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 30, 2020 Friday 13:45 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1208 words

**Byline:** Megan Specia

**Highlight:** Alexandra Wilson is working to change England’s legal establishment, and perceptions about who belongs in it, from the inside.

**Body**

Alexandra Wilson is working to change England’s legal establishment, and perceptions about who belongs in it, from the inside.

LONDON — It was looking like a typical day at the office for Alexandra Wilson as she arrived at a London courthouse ready to defend someone accused of theft.

She tied her hair into a neat knot, shrugged on her black robe and pulled on a white horsehair wig — the official garb of Britain’s barristers, the lawyers who argue most cases in court.

But once she was in the courtroom, things went off script. In a patronizing exchange that was rude at best and hostile at worst, the prosecutor, an older white man, scoffed at Ms. Wilson, chided her for speaking with her client and tutted at her requests for details on court documents.

Unfortunately, it was an all too typical day for Ms. Wilson in a profession where, as a young Black woman, she often finds herself fighting for recognition and respect.

“It certainly does happen to a lot of Black barristers,” she said after the encounter. “My ability is underestimated, quite a lot.”

Last month, in an incident that made headlines in Britain — and spurred a public apology from the acting head of the country’s court system — Ms. Wilson was shouted at for entering the court to defend her client, [*one of three times that day she was assumed to be a defendant*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111).

Ms. Wilson wrote about the encounter [*in a Twitter thread that soon went viral*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111), and said the incident underscored broader issues in the justice system.

“For me, it was a real insight that Black people are being criminalized from when they are first laid eyes on,” she said. “How can I reassure my clients that it’s a fair system if people are already making their mind up from seeing a Black person that you are likely to be a criminal?”

That is part of her drive to be here.

“I thought the best way to make a difference was to be a part of the system that is so problematic and to make change from the inside,” she said. “It’s one thing calling out all of the problems, but we need to actually think, ‘How are we going to solve this?’”

As the 25-year-old daughter of a Black Caribbean father and white British mother from ***working-class*** roots, she is still a rarity in the cavernous halls of England’s courts.

Her unabashed observations about race and class have [*drawn a following of thousands on Twitter*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111), inspired [*a book about her experiences*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111) and driven her to found a community for Black women in the legal professions. Just over a year into her career, she’s only getting started.

A tweet she posted a few months before becoming a practicing barrister in early 2019 that included a photo of her in her official attire and the note “THIS is what a barrister looks like” was the first to draw attention.

The [*most recent statistics on diversity among Britain’s barristers*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111), from the Bar Standards Board, the profession’s regulating body in England and Wales, are grim. Nearly 100 years after the first women became barristers in 1922, women account for just 38 percent of the profession and 16 percent of the most senior barristers, known as Queen’s Counsel. And Black barristers account for just 3.2 percent of all barristers and 1.1 percent of the most senior ones.

[*A 2018 report from the Bar Standards Board*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111) noted that Black prospective barristers encounter significantly higher barriers to entering the profession than their white peers and are less likely to be taken on as trainees.

Yet Black people are overrepresented in the prison population, [*data from the Justice Ministry*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111) shows, with Black people making up about 12 percent of the prison population but just 3 percent of the total population in England and Wales.

The result, Ms. Wilson noted, is criminal courtrooms where those in positions of authority are overwhelmingly white and defendants are disproportionately Black.

“If you’ve got an overrepresentation of Black people on the wrong side of the law, being pushed through the system,” she said, “and they don’t see any Black people representing them, how can they trust us?”

Ms. Wilson confronts the skewed dynamic head on in her book, “In Black and White,” a memoir that details her experience as a barrister and her journey to get there, while unpacking the issues of race and class in a justice system long dominated by rich white men.

She thinks the time is right for Britain to address racial inequality after [*the police killing of George Floyd*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111) in Minneapolis set off protests and [*a global conversation about race, including in Britain*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111).

“I think we like to think of ourselves as this post-racial society where race doesn’t exist and we all live in racial harmony, and frankly, it’s not true,” she said.

She specialized in criminal and family law practice in the hopes of maximizing the impact she can make, and is [*a founding member of One Case at a Time*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111), an initiative to [*fund and provide legal representation*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111) for people of color.

“We can’t just fool ourselves into thinking that everyone has the exact same life chances and everyone is on a level playing field, because they are not,” she said.

Ms. Wilson grew up the eldest of four children in Essex, an area of southeastern England bordering London. Her father is first-generation British, born in England to Jamaican parents who immigrated to the country with a wave of other workers from the Caribbean as part of the “[*Windrush Generation*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111).” Her mother came from a British ***working-class*** family and grew up in public housing.

Both went on to received their college degrees as adults and are both now teachers, and Ms. Wilson credits her own ambition and perseverance to them.

When she was 17, the death of a close friend who was stabbed in London in a case of mistaken identity forced her to take a hard look at the system.

“For me, that was the first time I really started to appreciate how important color was,” she said, “because I had absolutely no doubt if he had been white, he wouldn’t have been killed that day.”

She followed his case through the courts and began to look into other cases, too. After his death, she knew she wanted a career that allowed her to address racial inequities in the justice system.

Yet she had to fight for her place every step of the way. When she told teachers that she wanted to apply to the University of Oxford, one told her mother that she was “too ambitious.”

When she graduated from Oxford — after studying in classrooms where she was often the only Black student — and applied for a legal traineeship, peers told her it would be impossible. And when she became a barrister, they said she wouldn’t fit in.

But last year, when she picked up the formal garb of her new profession — her new wig in a tin case with “Alexandra J. Wilson” in gold lettering on the front — with her grandmother by her side, she knew they were wrong.

Now, she wants to lift up other women of color who are making their way into the profession. This year, she founded [*Black Women in Law*](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-54281111), a community for aspiring lawyers and women already in the field. The group has close to 600 members who connect for conversations, advice and mentoring and organizes online events for schools.

“It’s so important that kids see Black female lawyers,” Ms. Wilson said. “I didn’t, and I wanted to.”

PHOTO: ALEXANDRA WILSON (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMARA ENO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***After Terror Attacks, Muslims Wonder About Their Place in France***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615R-B5N1-JBG3-60J7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 29, 2020 Thursday 08:12 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1336 words

**Byline:** Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** French officials’ attack on “Islamic separatism” and the “enemy within” has Muslims questioning whether they will ever fully be accepted.

**Body**

French officials’ attack on “Islamic separatism” and the “enemy within” has Muslims questioning whether they will ever fully be accepted.

IVRY-SUR-SEINE, France — At age 42, Mehdy Belabbas embodied the French republican promise of upward social mobility: the son of a Muslim construction worker of Algerian descent, he was the first in his family to attend graduate school and served for 12 years as the deputy mayor of the ***working-class*** city where he grew up.

And yet for the past two weeks, Mr. Belabbas has been thinking about just one thing: “I’m wondering if I should leave France.”

Mr. Belabbas’s thoughts stemmed from days of heated — if not hostile — public debate, largely fueled by President Emmanuel Macron’s own ministers, that started in response to the [*gruesome beheading*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) of a teacher by an 18-year-old Muslim extremist and was refueled by what officials believe was an [*Islamist terror attack in Nice*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) on Thursday.

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Mr. Macron, who began a campaign earlier this month [*against Islamic “separatism”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) from France’s deeply held secular values, said recently that Muslims needed to develop an “Islam of enlightenment,” which many considered patronizing.

While these statements and others from French officials have engendered a [*backlash in some Muslim countries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html), they have mostly caused bewilderment among France’s nearly six million Muslims, almost all of whom condemn violence but fear they are all being labeled terrorists.

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“As Muslims,” she said, “we pay the damages of those two forms of extremism.”

The bewilderment among France’s Muslim community is particularly pronounced in Ivry-sur-Seine, the ***working-class*** suburb east of Paris where Mr. Belabbas grew up and where several thousand Muslims have integrated economically and socially since the 1950s.

“Everything that has been said and done suggests that we Muslims are all targeted, that we are all likely to be related to this new paradigm of ‘separatism,’ that we are all suspected,” said Mohamed Akrid, the president of Annour, an organization that is overseeing the building of a mosque expected to be completed in 2023.

Since 2004, Muslim worshipers in Ivry-sur-Seine have had to make do with a dreary gym and a tent that the city hall has lent them to welcome the 2,000 or so people who attend Friday prayers.

Mr. Akrid acknowledged that Islam in France had been outflanked by radical factions that have a powerful influence on young people, especially on social networks. But he added that France’s recent [*crackdown on Muslim individuals and groups accused of radicalism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) risked creating more confusion than fighting this pervasive influence.

Mr. Darmanin [*said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) that the 250 or so police raids last week swept up “dozens of individuals not necessarily related to the investigation” of the beheading but to whom the government wanted to send a message: “Not a minute’s respite for the enemies of the Republic.” He later [*added*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) that the raids had produced only seven legal proceedings.

“It’s to convey a message,” Mr. Akrid said. “But to whom? To these people or to all Muslims?”

It was Mr. Darmanin’s comments on ethnic food aisles in supermarkets — such as shelves of halal products — which he said could foster “communitarianism” and lead to “separatism” that raised eyebrows and seemed to suggest that a broader debate on integration was at stake.

“The confusion is hazardous, in the sense that you risk further radicalizing certain strains of Muslim society, especially young people, who may feel rejected by such comments,” said Claire Renklicay, a restaurant owner of Kurdish descent who termed the combat against jihadism as “a fight for humanity.”

Mr. Belabbas said that when he grew up in the “Cité Gagarine,” once an [*ambitious social housing project*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) in Ivry-sur-Seine, “the French model of meritocracy told us: ‘If you work, if you study, if you respect the laws of the Republic, you will have the right to social mobility.’”

But “that didn’t necessarily mean that we had to eat like everyone else, or believe like everyone else,” he said, adding that today’s model instead implied that Muslim customs and practices were incompatible with the laws of the Republic.

Central to France’s convoluted relationship with its Muslim citizens is the authorities’ vow to defend those who publish [*caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html), as part of its strict laws on secularism that allow blasphemy. But many Muslims, from shoppers at the open-air market of Ivry-sur-Seine to the president of the French Council of the Muslim Faith, have stated their unease with the cartoons, arguing that there should be limits to offense when it comes to religious beliefs.

A [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) published in early September indicated that whereas 59 percent of French people supported the publishing of the caricatures in the name of freedom of speech, only 19 percent of Muslims agreed.

Vincent Geisser, a sociologist specializing on Islam at the University of Aix-Marseille, said that the current debate reflected a failure of the French model of integration, which used to “be coupled with a distancing or even a break with religion.”

He said that “not only did it not happen, but the opposite has actually taken place,” pointing to the thousands of French Muslims who had integrated into society while retaining their religious practices. This development is considered a “republican betrayal” by some political leaders.

In 2016, a [*report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html) on French Muslims by the Paris-based Institut Montaigne showed that 70 percent always buy halal meat and that 65 percent are in favor of the hijab, the veil or head scarf that many Muslim women wear but which has sparked [*years of disputes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/16/world/europe/france-decapitate-beheading.html)in France.

For young Muslims who fail to assimilate, said Hakim El Karoui, the author of the report, “the question is, ‘Who am I?’ And the answer is, ‘I’m a Muslim.’”

He added: “They’re going to want to make the religious identity their first identity.”

But in the shock following the teacher’s beheading and now the terror attacks, several prominent imams and representatives say they have grown aware of their responsibility to make sure a peaceful version of Islam is promoted in mosques and to call on Muslims to publicly support Mr. Macron’s fight against “Islamist separatism.”

Sitting next to the plans of the future mosque in Ivry-sur-Seine — a modern 20,000-square-foot building that will include prayer rooms, classrooms and a library — Mr. Akrid said that many young people were ignorant about religion “and are going to educate themselves on social networks, at the mercy of manipulators.”

Mr. Akrid said that he agreed with the need for Muslims to enter the public debate and to work toward a better understanding of religious texts. But he added that France’s assimilation policy, which tends to deny differences, could contradict such a role.

“We are asked to do two contradictory things at once,” Mr. Akrid said. “To step aside and to show up.”

Elian Peltier contributed reporting from London.

Elian Peltier contributed reporting from London.

PHOTO: In the Ivry-sur-Seine mosque. Officials’ attacks on “Islamic separatism” confuse French Muslims. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 23, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Church Coalition Urges Home Depot Boycott Over Voting Law***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GS-P7P1-JBG3-63B7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 21, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 682 words

**Byline:** By Nick Corasaniti

**Body**

Black religious leaders representing more than 1,000 churches in the state issued a ''warning shot'' for other Republican-led states that are trying to limit voting access.

A major coalition of Black faith leaders in Georgia, representing more than 1,000 churches in the state, called on Tuesday for a boycott of Home Depot, arguing that the company had abdicated its responsibility as a good corporate citizen by not pushing back on the state's new voting law.

The call for a boycott, led by Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, who oversees all 534 African Methodist Episcopal churches in Georgia, represents one of the first major steps to put significant economic pressure on businesses to be more vocal in opposing Republican efforts in Georgia and around the country to enact new restrictions on voting.

''We don't believe this is simply a political matter,'' Bishop Jackson said in an interview. ''This is a matter that deals with securing the future of this democracy, and the greatest right in this democracy is the right to vote.''

Home Depot, Mr. Jackson said, ''demonstrated an indifference, a lack of response to the call, not only from clergy, but a call from other groups to speak out in opposition to this legislation.''

While boycotts can be challenging to carry out in ways that put meaningful financial pressure on large corporations, the call nonetheless represents a new phase in the battle over voting rights in Georgia, where many Democrats and civil rights groups have been reluctant to support boycotts, viewing them as risking unfair collateral damage for the companies' workers.

But the coalition of faith leaders pointed to the use of boycotts in the civil rights movement, when Black voters' rights were also threatened, and said their call to action was meant as a ''warning shot'' for other state legislatures.

''This is not just a Georgia issue; we're talking about democracy in America that is under threat,'' said the Rev. Timothy McDonald III, the pastor of the First Iconium Baptist Church in Atlanta. ''We've got to use whatever leverage and power, spiritual fortitude that we have, including our dollars, to help people to understand that this is a national campaign.''

Home Depot's headquarters are in Georgia, and it is one of the largest employers in the state. But while other major Georgia corporations like Coca-Cola and Delta have spoken out against the state's new voting law, Home Depot has not, offering only a statement this month that ''the most appropriate approach for us to take is to continue to underscore our belief that all elections should be accessible, fair and secure.''

While not publicly wading into the fray, one of the company's founders, Arthur Blank, said in a call with other business executives this month that he supported voting rights. Another founder, Ken Langone, is a vocal supporter of former President Donald J. Trump.

Mr. Jackson said that the faith leaders were calling for four specific actions from Home Depot: speaking out against the Georgia voting law, publicly opposing similar bills in other states, offering support for the John Lewis Voting Rights Act in Congress, and backing litigation against the Georgia law.

Not all voting rights groups are on board with a boycott.

''I can't fully support a boycott within Georgia,'' said Aunna Dennis, the executive director of the Georgia chapter of Common Cause. ''The boycott hurts the ***working-class*** person. But corporations do need to be held accountable on where they put their dollars.''

Faith leaders acknowledged concerns from state leaders, both Democratic and Republican, about the impact of boycotts, but felt the stakes were high enough.

''It is unfortunate for those who will be impacted by this, but how many more million will be impacted if they don't have the right to vote?'' said Jamal H. Bryant, the senior pastor of the New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Ga.

''And so in weighing it out, we understand, tongue in cheek, that this is a necessary evil,'' Dr. Bryant said. ''But it has to happen in order for the good to happen.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/us/politics/georgia-home-depot-boycott.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/us/politics/georgia-home-depot-boycott.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Bishop Reginald T. Jackson leads boycott calls of Home Depot in Georgia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT ODOM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Production Design for the Mean Streets***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64JC-HC91-DXY4-X3VK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 16, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 26

**Length:** 1092 words

**Byline:** By Mekado Murphy

**Body**

The visual environments of ''West Side Story,'' ''The Humans'' and ''Nightmare Alley'' feel as alive as the actors.

We've all seen films with production design that is so dynamic that the setting or look is often considered an additional character. That may bring to mind the heightened or outsize realities in the work of stylist auteurs like Tim Burton and Wes Anderson. But a handful of likely Oscar contenders have built intriguing design worlds by burrowing into ***working-class*** realities, particularly the blue-collar struggles of building and sustaining a life in an ever-changing America.

Those struggles can be seen in water-stained walls, amid the brick piles of a bulldozed neighborhood or on the tattered carnival tents of ''The Humans,'' ''West Side Story'' and ''Nightmare Alley.'' Below, we spoke to the production designers of those movies about how they created such solemn, living backdrops.

'The Humans'

David Gropman

Stephen Karam's drama, an adaptation of his play, spends an evening with a family whose Thanksgiving gathering is more festering than festive. The dinner takes place in a Manhattan apartment that is newly home to a young couple, yet that is all that is new about the place. Paint is peeling, tiles are missing, pipes are gurgling. Many apartment-hunting New Yorkers have inevitably encountered this kind of rental.

The production designer David Gropman, whose credits include other stage-to-screen adaptations like ''Fences'' and ''August: Osage County,'' said that to get the feel of this apartment right, he started by inviting Karam to spend time in a friend's place uptown.

Gropman liked the scale of the rooms, the long hallway and the mazelike layout. There they discussed the film and how a real space would work. ''We talked about the width of the hallway,'' Gropman said, ''how you get from one room to the next, where the kitchen sits and how it's forced into a space that wasn't meant to be a kitchen, what the texture of the walls are like, painted white about a million times.''

The apartment truly does drive the narrative, forcing characters together in one room, pulling them apart in others. It's a grim environment for the struggles of a financially squeezed family that is holding grudges and secrets. Gropman and his team built the duplex apartment set at Steiner Studios in Brooklyn, with each floor on a different stage. But it was important that the place felt as real as possible, Gropman said, so that the actors could forget they were on a soundstage and ''feel that this is where they're supposed to be or where they're not supposed to be.''

'West Side Story'

Adam Stockhausen

The 1961 big-screen version of ''West Side Story'' took to the streets of New York City in its vibrant opening, filming around areas that were being razed to make way for new buildings that included Lincoln Center. That demolition becomes a plot point in Steven Spielberg's new adaptation of the musical. So what we see are the Jets and the Sharks waging turf wars in a neighborhood that is disintegrating before residents' eyes.

The production designer Adam Stockhausen (who frequently works on Wes Anderson's films) noted that he and Spielberg agreed from the start that a lot of the movie would be filmed on location in and around New York. ''Real street, real dirt, real grit, real jeopardy,'' he said. In his research, Stockhausen said, he was struck by an image in a ''slum clearance report'' for the rezoning: an aerial shot with a giant red line outlining the neighborhood. Stockhausen was overwhelmed by the expanse that would be razed but used it as a tool to shape the geography of the story.

They decided that the Jets' territory would have already met the wrecking ball. And they gave the Sharks a space where that same fate was imminent. The rumble would be held in a salt shed by the river, and the number ''Cool'' would be filmed on the rickety piers where pieces of wood had fallen away.

Stockhausen said they knew they would need a lot of urban space: ''It's not like we were just doing a little discreet scene on a stoop or something,'' he said. ''These were hundreds of dancers running out into the middle of the street at full speed.''

They skipped the Columbus Circle section, where the film takes place, because it's ''too built up and modernized,'' Stockhausen said, Instead, they went to northern Manhattan neighborhoods like Washington Heights, as well as spots in the Bronx to find suitable settings. For the Jets' scenes amid rubble, they traveled to Paterson, N.J. ''That's where we found this wonderful pair of parking lots that were adjacent to a really nice period street,'' Stockhausen said. ''And so that became our core of where we built the Jets' demolition zone.''

'Nightmare Alley'

Tamara Deverell

In Guillermo del Toro's noir telling of a carny who hustles his way to the big time, the carnival scenes are cast in a color palette that has a somewhat muted vibrancy. Both the grandeur and the grime, the tugging weight of life on the circuit, is seen in each tattered tent, each murky banner. It was important to the production designer Tamara Deverell (the television series ''Suits'' and ''Star Trek: Discovery'') to match her design to the moods of the characters and the scenes.

She started by building small wooden blocks to represent the characters and tents, ''almost like a toy,'' she said, and ''we played around with the shape of the carnival for the movement through it, because that was very important to Guillermo.''

At the same time, she researched carnivals and circuses of the 1920s, '30s and '40s, and the work of the artist Fred G. Johnson, ''the Picasso of banner art,'' as Deverell put it. She drew from his work but made her interpretation less joyful for this melancholy film.

Then she and her team built many of the sideshow sets on an empty field north of Toronto. ''I approached the whole carnival as a kind of canvas painting,'' she said. For the tents, the fabric was hand-dyed and aged, then sent to a family business in the Midwest that built them. Once the tents came back, the film crew would paint and age them some more.

''We wanted that patina of something that feels timeless because it's been kicked around,'' she said.

The production had to shut down, along with the rest of the film industry, during the first wave of the pandemic. ''When we came back,'' Deverell said, ''some of the tents had ripped and we had to fix the tears. And some of the stuff that we had up already had aged even more, and that was great.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/11/movies/designing-nightmare-alley-west-side-story-the-humans.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/11/movies/designing-nightmare-alley-west-side-story-the-humans.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Steven Yeun, top left, and Richard Jenkins in ''The Humans,'' with production design by David Gropman. The layout of the decrepit apartment drives the film's narrative. Above is a 3-D set model made for the film. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY A24

ALI KASHFI)

One of Adam Stockhausen's sketch designs for ''West Side Story,'' above. In the film, the Jets stake out territory on actual city streets, right. Locales like Washington Heights and spots in the Bronx provided suitable settings. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY 20TH CENTURY STUDIOS)

Sets for ''Nightmare Alley'' were built on a field, above, and extensively aged. ''We wanted that patina of something that feels timeless because it's been kicked around,'' the production designer Tamara Deverell said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KERRY HAYES/SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***You Say We Need a Revolution?; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60FF-N3H1-JBG3-604V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 26, 2020 Sunday 23:48 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 484 words

**Highlight:** Readers caution against radical change, though one disagrees.

**Body**

Readers caution against radical change, though one disagrees.

To the Editor:

Re “[*The Left Is Remaking Politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/11/opinion/sunday/defund-police-cancel-rent.html?searchResultPosition=1),” by Amna A. Akbar (Sunday Review, July 12):

The folly and the purity of demands of abolishing the police and prisons, and enacting the Green New Deal and “cancel rent,” are reminiscent of the folly and the purity that exemplified the election of 2016.

Too many on the left couldn’t see the threat from reactionaries and so couldn’t support the flawed candidacy of Hillary Clinton. A tragic mistake that has led to numerous right-wing policy changes that have left working people and minorities vulnerable to the whims of the Trump nightmare.

Lessons learned? Not by a long shot. In fact, the current demands of this segment of the left only serve up softballs for the right wing to hit out of the park.

The only hope is that these demands will be seen by most progressives as the pie-in-the-sky demands that they surely are. Demands that only interfere with the hard work of reforming our institutions. Demands that the protesters see as “paths to revolution,” which in reality will lead to four more years of right-wing dominance.

Jim Salczynski

Detroit

To the Editor:

The problem is that these “revolutionaries” assume that the human condition is good and that if the ***working class*** rises in power, if police are eliminated because communities “care for one another,” the world will be a better place. As if crime will melt away because everyone really, really cares for his fellow human beings.

There is no mention of the importance of education first and foremost, which of course should be fair and equal. But revolution does not change the human condition (yes, wealth is distributed more fairly, for a while).

Wealth inequality still exists in France; the “elites” still rule. Russia is in effect a dictatorship. Both went through the upheavals of a revolution.

Countries that do share a greater sense of humanity, like the Netherlands and Denmark, still maintain a police force. Until there is real critical thinking on these matters, including accepting that education begins at home, there can be no social revolution.

Ellen Shire

New York

To the Editor:

As Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch wrote in their classic book “Change,” a first-order change is a change in a system, but one that leaves the underlying structure of the system the same.

A second-order change is a change in the underlying structure of the system.

Amna A. Akbar’s article poignantly and beautifully demonstrates the need for second-order change in our political, social and economic structures (with their long history of capitalism, colonialism and systemic racism) in order to move toward “a more just future.”

Given climate change and climate injustice, I believe that we need divergent thinking and second-order change to have any future at all.

John Turtz

Larchmont, N.Y.

PHOTO:   (PHOTOGRAPH BY Adam Maida FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Hong Kong, Buckling Under Covid, Leaves Vulnerable in the Cold***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64XC-7V71-DXY4-X10X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 4, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1354 words

**Byline:** By Vivian Wang

**Body**

Poor residents have been forced to choose between infecting their families or sleeping outdoors because of cramped living quarters and a lack of isolation facilities.

HONG KONG -- For Chan Shun Ki, a cleaner at a construction site in Hong Kong, getting over the coronavirus was the easy part.

Ms. Chan was eager to return to work after missing more than a week last month while recovering. She had already skipped her rent payment after the pandemic wiped out her previous jobs cleaning hotels and waiting tables. She was borrowing money from relatives to make up for the loss of her $83 daily wage.

But then she received a text message from the government health system, which was battling days-long backlogs. It ordered her to stay home for two more weeks because her coronavirus test had come back positive. She had taken it 12 days earlier.

''I feel so much pressure,'' said Ms. Chan, who is a single mother of a 15-year-old. ''The government is really incompetent, and it leaves us residents not knowing what to do.''

As Hong Kong sinks under its fifth, and worst, coronavirus wave, the brunt is falling upon its most vulnerable: migrants, racial minorities, the ***working class***. While the city has long been one of the most unequal on earth, rarely has the cost of that inequality been as steep as now.

That is, in part, because of the sheer scale of this wave, which in two months has led to more than 250,000 infections and 800 deaths -- multiple times as many as in the previous four waves combined. Bodies have piled up in hospital hallways because morgues have no more room. Older patients have been left on gurneys outdoors.

But the suffering has also been exacerbated, some say, by government policy. Under direction from the central Chinese authorities, Hong Kong officials have insisted on some of the world's most stringent social distancing rules, crippling many service industries. Yet they have failed to contain the virus.

As a result, poor residents in cramped apartments have spread the virus to their families because the government has run out of isolation facilities. Those who recover cannot return to work because the testing jam means they cannot prove they are negative.

Migrant domestic workers, predominantly Southeast Asian women who work as caregivers and cleaners, have been fired after getting sick and forced to sleep on the streets. (Hong Kong law requires the workers to live in their employers' homes.) Vegetable prices have soared, but the government has offered limited cash relief.

At times, officials have actively challenged efforts to help the needy. A top official threatened to prosecute members of the public who raised funds for migrant workers fined for violating social distancing rules.

Roger Chung, a professor of public health ethics at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said the containment measures risked doing as much harm to low-income residents as the virus itself.

''I don't think the goal of protecting people's health from Covid-19 is the only incontestable goal'' in policymaking, he said. ''Because these policies can also take a toll on other people's well-being, especially in destabilizing their income and livelihoods.''

Even before the pandemic, Hong Kong's inequality was staggering. It has more billionaires than any city but New York, yet more than 200,000 residents live in carved-up tenement homes where the average living space per person is 48 square feet.

Amid the pandemic, those often dilapidated living quarters are even more perilous. The plumbing is frequently reconfigured to accommodate the multiple households sharing one apartment, and faulty installation can allow the virus to spread between floors. Insufficient ventilation has also fueled transmission.

Social distancing is impossible. Ms. Chan, the single mother, shares a one-room apartment with her son. Days after she fell sick, he did, too.

Some residents, desperate to avoid infecting their relatives, have slept on their rooftops or in stairwells. The Society for Community Organization, a nonprofit organization, said that it had received calls for help from nearly 300 people who were isolating at home, without access to food or medical supplies, since the fifth wave began in January.

The lack of isolation facilities has proved equally, if not more, challenging for migrant domestic workers, who make up about 10 percent of the working population, have few legal rights and often suffer discrimination.

Inah, an Indonesian worker who has been in Hong Kong for three years, began coughing on Feb. 21. Her employer ordered her not to return to the house until she had a negative test result, said Inah, who insisted on being identified only by her first name for fear of losing her job.

For hours, she stood in the rain outside her employer's home. Finally, around midnight, her employer allowed her in, ordering her to go straight to her room without using the restroom, Inah said. In the morning, she was kicked out again.

''Why do you just push me; you never helped me with anything?'' said Inah, who eventually found a place to stay through the nonprofit HELP for Domestic Workers.

HELP's executive director, Manisha Wijesinghe, said that, over five days in February, the group took in nearly 70 workers who had become homeless after testing positive.

Hong Kong's Labor Department said in a statement that firing domestic workers for illness was illegal.

But the authorities themselves have been accused of discrimination. Last month, after the government tightened restrictions on group gatherings, the police announced they had conducted a raid in an area where domestic workers ''commonly gather'' and issued 17 tickets. The $640 per person fine is more than the workers' minimum monthly wage.

In response, some residents organized an online fund-raiser, collecting $14,000 in three days. Then the labor secretary, Law Chi-kwong, accused them of encouraging illegal activity and said he would consider legal action. The organizers shut down the fund-raiser.

Even residents who have avoided infection are straining under the pandemic's economic burden.

The prices of vegetable shot up after one-fifth of the city's vegetable truck drivers were left unable to work because of quarantine rules. (About 90 percent of Hong Kong's produce comes from mainland China.) In late February, the average cost of Chinese lettuce was nearly three times as high as the price a month earlier, according to official statistics. Prices for tomatoes and potatoes have nearly doubled.

Chan Lap To, who owns a vegetable stand on western Hong Kong Island, said most customers were buying less than usual. But he had to hike prices. In addition to running the stall, he also sold vegetables to hotels and restaurants, and that business had plummeted by half because of the unstable supply and weak demand.

He said he had not received any government aid to make up for his losses. ''This is very unfair for all Hong Kong people,'' Mr. Chan said. ''It's all connected.''

The government has offered financial support for certain industries, and last week, officials proposed a nearly $22 billion relief package, including roughly $1,300 vouchers for most residents. But some businesses have been excluded from the previous subsidies. And the vouchers are digital, meaning they cannot be used for rent or at ubiquitous stalls like Mr. Chan's that accept only cash.

Hong Kong also does not have unemployment insurance. The government pledged last month to give one-time $1,300 payments to people who lost their jobs in the fifth wave. But those who became unemployed earlier were not eligible.

For Ms. Chan, the government's promises may bring temporary relief. But what she really wants is to get back to work. To do that, she would welcome even more draconian measures, such as a citywide lockdown, to get coronavirus cases under control.

''Dragging along like this, so I can't work for several months -- this is no way to do things,'' she said. ''Short-term pain is better than long-term pain.''

Joy Dong contributed reporting.Joy Dong contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/02/business/hong-kong-covid.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/02/business/hong-kong-covid.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Domestic workers being ordered to leave. The authorities in Hong Kong have targeted domestic workers with heavy fines for flouting social distancing rules. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Lam Yik/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***You Say We Need a Revolution?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60FM-4RG1-DXY4-X0PF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 27, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; LETTERS

**Length:** 483 words

**Body**

Readers caution against radical change, though one disagrees.

To the Editor:

Re ''The Left Is Remaking Politics,'' by Amna A. Akbar (Sunday Review, July 12):

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There is no mention of the importance of education first and foremost, which of course should be fair and equal. But revolution does not change the human condition (yes, wealth is distributed more fairly, for a while).

Wealth inequality still exists in France; the ''elites'' still rule. Russia is in effect a dictatorship. Both went through the upheavals of a revolution.

Countries that do share a greater sense of humanity, like the Netherlands and Denmark, still maintain a police force. Until there is real critical thinking on these matters, including accepting that education begins at home, there can be no social revolution.

Ellen ShireNew York

To the Editor:

As Watzlawick, Weakland and Fisch wrote in their classic book ''Change,'' a first-order change is a change in a system, but one that leaves the underlying structure of the system the same.

A second-order change is a change in the underlying structure of the system.

Amna A. Akbar's article poignantly and beautifully demonstrates the need for second-order change in our political, social and economic structures (with their long history of capitalism, colonialism and systemic racism) in order to move toward ''a more just future.''

Given climate change and climate injustice, I believe that we need divergent thinking and second-order change to have any future at all.

John TurtzLarchmont, N.Y.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/26/opinion/letters/left-wing-politics.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/26/opinion/letters/left-wing-politics.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Adam Maida FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 27, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Marine Le Pen, Kicking Off Her Campaign, Tries to Embody Credibility***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64J5-YY51-JBG3-62WP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 15, 2022 Saturday 00:10 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1073 words

**Byline:** Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** Ms. Le Pen has bet that sanitizing her far-right party’s image will finally bear fruit in the run-up to France’s presidential election in April.

**Body**

Ms. Le Pen has bet that sanitizing her far-right party’s image will finally bear fruit in the run-up to France’s presidential election in April.

PARIS — Marine Le Pen has long used fiery rhetoric and hard-hitting proposals to fight her way to power in France. But for her third presidential bid, she has struck an unusual tone: serenity.

On Saturday, [*Ms. Le Pen, a far-right leader*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/world/europe/france-le-pen-election.html), used social media to kick off the final stretch of her campaign with a [*3.5-minute video speech*](https://twitter.com/MLP_officiel/status/1482306650920869890?s=20) intended to portray her as a credible and composed stateswoman. A large white scarf tied around her neck, she is pictured in the video strolling around the Louvre’s glass pyramid and speaking in a reassuring tone, her words accompanied by soft piano music.

“Faced with the dangers that await us and the challenges that lie ahead,” Ms. Le Pen said, “I call on you to follow the path of reason and of the heart.”

Her speech’s peaceful overtones were a direct response to the violent messaging put forth by [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france-president.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article), another far-right candidate, whose [*campaign launch video*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/04/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france.html) was riddled with clips of crumbling churches, burning cars and violent clashes with the police that projected an image of a chaotic France.

Mr. Zemmour has said he is running for president to “save” his country, which he portrays as assailed by Islam, immigration and leftist identity politics. By contrast, Ms. Le Pen’s video showed her surrounded by smiling people as she toured France, visiting businesses and port cities.

The stakes are high for Ms. Le Pen less than 100 days before the presidential election. After finishing in third place in the 2012 campaign and being defeated in the 2017 runoff by Emmanuel Macron, she hopes her third bid will be the winning one. To try to make that happen, she has bet on dropping the populist messaging that once characterized her, and has instead redoubled efforts to “un-demonize” her party, the National Rally, which has often been associated with flashes of antisemitism and xenophobia.

But fierce competition among right-wing candidates has eroded Ms. Le Pen’s early lead in the polls and has led many to wonder if she will always remain a long shot.

Ms. Le Pen’s video — set at the world-renowned Louvre museum, which was once the main residence of France’s kings — was also a way for her to [*revive a confrontation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/world/europe/france-le-pen-election.html) with Mr. Macron, who is widely expected to seek another term. In 2017, when he was president-elect, Mr. Macron [*delivered his victory speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/world/europe/france-le-pen-election.html) in front of the same glass pyramid at the Louvre.

“Macron is the opponent,” said Philippe Olivier, a close aide to Ms. Le Pen and a member of the European Parliament. “That’s what the symbolic act of being at the Louvre is about.”

Until a few months ago, Ms. Le Pen was expected to be Mr. Macron’s main challenger, in a rematch of the 2017 vote. She has spent the past four years trying to foster her credibility and has [*worked to rebrand the National Rally’s extremist ideas as respectable*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/13/world/europe/france-far-right-national-rally-le-pen-macron.html).

Even as she has hewed to her party’s harsh nationalist, anti-immigrant vision, Ms. Le Pen has softened her longtime populist economic agenda by dropping a proposal to exit the eurozone and advocating more orthodox debt policies. She has also broadened her platform to include more day-to-day issues like energy prices, the theme of her campaign stop on Friday in Saint-Malo, in western France.

But two dark-horse candidates have emerged and have made the prospect of reaching a runoff with Mr. Macron more uncertain: [*Mr. Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france-president.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article), a [*polarizing far-right polemicist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html?action=click&amp;module=RelatedLinks&amp;pgtype=Article) who has seen a meteoric rise in the polls, and [*Valérie Pécresse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/18/world/europe/france-valerie-pecresse-republicans.html), a center-right politician whose hard-line messaging on national security and immigration issues step on some of Ms. Le Pen’s own favorite campaign themes.

[*Recent polls*](https://www.ifop.com/presidentielle-2022/) show Ms. Le Pen and Ms. Pécresse running neck and neck in the first round of April’s election, with each expected to get about 17 percent of the vote. But that still puts them about 10 points behind the incumbent, Mr. Macron.

The biggest threat to Ms. Le Pen’s ambitions is Mr. Zemmour. Studies have shown that [*his full-throated promotion of reactionary ideas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/world/europe/eric-zemmour-rally-france.html) has cost her many potential voters, and some have said that the two far-right candidates could sabotage each other’s chances.

But Mr. Zemmour seems to have lost momentum in recent weeks — he now [*stands at 13 percent in the polls*](https://www.ifop.com/presidentielle-2022/) — and Ms. Pécresse has found herself cornered between [*Mr. Macron’s right-leaning policies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/16/world/europe/france-macron-right.html) and competitors who lean further right than she does.

Meanwhile, party divisions have made competition from the left, which in total accounts for barely a quarter of the vote, almost nonexistent. On Saturday, [*Christiane Taubira*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/10/world/europe/ascending-heights-of-french-power-trailed-by-her-otherness.html), a charismatic former Socialist justice minister, officially announced her bid and became the eighth left-wing candidate. She said she would participate in a [*citizens’ primary that has desperately tried to create unity on the left*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/29/world/europe/france-left-presidential-election-primary.html).

“In the end, it’s likely that both Pécresse and Zemmour have already reached the peak of their campaigns,” said Antoine Bristielle, the head of the polling department at the Fondation Jean-Jaurès research institute. He added that Ms. Le Pen had weathered competition fairly well by focusing her campaign on the ***working class***, a segment of the electorate that Mr. Zemmour has failed to attract.

Mr. Bristielle and Mr. Olivier, Ms. Le Pen’s aide, also said that Mr. Zemmour’s radical messaging has had the unexpected effect of normalizing Ms. Le Pen’s ideas, indirectly fueling her longstanding strategy to sanitize the National Rally’s image.

Mr. Bristielle said recent polls showed that many right-wing voters, who in total represent about 50 percent of the electorate, would ultimately choose the candidate on the right most likely to win.

That is what Ms. Le Pen, should she pull ahead in the polls, is betting on.

Mr. Zemmour, by appealing to a conservative bourgeois electorate that has long balked at voting for a populist candidate, is building up “a reserve of votes for the second round” that could ultimately turn to Ms. Le Pen, Mr. Olivier said.

“In the end, I think Zemmour is positive for us,” he added.

For Ms. Le Pen, Mr. Bristielle said, “having Zemmour by her side to provide her with a pool of votes, and on top of that, to make her a normal, less transgressive candidate — that can be beneficial.”

PHOTO: Marine Le Pen has bet that sanitizing her party’s image will bear fruit in her third presidential bid. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEREMIAS GONZALEZ/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***G.O.P. primary victories in Nevada set the stage for Trump-centered battles in the fall.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65P6-FM51-JBG3-63R2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 14, 2022 Tuesday 22:17 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1700 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Weisman and Jazmine Ulloa

**Highlight:** The Nevada primaries capped a series of elections on Tuesday that saw key wins for Trump-inspired candidates in South Carolina and Texas.

**Body**

The Nevada primaries capped a series of elections on Tuesday that saw key wins for Trump-inspired candidates in South Carolina and Texas.

Republican voters in Nevada on Tuesday elevated conservative candidates who have ardently embraced Donald J. Trump’s false claims of election fraud, turning a key swing state into a contest this fall between embattled Democrats and Republicans who insist President Biden stole the 2020 election.

The victories in the Nevada primaries for Mr. Trump capped a series of elections on Tuesday that saw one South Carolina Republican lawmaker who had crossed Mr. Trump go down in defeat, another survive her Trump-backed challenge and a Hispanic Republican grab a South Texas House seat vacated by a Democrat.

Those results gave mixed signals about Mr. Trump’s continuing grip on the party even as the scrutiny of his actions following his 2020 defeat intensifies. At the same time, the elections on Tuesday suggested that Republicans remain on course for strong gains in November’s midterms.

By flipping the Rio Grande Valley seat of former Representative Filemon Vela in Texas, Mayra Flores became the first Republican to represent the majority-Hispanic district in the seat’s 10-year history, and she became the first Republican Latina the state has ever sent to Congress.

In the sheer number of tossup contests, few states will rival Nevada this fall. Republicans see chances to unseat a host of Democrats, including Gov. Steve Sisolak; Lt. Gov. Lisa Cano Burkhead; three Democratic members of the House; and Senator Catherine Cortez Masto.

Among the Republicans who won their primaries Tuesday were Adam Laxalt, a Senate candidate and former Nevada attorney general who led Mr. Trump’s efforts to overturn the state’s 2020 election results, and Jim Marchant, a secretary of state candidate who has pressed conspiracy theories about voting machines and hopes to oversee the state’s 2024 election.

Election night on Tuesday started with the defeat in South Carolina of Representative Tom Rice by a Republican primary challenger endorsed by Mr. Trump, even as another South Carolina Republican, Representative Nancy Mace, survived.

Both Mr. Rice and Ms. Mace had crossed the former president as he struggled to maintain power after the Jan. 6 attack, which is now under the spotlight of congressional hearings. Mr. Rice, a staunch conservative in a conservative coastal district, was one of 10 House Republicans who voted to impeach him for inciting the riot. Ms. Mace, in her first speech as a newly elected freshman, said Mr. Trump bore responsibility for the deadly mayhem, though she did not vote to impeach him.

In turn, Mr. Trump backed Katie Arrington, a former state lawmaker, to take on Ms. Mace and State Representative Russell Fry to challenge Mr. Rice. Mr. Trump, who turned 76 on Tuesday, called on South Carolina voters to deliver him “a beautiful, beautiful birthday present” — twin defeats of both Ms. Mace and Mr. Rice.

The South Carolina contests had their own dynamics — Mr. Rice was defiant and contemptuous of Mr. Trump to the end, while Ms. Mace tried hard to regain the good graces of Trump administration officials if not Mr. Trump himself. The outcomes of both races could hold deep meaning to the party as it considers whether to renominate the former president for another White House run.

“This took a little bit of time, but we are finally here,” Ms. Mace told those gathered for a victory party in Charleston, as she thanked Ms. Arrington for “stepping into the arena.” She added, “this is going to make our campaign even stronger in November.”

The elections on Tuesday represented something of a midpoint in a Republican primary season that has delivered decidedly mixed signals to party leadership. Mr. Trump has claimed some significant wins, propelling his chosen Senate candidates to primary victories, such as J.D. Vance in Ohio and Mehmet Oz in Pennsylvania. However, his endorsed candidates have lost primary showdowns for governor in Georgia and Nebraska as well as a key secretary of state race in Georgia.

Still to come are contests that rank high on his vengeance list, such as Representative Liz Cheney’s primary in Wyoming on Aug. 16. Ahead of Arizona’s Aug. 2 primary, Mr. Trump has backed Kari Lake, a promoter of his false stolen-election claims, to be the state’s next governor. To take on Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona, he picked Blake Masters, who was caught on tape promoting the conspiracy that one-third of the people outside the Capitol on Jan. 6 were F.B.I. agents.

In South Carolina, Mr. Rice was only the second of the 10 impeachment Republicans to take his case for re-election to the party’s primary voters, and he was the first to lose. The other, Representative David Valadao of California, clings to a slim lead over a Trump-aligned challenger, as vote counting continues after the primary there last week. Mr. Rice’s defeat means half of the 10 will not be returning to Congress next year, with other contests still to come, including Ms. Cheney’s uphill climb.

Ms. Mace’s run for re-election had split the Trump community. The Trump administration’s most prominent South Carolinians — former Representative Mick Mulvaney, his budget director and acting chief of staff, and former Gov. Nikki Haley, who served as United Nations ambassador — both backed Ms. Mace against Ms. Arrington, who was a proven gamble for the party since she had lost the seat to a Democrat in 2018.

Ms. Haley, who is considering her own run for president in 2024, [*had scrambled to endorse Ms. Mace*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/politics/nikki-haley-trump.html) before Mr. Trump could endorse Ms. Arrington, a move that established some independence without openly crossing the former president.

“It’s a great day in South Carolina!” Ms. Haley proclaimed with Ms. Mace’s victory.

In the Republican upset in South Texas, Ms. Flores won a special election to fill the remainder of Mr. Vela’s term until the end of the year, [*becoming one of three Latinas*](https://cawp.rutgers.edu/facts/state-state-information/texas) to ever represent the state in Congress. The seat will once again be up for grabs in the November general election. Yet even her temporary victory foreshadows broader Republican gains in the Democratic stronghold of South Texas.

Ms. Flores — who was born in Tamaulipas, Mexico, and is the wife of a Border Patrol agent — raised 16 times the amount logged by her closest Democratic competitor, Dan Sanchez. She appeared to have at least one celebrity supporter — Elon Musk, who [*posted on Twitter early Wednesday*](https://twitter.com/elonmusk/status/1536973965394157569) that he voted for Ms. Flores, describing it as the “first time I ever voted Republican.” Mr. Musk’s SpaceX operates a launch site in the district.

Ms. Flores had not received a formal endorsement from Mr. Trump, but she had campaigned as a [*Trump-inspired Republican*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/us/politics/border-grievance-politics.html) focused on border security. Her campaign signs highlighted three words: “Dios, familia, patria.” God, family, country.

In one of her earliest campaign ads, she made her way through a thick field of flowering cotton in South Texas, as she blasted a Democratic Party that she said insists on selling Hispanics the idea that they should depend on big government.

“At 13 years old, I was working in this very cotton field every day, all day, in the hot Texas sun,” she said, adding that immigrants like her came “the legal way” to pursue the American Dream. She called for a militarization of the border, embraced Mr. Trump’s false claims of election fraud and often denounced the “radical socialist communist agenda.”

In Nevada, Republican candidates largely sought to align themselves with Mr. Trump, taking hard right stances on abortion, guns, immigration and the teaching of race and gender in schools.

In the governor’s race there, Clark County Sheriff Joe Lombardo won the Republican nomination and will face Mr. Sisolak in November. The sheriff had been criticizing the governor for his mask mandates and his handling of the coronavirus pandemic. Mr. Sisolak abandoned the state’s mask mandate in February and has been heavily promoting Nevada’s economic rebound and the billions of dollars pumped into the state from federal coronavirus relief packages.

In the Senate race, Ms. Cortez Masto will face Mr. Laxalt, the grandson of a former Nevada governor and senator. In an audio recording obtained by The New York Times, Mr. Laxalt told voters in March that [*he was already gearing up to fight election fraud*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/22/us/politics/adam-laxalt-election-fraud.html) in his race, explaining that “we’re vetting which group we think is going to do better.”

But it was Mr. Marchant, a former state assemblyman, who worries many Democrats the most. At events with the MyPillow chief executive Mike Lindell and other Trump allies, Mr. Marchant has embraced some of the most far-fetched and debunked electoral conspiracy theories. He has pressed for all ballots to be cast and counted by hand, and he organized the “America First” secretary of state coalition to elect candidates who have embraced false claims about the 2020 election.

As it has been in the past several elections, Nevada promises to be a battleground in the 2024 presidential campaign, and the person running the election will either be Mr. Marchant or Cisco Aguilar, a Democrat and former aide to the late Senate majority leader Harry Reid.

“Enough of the untruths. We need to focus on the truths in a bipartisan way,” Mr. Aguilar [*told The Las Vegas Review-Journal*](https://www.reviewjournal.com/news/politics-and-government/nevada/cisco-aguilar-to-run-for-secretary-of-state-2351427/).

Beyond those statewide offices, three Nevada House seats are deemed tossups for the fall, a potential windfall for Republicans as they seek control of Congress.

In Nevada, where Mr. Reid and the state’s Culinary Union built an influential Democratic political machine, a racially diverse coalition of ***working-class*** and Latino voters has powered crucial Democratic victories in presidential elections since 2008. But the president’s party tends to lose ground in midterm elections. That has been particularly true for Democrats in Nevada. Democratic turnout in the midterms in the state has tended to take a sharp nosedive, favoring Republicans.

Maya King and Jennifer Medina contributed reporting.

Maya King and Jennifer Medina contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Mayra Flores won a special election; she is the first Republican Latina from Texas to go to Congress. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JASON GARZA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Georgia Faith Leaders Urge Boycott of Home Depot Over Voting Law***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GJ-P561-JBG3-62H4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 20, 2021 Tuesday 10:21 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 694 words

**Byline:** Nick Corasaniti

**Highlight:** Black religious leaders representing more than 1,000 churches in the state issued a “warning shot” for other Republican-led states that are trying to limit voting access.

**Body**

Black religious leaders representing more than 1,000 churches in the state issued a “warning shot” for other Republican-led states that are trying to limit voting access.

A major coalition of Black faith leaders in Georgia, representing more than 1,000 churches in the state, called on Tuesday for a boycott of Home Depot, arguing that the company had abdicated its responsibility as a good corporate citizen by not pushing back on [*the state’s new voting law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/georgia-voting-law-annotated.html).

The call for a boycott, led by Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, who oversees all 534 African Methodist Episcopal churches in Georgia, represents one of the first major steps to put significant economic pressure on businesses to be more vocal in opposing Republican efforts in Georgia and around the country to enact new restrictions on voting.

“We don’t believe this is simply a political matter,” Bishop Jackson said in an interview. “This is a matter that deals with securing the future of this democracy, and the greatest right in this democracy is the right to vote.”

Home Depot, Mr. Jackson said, “demonstrated an indifference, a lack of response to the call, not only from clergy, but a call from other groups to speak out in opposition to this legislation.”

While boycotts can be challenging to carry out in ways that put meaningful financial pressure on large corporations, the call nonetheless represents a new phase in the battle over voting rights in Georgia, where many Democrats and civil rights groups have been reluctant to support boycotts, viewing them as risking unfair collateral damage for the companies’ workers.

But the coalition of faith leaders pointed to the use of boycotts in the civil rights movement, when Black voters’ rights were also threatened, and said their call to action was meant as a “warning shot” for other state legislatures.

“This is not just a Georgia issue; we’re talking about democracy in America that is under threat,” said the Rev. Timothy McDonald III, the pastor of the First Iconium Baptist Church in Atlanta. “We’ve got to use whatever leverage and power, spiritual fortitude that we have, including our dollars, to help people to understand that this is a national campaign.”

Home Depot’s headquarters are in Georgia, and it is one of the largest employers in the state. But while other major Georgia corporations like [*Coca-Cola and Delta*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/georgia-voting-law-annotated.html) have spoken out against the state’s new voting law, Home Depot has not, offering only a statement this month that “the most appropriate approach for us to take is to continue to underscore our belief that all elections should be accessible, fair and secure.”

While not publicly wading into the fray, one of the company’s founders, Arthur Blank, said in a call with other business executives this month that he supported voting rights. Another founder, Ken Langone, is a vocal supporter of former President Donald J. Trump.

Mr. Jackson said that the faith leaders were calling for four specific actions from Home Depot: speaking out against the Georgia voting law, publicly opposing similar bills in other states, offering support for the John Lewis Voting Rights Act in Congress, and backing litigation against the Georgia law.

Not all voting rights groups are on board with a boycott.

“I can’t fully support a boycott within Georgia,” said Aunna Dennis, the executive director of the Georgia chapter of Common Cause. “The boycott hurts the ***working-class*** person. But corporations do need to be held accountable on where they put their dollars.”

Faith leaders acknowledged concerns from state leaders, both Democratic and Republican, about the impact of boycotts, but felt the stakes were high enough.

“It is unfortunate for those who will be impacted by this, but how many more million will be impacted if they don’t have the right to vote?” said Jamal H. Bryant, the senior pastor of the New Birth Missionary Baptist Church in Lithonia, Ga.

“And so in weighing it out, we understand, tongue in cheek, that this is a necessary evil,” Dr. Bryant said. “But it has to happen in order for the good to happen.”

PHOTO: Bishop Reginald T. Jackson leads boycott calls of Home Depot in Georgia. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATT ODOM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A German State Is Last in Almost Everything. But It’s No. 1 in Vaccines.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656R-JBB1-DXY4-X50X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 12, 2022 Tuesday 10:40 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1408 words

**Byline:** Christopher F. Schuetze

**Highlight:** Bremen — Germany’s smallest state — managed its vaccination campaign better than any other place in Germany. It succeeded by activating community networks.

**Body**

BREMEN, Germany — This northern port city, combined with neighboring Bremerhaven, makes up the smallest and by many measures the poorest state in Germany’s federal system. In state comparisons of education or addressing child poverty, it consistently ranks dead last.

But when it comes to vaccines, Bremen is No. 1, with more than 90 percent of its population fully vaccinated. It has achieved its success in a country that has managed to vaccinate only slightly more than three-quarters of its people, and that voted last week against a bill that would have made vaccinations mandatory for people 60 and over.

“Bremen was so successful because they realized pretty early on that you’ve got to go into the neighborhoods, that you can’t just have one central vaccination center, but that you have to go into communities and approach people,” said Marieke Gerstmann, who runs a community health mediation center that advocates for vaccinations in one of Bremen’s poorer neighborhoods.

What makes Bremen’s elite vaccination status all the more striking is that immigrants — who make up one-third of Bremen’s population, the most of any German state — are less likely to get vaccinated than people born in Germany, according to recent studies by the Robert Koch Institute, the national health authority.

“Our approach was, get to the people and connect with the community,” said Andreas Bovenschulte, who is Bremen’s mayor and also acts as the city-state’s governor.

Mr. Bovenschulte credits a tight network of community elders, religious leaders, civic activists and city employees that was strong in Bremen even before the pandemic hit. Bremen’s social ties are a necessity especially in underprivileged neighborhoods, he said.

Bremen’s chapter of the German Red Cross quickly put together mobile vaccination teams, two brand-new vaccination trucks and nine old city buses — which can serve as mobile vaccination clinics or post-shot recovery rooms.

“I’ve been preaching this for a while: You have to go and proactively approach people, you have to meet them and explain it to them,” said Melanie Brinkmann, a virologist at the Technische Universität Braunschweig and a member of the expert commission advising the federal government on the coronavirus pandemic.

Because so much focus initially was on securing sufficient vaccine doses to cover the population, Germany’s vaccination strategy initially overlooked those who would be harder to reach, Professor Brinkmann said in an interview.

“The last percentage points are the most difficult,” she said. “But some states really invested in consultations and did it well.”

On a recent sunny but bone-chillingly windy morning, one of the colorful vaccination trucks pulled into a desolate parking lot in front of a mall in the hardscrabble neighborhood of Gröpelingen. The truck, furnished with a heater and a noisy coffee maker, was parked next to one of the decommissioned buses that offered a place for the recently vaccinated to rest.

Bülent Aksakal, a community health worker fluent in Turkish and German, had made the rounds in the area the week before, telling people to circle the day on their calendar. Interest was low, because many people had already gotten their shots.

Najlaa Kanbar, 21, who is from Idlib, Syria, had missed Mr. Aksakal’s entreaties but saw the truck with offers of vaccination written in seven different languages on its side as she walked by with her three young children. She also noticed that there was no line and thought it was the perfect time to get her second shot.

Unlike other states that did little more than make the vaccines available, several dedicated community organizations in Bremen explained the vaccines and persuaded people to get them.

A caveat on Bremen’s official 90-percent-plus-coverage figure: Its numbers, like those of other population centers, may be skewed by residents of surrounding communities coming and taking advantage of Bremen’s vaccination offers. Because no national vaccination database exists, it’s hard to know to what extent this added to the numbers in Bremen, for example, or second-place Hamburg.

Mr. Aksakal, the community health worker, said he had spent the last 11 months visiting day care centers, sewing circles, language schools and integration courses, explaining how the vaccine works, why it was important and what side effects could be expected. “Honesty is always the best policy,” he said.

As opposed to conspiracy theories, people in immigrant communities “worry more about practical considerations, side effects and bureaucracy,” said Mr. Aksakal.

In Bremen-Osterholz, another ***working-class*** neighborhood in the eastern part of the city, a team of eight women, all of whom speak at least two languages, try to persuade people to get vaccinated. The community health workers — who are funded by a university — are just a small part of the warren of social workers, nonprofit groups, independent community projects and private people that have been activated to help promote vaccines.

“There was already a strong network, with many active people raring to go,” said Ms. Gerstmann, who runs the team.

Patience Bonsu, who was born in Ghana and is one of the counselors, says that when it comes to the often delicate matter of vaccinations, a connection to the relevant migrant community is invaluable.

As a counselor at a women’s center, Ms. Bonsu, who speaks English and Twi, a language spoken in Ghana, in addition to German, uses her position to bring up vaccines when talking to the mothers about other issues.

“The trust issue is very, very important at this moment,” she said.

With access to their home communities through social media, many migrants are also exposed to disinformation that leads to fears and questions about vaccination.

“Many in the African community initially thought the virus wouldn’t affect them because there were so few reported cases in Africa,” said Ms. Bonsu. “But then people from the community here started getting sick.

“I think that a lot of people, especially from the African community, feel more comfortable asking me questions,” said Ms. Bonsu about her work over the past year.

The city’s outreach has gone beyond just explaining vaccinations. Ilker Kabadayi, a mosque elder at the Fatih mosque in Gröpelingen, said he has had local community health workers come in to help explain the Covid social distancing rules.

None of it can be taken for granted. Five months after Chancellor Olaf Scholz started pushing for a general vaccine mandate for all adults, lawmakers rejected a watered-down proposal last week. The parliamentary vote was a setback for a country that once prided itself on sound pandemic management, but Bremen is ahead of the game.

Clutching a pack of brochures and smiling at potential vaccine recipients, Sabrine Rehifi stood outside the vaccine truck in Gröpelingen. When it gets busy, it is Ms. Rehifi’s job to help keep the line orderly and make sure everyone has the proper forms; when it’s slow she tries to engage passers-by, which as a speaker of five languages — including Arabic and Swahili — she is well positioned to do.

When Ms. Kanbar approached, Ms. Rehifi greeted her in Arabic. Once she realized that Ms. Kanbar’s German would not suffice to fill out the forms required to get the shot, she accompanied her onboard to translate.

“By the time they come here, they’ve usually already made up their mind to get their vaccines,” Ms. Rehifi said.

But despite the staff’s best effort, Ms. Kanbar’s 2-year-old son started to cry and then wail as the registration went on, which in turn caused his older sister to join in before the staff could bring cookies to to console them.

“To get downtown with three kids with public transport, that’s actually quite a challenge,” said Peter Zeugträger, who runs the local vaccine operation, over the din. Without the outreach program, Ms. Kanbar might have spent hours traveling to the vaccine center in the central part of the city.

Unfazed by the wailing, Ms. Kanbar said she was happy to be able to get the shot so easily.

“My husband will come by as soon as he’s off work,” she said before rolling up her sleeve.

PHOTOS: Najlaa Kanbar, a Syrian mother of three, getting a Covid-19 shot at a mobile vaccination site in Bremen, Germany. Community outreach efforts like mobile clinics, left, have helped the state of Bremen fully inoculate more than 90 percent of its population. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAETITIA VANCON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

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[***Dance When the Spirit Moves You***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RW-W371-DXY4-X1C8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 13, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1206 words

**Byline:** By Gia Kourlas

**Body**

The actor Mads Mikkelsen ends Thomas Vinterberg's film with a wild delight of a drunken dance. The man, once a professional dancer, can move.

Martin is a history teacher with the listless, sloping posture of a comma. He walks slowly, as though every step ignites a jolt of pain. His job is uninspiring; his marriage is falling apart. ''Have I become boring?'' he asks his wife. ''Do you find me boring?''

Her answer seems to confirm what he already knows: ''You're not the same Martin I first met.''

In the Danish director Thomas Vinterberg's ''Another Round,'' a film about breaking the rules and, in doing so, breaking free, Martin is one of four high school teachers who decide to test a theory about alcohol: As long as they maintain a consistent level of it in their blood, their lives will improve.

The experiment has its problems. But ultimately Martin, played by Mads Mikkelsen, finds release, which comes through in a dance at the end of the movie. The dance, a little drunken, shows Mikkelsen's nimble ability to balance daring and control. It's fitting: He was once a professional dancer.

The dance begins after Martin, who took jazz ballet lessons in his past, has attended the funeral of a friend and received text messages from his wife that hint at reuniting; he and his friends greet graduating students at the harbor as the song ''What a Life,'' by the Danish band Scarlet Pleasure, plays. At first, his movement is a little tentative, full of stops and starts. But once he gets going, he throws himself into it, taking wide crossover steps, swaying and, with a silky vigor, spinning to the ground and springing up -- all the while taking sips from a can of beer.

As his body melts into the beat of the song, it's clear that this is more than a dance: Martin has been given another chance -- or round -- at life, and he's taking it. Uninhibited and robust, Mikkelsen, 55, darts through space, punching at the air and jumping forcefully before taking off in a most spectacular leap over the water. The film ends with him in midair.

In working with Mikkelsen, the choreographer Olivia Anselmo said: ''He started the whole rehearsal saying, 'Well, I'm not like I used to be, I'm not young anymore and blah, blah, blah.' And then the first thing he does is go into a slide and a roll on the floor and jumps up and does this thing where he wraps his leg around the other leg -- like a yoga pose. He just did that.''

Mikkelsen started out as an acrobat before discovering dance, though it's as an actor that he's made his name. He was the Bond villain in ''Casino Royale,'' and Dr. Hannibal Lecter in the television series ''Hannibal.'' He won a best actor award at Cannes for his role in Vinterberg's film ''The Hunt'' (2012). But to Anselmo, he is something else. ''When I was in the studio with him, it's not like I'm thinking like, wow, this is this world-known actor,'' she said. ''It was so cozy and chill. I just thought, this is just another dancer.''

Recently, Mikkelsen spoke about the dance and his professional dancing years, which lasted around nine years. He switched to drama, he said, ''to pull out a different drawer and find something new,'' he said. ''I was also always more in love with the drama of dancing than the aesthetics of dancing.''

What follows are edited excerpts from a recent conversation.

How did you feel about dancing in the film?

I thought it would be a hard thing to get away with in a realistic film -- to dance for real. So in my world, it was more like a drunken dream or a drunken image or fantasy, but in Thomas's world, it was literally a man dancing while he was surrounded by a lot of young people. [Laughs]

He wanted the ending to be a balance between a man flying and a man falling and, obviously, the dance was perfect for that.

How did you begin dancing in the first place?

I started out as a gymnast, and there was a choreographer coming to our club. She wanted a couple of acrobats in the background who could do flips and she wanted us to do a few steps as well. She thought I had a certain amount of talent and she asked me if I wanted to learn the craft, and I had absolutely nothing else to do.

I did a few shows with her, kind of musical things, and then it just felt as if I had to honor dance. I had to really learn it from the base.

Where did you study?

I applied for a scholarship and I went to New York for two summers to Martha Graham. Then I joined a contemporary ballet group in Denmark and I did a ton of musicals like ''La Cage Aux Folles'' and ''Chicago.'' ''West Side Story.'' But I was trained as a contemporary Martha Graham dancer.

Was Martha around? She must have been pretty old.

Yeah. I had the opportunity to meet her. It was a miracle time. She was obviously not a teacher [anymore], but she came along once as the guru she was, with her arthritis. She was helped out of the car. She was stunning. She had this enormous hair. She sat on the floor and watched us. And all of a sudden, she just went into one of her moves -- her spine just got completely straight, and she put her nose on the floor.

That is magic.

We were all just like, what? And then she had all the boys come really close because she didn't speak up loudly. She said, ''The boys must jump in the air.'' And so we went in there and we jumped and jumped and jumped, and then we looked at her, and she had fallen asleep. [Laughs] But it was fantastic, fantastic to meet her.

When did you start gymnastics?

I was probably in first or second grade. You have to understand, gymnastics in Denmark was on a completely different level than the rest of the world in the sense that we sucked. I remember there was a Russian club coming to us as a friendship club, and it was just insane how good they were. It was just like, Jesus, we are wasting our time.

How old were you when you switched to dance?

I think it was about 17 or 18 when that happened. So I was a ***working-class*** little boy -- almost like a Billy Elliot story. I couldn't really tell my friends what I started out doing. That's just the way it is when you're a ***working-class*** kid, but then when they eventually found out, I told them to do the math: ''How many girls, how many boys?'' They were all like, ''Yeah, I want to be a dancer as well.''

What was it like dancing again for ''Another Round''?

It was like saying hi to an old friend. I'm the kind of dancer that doesn't dance when I'm out at a club with friends. I've always been a little reluctant to do that because, I guess, it was my profession. I knew that this character was rusty and he was not a professional dancer like I was, but he had done it as a young man, as a kid. At the same time, I got a little ambitious.

Did you injure yourself?

No, not at all. It was all good. But it was all adrenaline. I felt really young again, but the next week I felt really old.

Because you were sore?

I was super sore. I do a lot of sports. I bike and I play tennis and I do all kinds of stuff, but it's not the same muscles.

What were you thinking about in the final dance?

We wanted it not to be about the dance but about what was inside of the character. More than it is a performance, it's an internal journey. It's almost like a close-up.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mads Mikkelsen, center, filming the end of ''Another Round.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRIK OHSTEN/SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS)

Mads Mikkelsen, who takes flight in the final scene of Thomas Vinterberg's film, ''Another Round,'' on being a dancer: I was ''always more in love with the drama of dancing than the aesthetics of dancing.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY STURLA BRANDTH GROEVLEN/SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS)

Mikkelsen's character, Martin, is a high school teacher who, along with three colleagues, takes part in an experiment with alcohol to shake up his listless life. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRIK OHSTEN/SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS) (C6)

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2021

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[***How I Learned the Art of Seduction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66VJ-RTV1-DXY4-X19V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 13, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 12; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 2552 words

**Byline:** By Melissa Febos

**Body**

Recently, a friend of mine who is newly divorced and dating for the first time asked me to help her work on her flirtation skills.

''First, you have to get the gaze right,'' I told her. ''Not stalker-heavy, but enough so they notice.''

''Like this?'' She glowered at me, and I tried to stifle a laugh.

''More like this,'' I said, demonstrating.

When I was a kid, my mother taught me how to soften my gaze when watching birds so they wouldn't feel the weight of my attention. This kind of look is just the opposite -- a concentrated gaze that lands like a finger, tapping, casting the line of desire until it catches and tugs.

I looked at her, and something activated in me, responding to a set of clues telling me how she wants to be seen. ''Look intently,'' I told her, ''but not for too long, just graze them with it.''

''Whoa,'' she said, ''careful where you point that!'' She looked at me in wonder, and I felt both proud and embarrassed. ''Where did you learn to do that?''

I think of myself as someone who has always known how to do this -- an intuitive seducer -- but my friend's question invited me to reconsider the origins of the impulse.

Where did I first learn it?

There is, of course, the mere fact of my being a woman, which means I have been consuming lessons in seduction my whole life from movies and TV. But my friend is also a woman, and she can't emit the smoldering atmosphere to reel someone in. Whereas I can do it on command, as if it were my job. As we watch our meals arrive I ponder this, and something clicks. For many years -- sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly -- seducing people was my job.

Both my parents grew up ***working-class***, sometimes working-poor, and I was raised with an ethos of scarcity -- we wasted nothing, ate down to the rind of everything and tried not to buy anything on credit. Though my family was solidly middle-class, my classmates often assumed I was poor because I wore discount shoes and generic brand clothes all through grade school, until I switched to thrift stores as a teen.

My parents weren't cheap, exactly, but they didn't locate status in commodities -- my mother once told me that driving a luxury car was like giving the finger to all the poor people in the world -- and they believed in work. The week I turned 14, the legal employment age in Massachusetts, my dad took me to city hall to get a work permit.

That year, I started working as a dishwasher at a seafood restaurant. Dressed most days in a pair of faded overalls and Doc Martens, I would peer out at the front of the house and watch the wait staff -- mostly 20-somethings who held the glamour of low-level celebrities to me.

Tidy in their identical aprons and T-shirts bearing the restaurant logo, they all seemed kind of hot to me in an ineffable way that had little to do with their looks. The source of this attractiveness, I eventually realized, was the skill with which they deployed charisma.

They were practiced seducers, flitting around the dining room, calibrating their affect to suit each diner. The ones with the tallest stacks of bills at the end of a shift cultivated a flirtation with their tables that hit exactly the right note to release money. As if every diner were a slot machine played less by chance than by skill.

At 14, I already had a keen sense that I ought to appeal to people, men especially, but ''succeeding'' at this had mixed results. Early sexual development had left me vulnerable to early sexual experience -- I didn't really learn how to say no until adulthood -- and mostly it had left me feeling powerless and numb. Using my drive to be liked in a context whose endpoint wasn't sex, and which promised material reward for success, seemed a much safer forum. The idea felt empowering, even, as it gave me control over the encounter.

My first job waiting tables was at Café Algiers, a landmark Middle Eastern restaurant in Harvard Square in Cambridge that catered to professors and graduate students. I was 17 and happily living in a squalid apartment with four friends in Somerville. Amid the wobbly octagonal tables, I balanced silver pots of mint tea and plates of hummus and practiced my approach.

I learned that if my gaze was too intense, the men (and occasionally women) asked sotto voce what time my shift ended; if it was too subtle, they ignored me and left disappointing tips.

The trick was to kindle the right feeling in myself -- I have something they want and I want to give it to them, but not yet -- to render the plates of food a symbol for something else, to exude an air of slight withholding. I learned what all good salespeople understand: If you suggest that a person wants something with enough confidence, there's a good chance they'll believe you.

Every shift was an exercise in the art of seduction, and each one ended with a tally of tips that amounted to a kind of grade -- numeric feedback on the degree of my success.

I honed my skills quickly. After just a few weeks, I could balance five entrees on one tray, instantly calculate a bill in my head, and just as instantly read the customers. I could tell if a diner wanted me to tease them, treat them with mild disgust (rare, but they did exist) or welcome them like a long-lost family member. My scatterbrained nature, which made me clumsy in my everyday life, was focused by the stream of social cues. I intuitively understood the rhythm of it, like a dancer catching a beat. When I was working, I didn't think and I didn't make errors -- which was good, because my livelihood depended on it: In 1996, the minimum wage for tipped employees was $2.13 per hour.

My second job as a server was at the Greenhouse, another storied Cambridge institution. The overpriced diner had an iconic green sign and a dining room that was perpetually fogged with cigarette smoke. The female professors generally tipped big and wanted a dry little flirt, sprinkled with irony, as if we were in on the same joke. The blue-collar guys who ate at the counter liked to trade endearments, to be teased a little. A natural mimic, I sometimes dropped my Rs when talking with them. You want that on mahble rye?

After the Greenhouse, there were eight or 10 more restaurant jobs -- the Jewish deli where families came for brunch, the bakery frequented by moneyed lesbians, the Mexican restaurant that hosted a lot of tourists and bachelorette parties. Whatever their differences, every restaurant was a microcosm of larger social hierarchies. I once worked a brunch shift in Belmont with a guy I was dating. He often got high before work and was terrible at his job. He never thought about what the customer wanted, never read their faces for subtle cues, never seduced anyone. He didn't have to. He could get orders wrong, mix up tables, spill water on a customer, and still end the shift with a tall stack of tips. Meanwhile, my earnings dropped if I smiled too little or too much.

I came to learn that this was a rule in restaurants: No matter the quality of their service, male waiters got bigger tips. They also rarely had to put up with the kind of abuse that we did.

I remember one table I had during my stint at the Mexican restaurant. It was a big family, replete with a preening patriarch who emanated insecurity that he expressed by treating every woman in sight like garbage. I smiled through it, even when he patted my ass in full view of his wife, who then glared at me.

A knot of shame and fury tightened in me. I ignored it and imagined the tip this kind of treatment inevitably led to -- a ten, maybe a twenty, even. I smiled at that vision and then directed it at the table. But in this instance, after they'd left as I cleared their oily dishes, I realized the man had stiffed me. I seethed for days. It stoked a fire in me that felt elemental. More than 20 years later, I can feel its heat. It wasn't so much the money as the humiliation

Over time, exposure inured me to the humiliations of the job. A person can get used to almost anything given enough time -- personality will grow around adversity the way tree roots will grow around a rock, shaping itself in response to the immovable.

Plus, I needed the money. I was a teenager for most of the years I worked in restaurants. I didn't have a degree, or even a high school diploma (unless you count the G.E.D.). Even though I was occasionally stiffed, it was the highest-paying job I was qualified for, by a long shot.

The humiliations inherent in waiting tables were also made tolerable also by the satisfaction of being good at my job. While I held less power than the diners in many ways -- I was there to literally serve them -- I also had a subtle control over them, one they couldn't see and which grew stronger the longer I exercised it. I worked them, like a salesperson or a petty con artist, and they were my chumps, my suckers, my johns.

A skilled seducer can invert a power dynamic to their advantage. The knowledge of how to do this was, I realized, a valuable skill and one I later employed to much more lucrative ends.

When I moved to New York in 1999, it was harder to get restaurant work. Upscale Manhattan places wanted a résumé, and my experience was decidedly downscale. I worked for a few months at a diner in the West Village, serving eggs and fetching jam and ketchup, but not long after that I got into sex work, which paid a lot better.

As a professional dominatrix, I applied all the skills I'd hewed waiting tables -- reading people, intuiting their desires, performing interest and indifference. And the beauty of it was that the subtext became text. Before I worked with any client, we had a consultation in which he told me exactly what he wanted, and I agreed to it or didn't. Of course, my demeanor in these meetings was calibrated according to my instinct for what the clients wanted. (They wanted to be treated with disgust far more frequently than restaurant diners had, which I enjoyed.)

During the sessions themselves, I relied upon my honed instinct for timing and intensity -- even when they had a script, there was still a lot to improvise. The work was primarily that of seduction: the assessment of desire and how to draw it out, grow it, leave it wanting a little. The main difference -- and it was not small -- is that I was paid well no matter how the session went.

During my second year of grad school, I started adjunct teaching, which paid worse than either sex work or waiting tables. Some semesters, I taught six classes at three different schools, for which I traveled across four boroughs. I got used to writing on commuter trains and slowly built a very different wardrobe than that I had needed for any previous job.

Teaching was also a performance, but like sex work, I got paid whether it was good or not. Mostly I performed well, and not having to flirt with anyone to do so was a revelation, however meager the pay.The principal difference between teaching and my previous jobs was that in the classroom the role I played was not predicated on a lie. I acted a persona derived from true parts of me, perhaps the truest parts of me.

A good teacher seduces, but not with the aim of bedding students. A good teacher deploys their charisma with the goal of making the audience fall in love with the subject they teach. My goal was never to extract money, or even esteem, from my students but instead to infect them with the love I felt for the writers I taught. After teaching I was tired, but not drained the way I used to be after a restaurant shift, with my spirit as spent as my body. I arrived home from class electrified by my own love for the books I taught and for the craft of making art out of life.

After I finished grad school and before I sold my first book, I went back to food service. I got a job at a small restaurant that was named after a spice in my rapidly gentrifying Brooklyn neighborhood. It was a much nicer joint than any I had worked in before. There were candles on the tables and a new menu was printed every night.

It had been a few years, and as I dug out my waist aprons for my first shift, I thrilled a little at the prospect of returning to the familiar rhythm of service.

An hour or so in, however, my confidence began to waver. I still knew how to do the job, but a woodenness came over me when it was time to smile and wink and mold myself around the unspoken desires of strangers. Over the evening's course, my body's unwillingness to comply dismayed me. What was wrong? Had I lost my touch?

At the end of the night, I made a small error, and the chef shouted at me from behind the line: ''What are you, stupid?''

Chefs had shouted many worse things at me in the past; verbal abuse from chefs was a given in many restaurants and rated a pretty minor offense overall. But I was no longer used to it.

I had just spent two years at the front of college classrooms in which, however underpaid, I was never called stupid. I was treated with respect, even deference. I had ascended to a different realm of employment where, while the option was still available to me, I didn't need to use my sexuality to make money. Nor was I required to suffer these kinds of overt humiliations.When I cashed out, I was left with more than I had ever reaped from a single shift waiting tables. I zipped the wad of bills into my coat pocket and told the house manager that I wouldn't be back the following night, or any thereafter. I never worked the floor of a restaurant again.

Sometimes I miss it, but I am always grateful I had the privilege to quit that life.

Now I teach full time, and when I walk into a classroom on the first day of the semester, I scan the room of faces and feel their expectations swell like waves toward me.

There is a thrilling power in holding someone's attention, in intuiting their interests and igniting their curiosity -- all seducers know it. I first learned that feeling not in the dungeon, but in the dining rooms of restaurants, the clatter of dishes wafting with the smell of garlic from the kitchen, clashing with the low music of the front of the house.

It's impossible to fully account for the ways that education influenced not only my relationship to work, but to every person I encounter. Spending years thinking of people as slot machines to win by extracting their favor, knowing the security of my life depended on it, did not set me up for healthy relationships.

I've outgrown a lot of skills that once served my survival, and learned that holding on to them does its own damage. There is grace in letting go of what no longer serves me or those whose paths I cross. I'm grateful, also, for the occasional opportunity to repurpose them. I like to think my years of seduction have made me a more empathic teacher, that the skill of eliciting desire has become one for sharing love.

Melissa Febos is the author of ''Girlhood,'' ''Whip Smart,'' ''Abandon Me'' and ''Body Work.'' She teaches in the nonfiction writing program at the University of Iowa.

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**Graphic**

This article appeared in print on page SR12.

**Load-Date:** November 13, 2022

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[***Could Anger At Democrats Turn Nevada Red?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65P4-3VV1-DXY4-X2WV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 14, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1730 words

**Byline:** By Blake Hounshell

**Body**

No state was walloped harder by the economic impact of the pandemic, and voters may take out their anger on Democrats.

If a red wave arrives in November, as many expect, it will likely wash ashore in landlocked Nevada, a state whose recent history of Democratic victories masks just how hard-fought those triumphs have been.

In presidential elections, Republicans have not won Nevada since 2004, when President George W. Bush carried the state narrowly over John Kerry. Races for statewide office have been more contested, but still dominated by Democrats on the whole.

This year could be different. Nevadans will cast their final ballots on Tuesday in primary elections that will decide what sorts of candidates will be carrying the G.O.P. banner in November. And as of now, it looks as if many of those Republicans might very well be elected.

Much has been written about the woes of Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, a Democrat who is up for re-election this year. Whenever her name appears in national news coverage, it's invariably accompanied by some version of the phrase ''one of Democrats' most endangered incumbents.''

Her likely opponent is Adam Laxalt, a former state attorney general whose father, Pete Domenici, was a senator in New Mexico -- a fact that was a closely held family secret until 2013. Laxalt's grandfather was Paul Laxalt, who served as both governor and senator in Nevada.

Heading into Election Day, Laxalt looks to be comfortably ahead of his top primary opponent, Sam Brown, a retired Army captain. Laxalt helped lead Donald Trump's efforts to overturn the presidential election results in Nevada in 2020.

House seats on fire

Less well understood than the Senate stakes is the fact that all three of Democrats' House seats in Nevada are also at risk in November.

The Cook Political Report rates all three districts as Democratic tossups. House Majority PAC, the main outside spending arm of House Democrats, has reserved more dollars in ad spending in Las Vegas than in any other media market in the country.

There's Representative Susie Lee, who squeaked by her Republican opponent by fewer than 13,000 votes in 2020. Lee's likely opponent is April Becker, a lawyer who has the backing of Representative Kevin McCarthy, the top Republican in the House.

Representative Steven Horsford, whose district stretches from northern Las Vegas to the middle of the state, could also be in trouble. In March, his wife, Sonya Douglass, popped up on Twitter to say she would ''not be silent'' about the decade-long affair he has admitted to having with Gabriela Linder, a former intern for Senator Harry Reid.

Douglass criticized his choice to ''file for re-election and force us to endure yet another season of living through the sordid details of the #horsfordaffair with #mistressforcongress rather than granting us the time and space to heal as a family.''

Linder hosted an ''audio memoir'' of the affair under a pseudonym, Love Jones, called ''Mistress for Congress.''

After Horsford responded to her first series of tweets, Douglass wrote: ''This statement is worse than the first from May 2020. The lies never end. Let's pray @stevenhorsford comes to grips with reality and gets the help he needs.''

Horsford's likely opponent is Annie Black, a state lawmaker who was outside the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Last week, Black sent out a fund-raising appeal to supporters with the subject line, ''The Real 'Big Lie' is that Biden Won 'Fair and Square.'''

The Democratic primary to watch

Then there's Representative Dina Titus, whose historically safe Las Vegas seat is now decidedly unsafe thanks to a decision by Nevada Democrats to spread some of the voters in her old district across the two others.

That move prompted a vulgar complaint by Titus, who blasted the redistricting move as ''terrible'' during remarks at an A.F.L.-C.I.O. town hall event in December.

''They could have created two safe seats for themselves and one swing,'' Titus said. ''That would have been smart.'' She added: ''No, no, we have to have three that are very likely going down.''

Titus, in an interview, noted that she had represented parts of her new district when she was in the Nevada Legislature. ''It's like coming home,'' she said. ''Been gone awhile, but I'm back.''

But first, Titus faces a primary challenge from Amy Vilela, an activist who last week secured the backing of Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Vilela was a co-chair of the Sanders presidential campaign in 2020. She previously ran in a primary against Horsford in 2018, losing by a large margin.

This time, Vilela is running a progressive insurgent campaign against what she called ''complacency'' by Titus and the Democratic establishment, which she said was causing low enthusiasm among voters.

''We definitely have to start delivering on our promises and start addressing the needs of the ***working class*** instead of the donor base,'' Vilela said in an interview.

''Well, let's put it in perspective,'' Titus responded, pointing to her record of bringing federal dollars to Nevada. ''When Amy tries to portray herself as the progressive and me as the establishment, look at all the endorsements I have. She's a Democratic Socialist, and I'm the progressive Democrat.''

'We fell off the skyscraper and quickly hit bottom'

If Nevada flips to red in November, the state's economic struggles will be a powerful reason.

Nevada's unemployment rate surged to 28.5 percent in April 2020, just after the coronavirus pandemic throttled the tourism industry, which makes up a huge portion of the state's economy. The unemployment rate is now 5 percent, still not quite at prepandemic levels.

Democrats say that without their help, the economic suffering would have been worse. And Mike Noble, a pollster who works in Nevada, said that while a Republican sweep was a possibility, ''a lot of things would need to go right for the G.O.P. to make that come to fruition since the Democrats have the advantage of incumbency.''

Inflation is posing a potent new threat. As of Monday, the average price of a gallon of gasoline in Nevada was $5.66, well above the $5 national average. That's in a state with an anemic public transit system, where you need a car to get most places. And rents in Las Vegas, a place with a famously transient population, are rising faster than in nearly any other city in the country.

''Our recovery has been in fits and starts,'' said Stephen Miller, research director at the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. ''We fell off the skyscraper and quickly hit bottom, then we just went kind of sideways for a while.''

What to read

William Barr, the former attorney general, said that Donald Trump had become ''detached from reality'' in a videotaped interview broadcast on the second day of public hearings by the panel investigating the Jan. 6 assault at the Capitol. View The Times's live coverage here.

Maya King looks at the different paths taken by Representatives Nancy Mace and Tom Rice, two South Carolina Republicans who criticized Trump after Jan. 6.

Eric Adams has been New York's mayor for only five months, but with the city facing a series of urgent challenges, he has already kicked off a cross-country fund-raising blitz for re-election, write Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Dana Rubinstein.

A deep-red New Mexico county tries to ditch voting machines and drop boxes

In a New Mexico county that Donald Trump carried by 26 percentage points in the 2020 election, officials have voted unanimously to abandon the use of electronic voting machines and drop boxes for absentee ballots, persuaded by an ''audit force'' that critics say has sowed baseless fraud claims.

The Otero County Commission, which is made up entirely of Republicans, took the step on Thursday after a two-hour presentation by the New Mexico Audit Force, a partisan group whose canvassing activities and embrace of conspiracy theories has drawn scrutiny from Congress.

Couy Griffin, the commissioner who introduced the measures, defended the work of the audit force before the 3-to-0 vote.

''If the 2020 election was built on a lie,'' Griffin said, ''which we believe it was, we hope that it does overturn it. We live in a time right now whenever we say, 'I'm not sure the vote's secure,' and it's just like you get attacked from every angle like you're a crazy person.''

The commissioners acknowledged that the vote might be symbolic more than anything, pointing out that the county clerk, a Republican, will have the final say.

A spokesman for New Mexico's top election official -- Maggie Toulouse Oliver, the Democratic secretary of state -- said in an email on Monday that state law governed voting systems and drop boxes. The county will continue to maintain and utilize the current systems under the authority of the state and the county clerk, he said.

''The vote taken by the Otero County Commission last week has no legal authority,'' Alex Curtas, the spokesman, said.

In a move that echoed other Republican efforts across the country to switch to hand-counting of votes, the commission also voted to conduct a hand count of ballots cast in last Tuesday's primary elections, but state officials said there was no mechanism for the county to simply order that.

Representatives of the audit force told the commissioners that ballots should be hand-counted for the November election and said that the electronic machines -- made by Dominion Voting Systems -- were vulnerable to being hacked, in addition to incorrectly interpreting and marking ballots.

A representative for Dominion Voting Systems, the target of baseless pro-Trump conspiracy theories about rigged voting machines, said, ''This is yet another example of how lies about Dominion have damaged our company and diminished the public's faith in elections.''

Gerald Matherly, a commissioner, said that he had been persuaded that drop boxes were a ''scam thing'' after watching ''2000 Mules,'' a film by the conservative commentator Dinesh D'Souza that makes numerous false claims about ''ballot trafficking'' and election fraud. An Associated Press analysis of the film found gaping holes in its supposed findings.

-- Blake

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/2022/06/13/us/politics/nevada-republicans-november-elections.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/13/us/politics/nevada-republicans-november-elections.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Adam Laxalt helped lead Donald J. Trump's efforts to overturn the presidential election in Nevada. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE BUGLEWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Hong Kong, Buckling Under Covid, Leaves Its Most Vulnerable in the Cold***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WY-MTM1-JBG3-64MY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 2, 2022 Wednesday 23:50 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1375 words

**Byline:** Vivian Wang

**Highlight:** Poor residents have been forced to choose between infecting their families or sleeping outdoors because of cramped living quarters and a lack of isolation facilities.

**Body**

Poor residents have been forced to choose between infecting their families or sleeping outdoors because of cramped living quarters and a lack of isolation facilities.

HONG KONG — For Chan Shun Ki, a cleaner at a construction site in Hong Kong, getting over the coronavirus was the easy part.

Ms. Chan was eager to return to work after missing more than a week last month while recovering. She had already skipped her rent payment after the pandemic wiped out her previous jobs cleaning hotels and waiting tables. She was borrowing money from relatives to make up for the loss of her $83 daily wage.

But then she received a text message from the government health system, which was battling days-long backlogs. It ordered her to stay home for two more weeks because her coronavirus test had come back positive. She had taken it 12 days earlier.

“I feel so much pressure,” said Ms. Chan, who is a single mother of a 15-year-old. “The government is really incompetent, and it leaves us residents not knowing what to do.”

As Hong Kong sinks under its fifth, and worst, coronavirus wave, the brunt is falling upon its [*most vulnerable*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/26/world/asia/hong-kong-coronavirus-lockdown-inequality.html): migrants, racial minorities, the ***working class***. While the city has long been one of the most unequal on earth, rarely has the cost of that inequality been as steep as now.

That is, in part, because of the sheer scale of this wave, which in two months has led to more than 250,000 infections and 800 deaths — multiple times as many as in the previous four waves combined. Bodies have piled up in hospital hallways because morgues have no more room. Older patients have been [*left on gurneys outdoors*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/business/hong-kong-unvaccinated-elderly.html).

But the suffering has also been exacerbated, some say, by government policy. Under [*direction from the central Chinese authorities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/world/asia/hong-kong-covid-omicron-wave.html), Hong Kong officials have insisted on some of the world’s most stringent social distancing rules, crippling many service industries. Yet they have failed to contain the virus.

As a result, poor residents in cramped apartments have spread the virus to their families because the government has run out of isolation facilities. Those who recover cannot return to work because the testing jam means they cannot prove they are negative.

Migrant domestic workers, predominantly Southeast Asian women who work as caregivers and cleaners, have been fired after getting sick and forced to sleep on the streets. (Hong Kong law requires the workers to live in their employers’ homes.) Vegetable prices have soared, but the government has offered limited cash relief.

At times, officials have actively challenged efforts to help the needy. A top official threatened to prosecute members of the public who raised funds for migrant workers fined for violating social distancing rules.

[*Roger Chung*](https://www.sphpc.cuhk.edu.hk/rogerchung), a professor of public health ethics at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said the containment measures risked doing as much harm to low-income residents as the virus itself.

“I don’t think the goal of protecting people’s health from Covid-19 is the only incontestable goal” in policymaking, he said. “Because these policies can also take a toll on other people’s well-being, especially in destabilizing their income and livelihoods.”

Even before the pandemic, Hong Kong’s inequality was staggering. It has more [*billionaires*](https://www.scmp.com/business/china-business/article/3148865/hong-kong-had-worlds-second-largest-billionaire-population) than any city but New York, yet more than 200,000 residents live in [*carved-up tenement homes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/07/22/world/asia/hong-kong-housing-inequality.html) where the average living space per person is 48 square feet.

Amid the pandemic, those often dilapidated living quarters are even more perilous. The plumbing is frequently reconfigured to accommodate the multiple households sharing one apartment, and faulty installation can allow the virus to spread between floors. Insufficient ventilation has also fueled transmission.

Social distancing is impossible. Ms. Chan, the single mother, shares a one-room apartment with her son. Days after she fell sick, he did, too.

Some residents, desperate to avoid infecting their relatives, have slept on their rooftops [*or in stairwells*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/23/hong-kong-covid-quarantine-vulnerable-people/). The Society for Community Organization, a nonprofit organization, [*said*](https://soco.org.hk/%e5%9f%ba%e5%b1%a4%e5%b8%82%e6%b0%91%e6%8a%97%e7%96%ab%e9%98%b2%e7%96%ab%e6%94%af%e6%8f%b4%e4%b9%8b%e7%94%b3%e8%a8%b4/) that it had received calls for help from nearly 300 people who were isolating at home, without access to food or medical supplies, since the fifth wave began in January.

The lack of isolation facilities has proved equally, if not more, challenging for migrant domestic workers, who make up about 10 percent of the working population, have few legal rights and often [*suffer discrimination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/18/world/asia/hong-kong-domestic-worker-discrimination.html).

Inah, an Indonesian worker who has been in Hong Kong for three years, began coughing on Feb. 21. Her employer ordered her not to return to the house until she had a negative test result, said Inah, who insisted on being identified only by her first name for fear of losing her job.

For hours, she stood in the rain outside her employer’s home. Finally, around midnight, her employer allowed her in, ordering her to go straight to her room without using the restroom, Inah said. In the morning, she was kicked out again.

“Why do you just push me; you never helped me with anything?” said Inah, who eventually found a place to stay through the nonprofit [*HELP for Domestic Workers*](https://helpfordomesticworkers.org/en/home/).

HELP’s executive director, Manisha Wijesinghe, said that, over five days in February, the group took in nearly 70 workers who had become homeless after testing positive.

Hong Kong’s Labor Department said in a statement that firing domestic workers for illness was illegal.

But the authorities themselves have been accused of discrimination. Last month, after the government tightened restrictions on group gatherings, the police [*announced*](https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202202/13/P2022021300667.htm) they had conducted a raid in an area where domestic workers “commonly gather” and issued 17 tickets. The $640 per person fine is more than the workers’ minimum monthly wage.

In response, some residents organized an online fund-raiser, collecting $14,000 in three days. Then the labor secretary, Law Chi-kwong, accused them of encouraging illegal activity and [*said he would consider*](https://hongkongfp.com/2022/02/19/hk107k-fundraiser-for-domestic-workers-facing-covid-fines-axed-after-official-says-campaign-may-be-illegal/) legal action. The organizers shut down the fund-raiser.

Even residents who have avoided infection are straining under the pandemic’s economic burden.

The prices of vegetable shot up after [*one-fifth*](https://sc.isd.gov.hk/TuniS/www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202202/15/P2022021500354.htm?fontSize=1)of the city’s vegetable truck drivers were left unable to work because of quarantine rules. (About 90 percent of Hong Kong’s produce comes from mainland China.) In late February, the average cost of Chinese lettuce was nearly three times as high as the price a month earlier, according to [*official statistics*](https://www.afcd.gov.hk/english/agriculture/agr_fresh/agr_fresh.html). Prices for tomatoes and potatoes have nearly doubled.

Chan Lap To, who owns a vegetable stand on western Hong Kong Island, said most customers were buying less than usual. But he had to hike prices. In addition to running the stall, he also sold vegetables to hotels and restaurants, and that business had plummeted by half because of the unstable supply and weak demand.

He said he had not received any government aid to make up for his losses. “This is very unfair for all Hong Kong people,” Mr. Chan said. “It’s all connected.”

The government has offered financial support for certain industries, and last week, officials [*proposed*](https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/hong-kong-economy/article/3168071/sweeteners-ease-covid-19-pain-vouchers-and-tax?module=hard_link&amp;pgtype=article) a nearly $22 billion relief package, including roughly $1,300 vouchers for most residents. But some businesses [*have been excluded*](https://www.thestandard.com.hk/breaking-news/section/4/153262/Wet-market-vendors-left-out-of-government-subsidies) from the previous subsidies. And the vouchers are digital, meaning they [*cannot be used for rent*](https://hongkongfp.com/2022/02/24/hong-kong-budget-calls-for-cash-instead-of-consumption-vouchers-lack-of-support-for-underprivileged/) or at ubiquitous stalls like Mr. Chan’s that accept only cash.

Hong Kong also does not have unemployment insurance. The government [*pledged last month*](https://news.rthk.hk/rthk/en/component/k2/1632596-20220208.htm) to give one-time $1,300 payments to people who lost their jobs in the fifth wave. But those who became unemployed earlier were not eligible.

For Ms. Chan, the government’s promises may bring temporary relief. But what she really wants is to get back to work. To do that, she would welcome even more draconian measures, such as a citywide lockdown, to get coronavirus cases under control.

“Dragging along like this, so I can’t work for several months — this is no way to do things,” she said. “Short-term pain is better than long-term pain.”

Joy Dong contributed reporting.

Joy Dong contributed reporting.

PHOTO: Domestic workers being ordered to leave. The authorities in Hong Kong have targeted domestic workers with heavy fines for flouting social distancing rules. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Lam Yik/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In Madison Cawthorn’s District, Strong Opinions of Him, For and Against***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FR-VT81-DXY4-X044-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 15, 2022 Sunday 05:26 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1459 words

**Byline:** Jazmine Ulloa

**Highlight:** The right-wing firebrand is counting on Republican primary voters to look past his bad press. Opponents are counting on them to lose patience with him.

**Body**

The right-wing firebrand is counting on Republican primary voters to look past his bad press. Opponents are counting on them to lose patience with him.

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. — When Representative Madison Cawthorn’s name comes up in this city of 14,000, where he was born and raised and it is not difficult to bump into someone who knew him from his home-schooling days, there tends to be a visceral reaction.

There are sighs from Republicans who elected him to his first term in November 2020 and met his meteoric rise in Washington with the praise and excitement reserved for a hometown hero — only [*to be disappointed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/30/us/politics/madison-cawthorn-congress.html) by his behavior and bad press ever since.

There are groans and looks of utter disgust from people with Democratic and independent leanings — some of whom have chosen to cast a ballot in a Republican primary for the first time in hopes of removing him from office.

And there are eye-rolls and shrugs from his die-hard supporters, “America First” conservatives after the fashion of Donald J. Trump, who chalk up Mr. Cawthorn’s controversies to youthful indiscretion and instead reserve their opprobrium for the liberal media, Democrats, his Republican opponents and political groups with deep pockets.

“I don’t care what he’s done,” said Moiena Gilbert, 77, a retired certified nursing assistant who pulled up in an old Ford pickup to cast an early vote this week at Henderson County’s Board of Elections. “I am going to vote for the man.”

What there is not a lot of is indifference. In this southwestern corner of the state, a largely ***working-class*** and Republican stronghold set against the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains, it seems as if nearly everyone has made up his or her mind on the young firebrand once seen as the future of the Republican Party.

In interviews with more than 30 voters in Mr. Cawthorn’s 11th Congressional District, including nearly two dozen registered Republicans, it was clear that his support had weakened, even among hard-right Trump followers who said Mr. Cawthorn’s immaturity and lack of focus on his constituents had led them to disregard his endorsement by the former president and give one of his rivals their vote.

Mr. Cawthorn needs to garner only 30 percent of the vote on Tuesday to avoid a runoff in a crowded field split among seven other challengers. They are led by Chuck Edwards, a state senator who has the endorsements of most members of the Legislature from his district, and Michele Woodhouse, the elected Republican chair of Mr. Cawthorn’s district who once was among his staunch supporters.

Whether Mr. Cawthorn can dodge a runoff has been a constant source of debate in his hometown among friends, co-workers and in Christian circles.

“I think there is a lot of support for Madison — they just may be afraid to tell you,” said one Baptist deacon leaving the Bethany Bible Church after a Wednesday night Bible study.

Chip Worrell, 62, a charter member of the same church and a woodworker who helped erect its building, disagreed.

“I don’t think he is going to be re-elected,” he said.

Mr. Cawthorn, 26, who was injured in a car crash at 18, has seldom been out of the headlines since making his first run for Congress in 2020, when it emerged that he had made up parts of his autobiography. He falsely claimed his injuries had kept him from attending the Naval Academy, but admitted in court that it [*had already rejected him*](https://avlwatchdog.org/candidates-claim-creates-false-impression/). Young women at the conservative Christian college he attended before dropping out [*accused him of sexual harassment*](https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/addybaird/madison-cawthorn-sexual-misconduct-allegations-patrick).

Elected in 2020 as the youngest member ever to serve in the House, he helped spread Mr. Trump’s stolen-election lies and aligned himself with other incendiary far-right representatives, Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia and Lauren Boebert of Colorado.

But his re-election campaign has been marred by a seemingly endless series of embarrassing reports — beginning when he claimed that people he “looked up to” in Washington had [*invited him to orgies and used cocaine.*](https://twitter.com/patriottakes/status/1508127124498141187) (The remark drew a scolding from the House Republican leader, Kevin McCarthy.)

The revelations ranged from traffic violations, like driving with a revoked license, to two incidents in which he brought a loaded gun to an airport. Politico published photos of Mr. Cawthorn in [*lingerie*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/04/22/madison-cawthorn-photos-00027286). The [*Washington Examiner*](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/house/madison-cawthorn-implicated-in-potential-insider-trading-scheme-experts-say) reported his involvement in a cryptocurrency scheme and suggested it may have violated federal insider trading laws. And nude photos and videos [*have circulated*](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/madison-cawthorn-videos-trump-maga-endorsement-1350478/) showing him in sexually suggestive antics, in what appeared to be attempts to raise questions about Mr. Cawthorn’s sexuality.

Mr. Cawthorn’s campaign did not respond to requests for comment. [*Writing on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/CawthornforNC/status/1521994807526281218), he told supporters that he and a friend had simply been joking around crassly.

“I told you there would be a drip drip campaign,” he wrote. “Blackmail won’t win. We will.”

Democrats have criticized some of the attacks for stirring homophobia. Supporters in Mr. Cawthorn’s district see the leaks as the work of his opponents or of G.O.P. leaders like Mr. McCarthy.

But a super PAC created to oust Mr. Cawthorn, which has held itself out as a clearinghouse of damaging information about him, said the tips it has received have largely come from Mr. Cawthorn’s former aides and supporters.

“From the very start, we have been focused on firing Cawthorn, but firing him in a way that was factual and honest,” said David Wheeler, a Democrat who co-founded the group, [*American Muckrakers Inc.*](https://firemadison.com/), with Mr. Cawthorn’s 2020 Democratic opponent, Moe Davis.

In Henderson, Transylvania and Haywood counties, many voters recalled how Mr. Cawthorn won the seat — replacing Mark Meadows, who became chief of staff in the Trump White House — by modeling himself after Mr. Trump.

Many compared his brashness to Mr. Trump’s and brushed away the photos of him partying or goofing off as the digressions of a young man. Some believed them to be fake.

“If I was a young kid with a cellphone, I wouldn’t have a job either,” said David Roberts, 33, an engineer and unaffiliated voter in Hendersonville who planned to cast a ballot for Mr. Cawthorn on Tuesday. “I am not voting for him to be my best friend or date my daughter.”

Less easily brushed away were Mr. Cawthorn’s attempts to bring guns through airport security and his traffic violations, which many saw as irresponsible considering the crash that left him in a wheelchair. “Disgrace,” “immature” and “embarrassment” were common refrains.

“He’s broken the law. He hasn’t really done anything for this district that I can think of,” said Scott Tekavec, 59, a maintenance technician who said he did not usually vote Republican but decided to cast a ballot for Mr. Edwards as an expression of his disdain for Mr. Cawthorn.

Perhaps the most frequently cited objections to Mr. Cawthorn, however, were his track record of missing important votes in Congress and reports that [*he had moved*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/magazine/2022/02/23/his-attempt-switch-districts-north-carolinas-madison-cawthorn-may-be-exposing-limits-new-celebrity-politics/) into a newly-drawn conservative district nearby before deciding to run for re-election to his seat in the 11th District.

“He isn’t doing his job,” Lynn Cagle, 47, a truck driver in Haywood County, said of Mr. Cawthorn as he left a senior center after voting for Mr. Edwards.

Mr. Cawthorn’s opponents lack his ability to draw attention, but they see an opening nonetheless. At a Hendersonville rally, Ms. Woodhouse presented herself as a true “America First” conservative and Mr. Cawthorn as unelectable.

And Rodd Honeycutt, a retired Army colonel, said he had voted for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but felt the need to challenge him this year over his lack of leadership.

“There is a trend line of missteps and indiscipline,” Mr. Honeycutt said, adding: “It’s really a distraction right now when we should be focused on kitchen-table issues like the cost of gas, or inflation, or what is going on with the war in Ukraine.”

At Bethany Bible Church, Christine Tuttle, 61, a bookkeeper, and her daughter, Lizzie, 20, said they remembered Mr. Cawthorn as respected, outgoing and popular among the home-school families.

They said their image of him was tainted when [*young women*](https://wng.org/articles/rising-republican-star-faces-accusations-from-women-1618197952) came forward with accusations that he had forcibly kissed them.

Mrs. Tuttle said she still voted for him in 2020. “He had so much promise,” she said.

She and her daughter said they would not be voting for Mr. Cawthorn this time. But they said they knew plenty of people who would.

PHOTOS: Representative Madison Cawthorn at a rally hosted by former President Donald J. Trump in Selma, N.C., last month. (PHOTOGRAPH BY VEASEY CONWAY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Lizzie and Christine Tuttle of Hendersonville, N.C., voted for Mr. Cawthorn in 2020 but said they do not plan to this year.; Mr. Cawthorn needs to garner 30 percent of votes on Tuesday to avoid a runoff in a race split among seven other challengers. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSE BARBER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[***His Dancing Days Were Over. Then Came ‘Another Round.’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61RP-HPV1-JBG3-61M6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 12, 2021 Tuesday 10:24 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; dance

**Length:** 1287 words

**Byline:** Gia Kourlas

**Highlight:** The actor Mads Mikkelsen ends Thomas Vinterberg’s film with a wild delight of a drunken dance. The man, once a professional dancer, can move.

**Body**

The actor Mads Mikkelsen ends Thomas Vinterberg’s film with a wild delight of a drunken dance. The man, once a professional dancer, can move.

Martin is a history teacher with the listless, sloping posture of a comma. He walks slowly, as though every step ignites a jolt of pain. His job is uninspiring; his marriage is falling apart. “Have I become boring?” he asks his wife. “Do you find me boring?”

Her answer seems to confirm what he already knows: “You’re not the same Martin I first met.”

In the Danish director Thomas Vinterberg’s[*“Another Round,” a film about breaking the rules*](https://www.amazon.com/Another-Round-Mads-Mikkelsen/dp/B08PCPY4SF)and, in doing so, breaking free, Martin is one of four high school teachers who decide to test a theory about alcohol: As long as they maintain a consistent level of it in their blood, their lives will improve.

The experiment has its problems. But ultimately Martin, played by Mads Mikkelsen, finds release, which comes through in a dance at the end of the movie. [*The dance, a little drunken*](https://www.amazon.com/Another-Round-Mads-Mikkelsen/dp/B08PCPY4SF), shows Mikkelsen’s nimble ability to balance daring and control. It’s fitting: He was once a professional dancer.

The dance begins after Martin, who took jazz ballet lessons in his past, has attended the funeral of a friend and received text messages from his wife that hint at reuniting; he and his friends greet graduating students at the harbor as the song “What a Life,” by the Danish band Scarlet Pleasure, plays. At first, his movement is a little tentative, full of stops and starts. But once he gets going, he throws himself into it, taking wide crossover steps, swaying and, with a silky vigor, spinning to the ground and springing up — all the while taking sips from a can of beer.

As his body melts into the beat of the song, it’s clear that this is more than a dance: Martin has been given another chance — or round — at life, and he’s taking it. Uninhibited and robust, Mikkelsen, 55, darts through space, punching at the air and jumping forcefully before taking off in a most spectacular leap over the water. The film ends with him in midair.

In working with Mikkelsen, the choreographer Olivia Anselmo said: “He started the whole rehearsal saying, ‘Well, I’m not like I used to be, I’m not young anymore and blah, blah, blah.’ And then the first thing he does is go into a slide and a roll on the floor and jumps up and does this thing where he wraps his leg around the other leg — like a yoga pose. He just did that.”

Mikkelsen started out as an acrobat before discovering dance, though it’s as an actor that he’s made his name. He was the Bond villain in “Casino Royale,” and Dr. Hannibal Lecter in the television series “Hannibal.” He won a best actor award at Cannes for his role in [*Vinterberg’s film “The Hunt” (2012)*](https://www.amazon.com/Another-Round-Mads-Mikkelsen/dp/B08PCPY4SF). But to Anselmo, he is something else. “When I was in the studio with him, it’s not like I’m thinking like, wow, this is this world-known actor,” she said. “It was so cozy and chill. I just thought, this is just another dancer.”

Recently, Mikkelsen spoke about the dance and his professional dancing years, which lasted around nine years. He switched to drama, he said, “to pull out a different drawer and find something new,” he said. “I was also always more in love with the drama of dancing than the aesthetics of dancing.”

What follows are edited excerpts from a recent conversation.

How did you feel about dancing in the film?

I thought it would be a hard thing to get away with in a realistic film — to dance for real. So in my world, it was more like a drunken dream or a drunken image or fantasy, but in Thomas’s world, it was literally a man dancing while he was surrounded by a lot of young people. [Laughs]

He wanted the ending to be a balance between a man flying and a man falling and, obviously, the dance was perfect for that.

How did you begin dancing in the first place?

I started out as a gymnast, and there was a choreographer coming to our club. She wanted a couple of acrobats in the background who could do flips and she wanted us to do a few steps as well. She thought I had a certain amount of talent and she asked me if I wanted to learn the craft, and I had absolutely nothing else to do.

I did a few shows with her, kind of musical things, and then it just felt as if I had to honor dance. I had to really learn it from the base.

Where did you study?

I applied for a scholarship and I went to New York for two summers to Martha Graham. Then I joined a contemporary ballet group in Denmark and I did a ton of musicals like “La Cage Aux Folles” and “Chicago.” “West Side Story.” But I was trained as a contemporary Martha Graham dancer.

Was Martha around? She must have been pretty old.

Yeah. I had the opportunity to meet her. It was a miracle time. She was obviously not a teacher [anymore], but she came along once as the guru she was, with her arthritis. She was helped out of the car. She was stunning. She had this enormous hair. She sat on the floor and watched us. And all of a sudden, she just went into one of her moves — her spine just got completely straight, and she put her nose on the floor.

That is magic.

We were all just like, what? And then she had all the boys come really close because she didn’t speak up loudly. She said, “The boys must jump in the air.” And so we went in there and we jumped and jumped and jumped, and then we looked at her, and she had fallen asleep. [Laughs] But it was fantastic, fantastic to meet her.

When did you start gymnastics?

I was probably in first or second grade. You have to understand, gymnastics in Denmark was on a completely different level than the rest of the world in the sense that we sucked. I remember there was a Russian club coming to us as a friendship club, and it was just insane how good they were. It was just like, Jesus, we are wasting our time.

How old were you when you switched to dance?

I think it was about 17 or 18 when that happened. So I was a ***working-class*** little boy — almost like a Billy Elliot story. I couldn’t really tell my friends what I started out doing. That’s just the way it is when you’re a ***working-class*** kid, but then when they eventually found out, I told them to do the math: “How many girls, how many boys?” They were all like, “Yeah, I want to be a dancer as well.”

What was it like dancing again for “Another Round”?

It was like saying hi to an old friend. I’m the kind of dancer that doesn’t dance when I’m out at a club with friends. I’ve always been a little reluctant to do that because, I guess, it was my profession. I knew that this character was rusty and he was not a professional dancer like I was, but he had done it as a young man, as a kid. At the same time, I got a little ambitious.

Did you injure yourself?

No, not at all. It was all good. But it was all adrenaline. I felt really young again, but the next week I felt really old.

Because you were sore?

I was super sore. I do a lot of sports. I bike and I play tennis and I do all kinds of stuff, but it’s not the same muscles.

What were you thinking about in the final dance?

We wanted it not to be about the dance but about what was inside of the character. More than it is a performance, it’s an internal journey. It’s almost like a close-up.

PHOTOS: Mads Mikkelsen, center, filming the end of “Another Round.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRIK OHSTEN/SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS) (C1); Mads Mikkelsen, who takes flight in the final scene of Thomas Vinterberg’s film, “Another Round,” on being a dancer: I was “always more in love with the drama of dancing than the aesthetics of dancing.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY STURLA BRANDTH GROEVLEN/SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS); Mikkelsen’s character, Martin, is a high school teacher who, along with three colleagues, takes part in an experiment with alcohol to shake up his listless life. (PHOTOGRAPH BY HENRIK OHSTEN/SAMUEL GOLDWYN FILMS) (C6)

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2021

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[***Want a Clue About the 2022 Midterm Elections? Look at 2 Ohio Races.; On Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:643H-2KX1-JBG3-621T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 16, 2021 Tuesday 18:57 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1030 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Neither race received much national attention, but there’s a long history of special election results foreshadowing the next general election.

**Body**

Neither race received much national attention, but there’s a long history of special election results foreshadowing the next general election.

[*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/politics?module=inline) to get On Politics in your inbox on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

A lot seems to be going poorly for Democrats right now, including President Biden’s [*sinking approval ratings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/us/politics/biden-approval-ratings.html) and the results of this month’s elections in [*Virginia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/democrats-virginia-governor-race.html) and [*New Jersey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/murphy-wins-nj-governor.html).

But two obscure special elections in Ohio’s 11th and 15th congressional districts, where Democrats and Republicans each retained long-held seats, revealed a possible bright spot for Democrats and faintly signaled that political conditions may not be as dire for Democrats as they seem.

Neither race received much national attention. Neither race was especially competitive. And neither had a high turnout.

But unlike in the flashier races for Virginia and New Jersey governor, the two Democratic candidates in the Ohio congressional races ran about as well as Democrats usually do. They ran far closer to the party’s recent benchmarks, including Mr. Biden’s showing in the last presidential election, than Democrats did in Virginia, where Terry McAuliffe lost to the Republican, Glenn Youngkin, and in New Jersey, where Gov. Phil Murphy, a Democrat, won by a slim margin.

While it would be a mistake to read too much into these two low-profile affairs, it would also be a mistake to ignore them.

The two House races didn’t receive much attention for a simple reason: Neither party had any reason to contest them. Ohio’s 11th District is overwhelmingly Democratic, and the 15th is firmly Republican.

Yet in both races, the Democratic House candidates ran only three percentage points behind Biden’s showing against former President Donald Trump in last year’s election. The margin is nothing for Democrats to brag about, but it’s simply not the same as what they experienced in Virginia and New Jersey, where the Republican candidates ran 12 and 13 points ahead of Mr. Trump.

Of the two districts, Ohio’s 15th is more competitive — and the most representative of next year’s battlegrounds. It stretches from the suburbs around Columbus to the conservative ***working-class*** countryside of south-central Ohio. Unlike the House battlegrounds, this is not a district where Democrats have a chance to prevail, even under favorable circumstances: Mr. Trump won the district by [*14 points*](https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2020/11/19/1163009/-Daily-Kos-Elections-presidential-results-by-congressional-district-for-2020-2016-and-2012) while the incumbent Republican, Steve Stivers, won it by 27 points last November.

But despite a more favorable national political environment, Mike Carey, a Trump-endorsed Republican and coal lobbyist, defeated Allison Russo, a Democratic state representative, by a fairly typical 17-point margin — a bit better than Trump, and quite a bit worse than Mr. Stivers.

While the results of the Virginia election spurred talk that the Democratic Party’s leftward lurch on race and cultural issues might be hurting the Democrats in the suburbs, Ms. Russo won 55 percent of the vote in the Franklin County portion of the district, home to the Columbus suburbs, nearly matching the 56 percent won by Mr. Biden.

Ohio’s 11th District is even less competitive. The majority-Black district, which snakes from Cleveland to Akron, favored Mr. Biden by a whopping [*61 points*](https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2020/11/19/1163009/-Daily-Kos-Elections-presidential-results-by-congressional-district-for-2020-2016-and-2012) last November. The previous Democratic representative, Marcia Fudge, who is now the secretary of housing and urban development, won by 60 points. The result was similar this time: Shontel Brown, the establishment-backed Democrat who narrowly defeated the progressive favorite Nina Turner in an August primary, won by 58 points.

It might seem odd to draw attention to the results of uncompetitive races, but special congressional election results often do a decent job of [*foreshadowing*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/special-elections-so-far-point-to-a-democratic-wave-in-2018/) the outcome of the next midterm elections. Four years ago, special elections were one of the first signs of Democratic strength after Mr. Trump was elected president. So far this cycle, other[*special election results*](https://twitter.com/ECaliberSeven/status/1454922438236680192?s=20)have tended to resemble the modest Republican gains in Ohio more than the significant G.O.P. swings in Virginia and New Jersey.

Another reason to pay attention is that the special congressional elections are contests for federal office, not state or local government.

While politics has become [*increasingly nationalized*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/all-politics-is-national-because-all-media-is-national/) in recent years, it remains quite common for voters to split their tickets and back the other party in down-ballot races for governor or other local offices. Maryland and Massachusetts elected Republican governors in 2018, despite the so-called blue wave that year. Local issues, like education or property taxes, naturally play a much bigger role than they do in federal contests. And it is much easier for a relatively moderate candidate for local office to shed the baggage of the national party. After all, a vote for Youngkin as governor of Virginia is not a vote to make Kevin McCarthy the House speaker or Mitch McConnell the Senate majority leader.

Democrats and Republicans were deadlocked on the generic congressional ballot, a poll question asking whether voters would back a Democrat or Republican for Congress. Historically, the measure tracks well with the eventual House national vote. On average, Republicans lead by less than a percentage point, [*according to FiveThirtyEight*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/congress-generic-ballot-polls/) — they took the lead while I wrote this newsletter.

A roughly tied House national vote would most likely mean clear Republican control of the chamber, thanks to partisan gerrymandering and the tendency for Democrats to win lopsided margins in reliably Democratic areas. But it would be a much closer race than one might guess based on Virginia and New Jersey.

And it would be roughly in line with the results in Ohio: a four-point shift to the Republicans, compared to Biden’s four-point win in the national vote.

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PHOTO: Shontel Brown, center, a Democratic candidate for Congress, won the special election in Ohio’s 11th district by 58 points. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stefani Reynolds for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 16, 2021

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[***When Relationship Problems Mirror the Struggles of a Nation; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WR-NKW1-JBG3-62SB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2022 Tuesday 01:10 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1293 words

**Byline:** Hamilton Cain

**Highlight:** In his debut novel, “Groundskeeping,” Lee Cole arranges an unlikely courtship on a college campus.

**Body**

GROUNDSKEEPING

By Lee Cole

On the first Tuesday evening in November, die-hard political junkies huddle around wide-screen televisions tuned into Fox News, MSNBC or CNN, depending on partisan flavor. Studio maps light up in red and blue, announcing victors in mostly two-party races and charting broader trends of sorting-out: From cities to suburbs to farms, Americans now cluster among our political tribes, folks who share our values on topics from budget deficits to border refugees to Roe v. Wade. If we zoom in, though, these maps are more pixelated: Voters blur together in purple-hued swirls, ZIP code by ZIP code, family by family, fanning tensions that often blaze into open conflict.

Enter 28-year-old Owen Callahan, the pensive narrator of Lee Cole’s exacting, beautifully textured debut novel, “Groundskeeping,” who returns to his native Kentucky from a forestry stint in Colorado in the fall of 2016, as the country limps down the homestretch of a bitterly contested presidential election.

Raised in a dot of a town in the western part of the state, Owen moves into the basement of his conservative grandfather, Pop, on the outskirts of Louisville, a place Cole describes in fine brushstrokes: “Platoon of beer cans in the corner, black banana peels on paper plates, stained coffee cups. Pallid moonlight slanting down from the window.” Owen bobs and weaves through arguments with his middle-aged, medicated uncle, Cort, whose penchant for video games and Make America Great Again signs annoys him. (Owen’s divorced parents have each remarried and still live near Paducah.) He’s hired as a groundskeeper at prestigious Ashby College, which boasts “Georgian-style structures of red brick with dormer windows and columns.” Cole writes: “There were flower beds all along the sidewalks. Black-eyed Susans. Purple asters. Huge, gnarled oak trees shaded everything. … But none of the students seemed to notice. Moreover, none of them seemed to notice us — the groundskeepers taking their lunch.”

If economic class is the third rail of American life, then Cole eases his hand out, gently, to touch it, his realism a meld of Richard Russo and Anne Tyler by way of Sally Rooney. Despite Owen’s modest upbringing, he’s a striver with scant chill. He’s liberal in his politics and passionate about Walt Whitman and Modigliani, stoking a sense of curiosity and discipline not always associated with his demographic. He yearns to be a writer.

As an Ashby employee, Owen is allowed to enroll in a creative writing workshop; he chooses “Jungle Narratives,” whose pedantic instructor encourages him. At a party Owen meets the beguiling Alma Hadzic, Ashby’s author in residence, younger by two years but with one lauded book already under her belt and a second under contract; she embodies the “coastal elite” whose ranks he aspires to join. Their mutual attraction is immediate, although Alma is dating one of Owen’s classmates. No matter. Alcohol and cocaine are consumed; noses are broken; conversations are had; the boyfriend is tossed aside.

Once together, the couple fall into routines of domesticity, thrown off only by trips to meet each other’s parents. The daughter of Bosniak Muslim refugees, Alma came to the United States as a toddler, first living in a cramped apartment in Queens, then relocating to an affluent Washington, D.C., suburb as her family ascended a ladder of prosperity and assimilation. She’s Princeton-educated and urbane, yet haunted by the blood-drenched Balkan genocides, as Owen discovers in her fiction, cannily embedded here.

For his part, Owen is determined to persuade Alma of the humanity beneath his people, xenophobic descendants of English and Scottish settlers who poured through the Cumberland Gap and bogged down in rural poverty, “sharecropping, scraping by,” their lives invisible to the Acelarati.

“Groundskeeping” is, unsurprisingly, a novel of place. Cole’s Kentucky is rife with Southern Baptists, sausage biscuits, flea markets, mobile homes, pregnant teenagers, fentanyl overdoses. There’s even an ode to that awesome regional institution, Cracker Barrel. “I explained that Cracker Barrel was cheap, and they were ***working-class*** people without a lot of money who nonetheless wanted the experience of a family outing,” Owen notes. “They loved the food and the décor not because they had bad taste, but because it was familiar to them. They’d grown up on actual farms, milking cows and pulling the suckers from actual tobacco. They’d eaten stewed apples and turnip greens and ham hock, and the tools on the walls had been the tools their fathers used, in a time that was not, at least in Kentucky, some distant yesteryear. It was recent and vivid, and the ache of its passing away therefore still present, like a phantom limb.” Cheever country this is not.

The nonagenarian Pop is the novel’s beating heart. Feeble in body but sharp as a tack, he’s a World War II veteran, a collector of Civil War antiques and a connoisseur of John Wayne movies, shuffling from recliner to kitchen, where he makes “crumble-ins,” a sop of milk and cornbread. (If you know, you know.) While Pop, Cort and Owen form a fraternity on the skids, it’s a thrill — a relief — to read a writer who approaches his male characters with generosity and intuition, steering blessedly free of caricature.

Cole paints in airy watercolors rather than bright acrylics; his touch is light, restrained, but always authoritative and precise. As with Helen Frankenthaler’s canvases, “Groundskeeping” achieves poise and uplift. But beneath the languid tale of young campus love, he’s playing a shell game: The novel’s not only a forensic examination of our toxic politics, it’s also a sly sendup of literary culture, a conveyor belt of M.F.A. programs and prizes and teaching gigs. The workshop teacher drones on about “cataloging” details, “a bad habit,” and yet Cole flagrantly does it in scene after scene, a wink to the reader.

Alma and Owen’s romance tacks back and forth — at times Cole seems almost as bored with it as they are — until a more primal instinct kicks in. As the artist Grace Hartigan observed of her fellow Abstract Expressionists: “Men have no objection to women as creators. It’s only when they’re all scrambling for recognition that the trouble begins.” So it is with Owen and Alma. The first competitive vibe flickers when he wins a coveted fellowship, which Alma mocks. She compiles her own catalog of Southern colloquialisms — critters, do what? — which he perceives as patronizing. And when he shares his work in progress with Alma, an autofiction, she recoils: He hasn’t bothered to change the names and situations of his family, or hers. Owen waves it away as an novice’s gaffe, but his betrayal whips her into a frenzy. He can’t help noticing a burr of resentment in her voice, though — perhaps he’s more talented than his girlfriend? And perhaps she knows that he knows?

Cole teases us, right up to the final sentence, with the notion that “Groundskeeping” is itself an autofiction once removed. Like so many Southern writers before him, he can’t go home again. If Owen faces a lack of resolution, in life as well as art, he’s in excellent company among the millions of us who straddle fault lines between red and blue. Inertia is not an option; he must reconcile “this fission in my heart … always these two selves, these repellent points of view.” A sterling novel that presages a major career, “Groundskeeping” puts a fresh spin on the divided self adrift in a divided nation.

Hamilton Cain is contributing books editor at Oprah Daily and the author of “This Boy’s Faith: Notes From a Southern Baptist Upbringing.” GROUNDSKEEPING By Lee Cole 336 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $28.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Lina Müller FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 16, 2022

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[***How I Learned the Art of Seduction; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66VC-BST1-JBG3-63XS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2022 Saturday 10:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2531 words

**Byline:** Melissa Febos

**Highlight:** Working in the restaurant industry taught me skills I later employed to more lucrative ends.

**Body**

Recently, a friend of mine who is newly divorced and dating for the first time asked me to help her work on her flirtation skills.

“First, you have to get the gaze right,” I told her. “Not stalker heavy but enough so they notice.”

“Like this?” She glowered at me, and I tried to stifle a laugh.

“More like this,” I said, demonstrating.

When I was a kid, my mother taught me how to soften my gaze when watching birds so they wouldn’t feel the weight of my attention. This kind of look is just the opposite — a concentrated gaze that lands like a finger, tapping, casting the line of desire until it catches and tugs.

I looked at her, and something activated in me, responding to a set of clues telling me how she wants to be seen. “Look intently,” I told her, “but not for too long, just graze them with it.”

“Whoa,” she said, “careful where you point that!” She looked at me in wonder, and I felt both proud and embarrassed. “Where did you learn to do that?”

I think of myself as someone who has always known how to do this — an intuitive seducer — but my friend’s question invited me to reconsider the origins of the impulse.

Where did I learn it?

There is, of course, the mere fact of my being a woman, which means I have been consuming lessons in seduction my whole life from movies and TV. But my friend is also a woman, and she can’t emit the smoldering atmosphere to reel someone in. Whereas I can do it on command, as if it were my job. As we watch our meals arrive I ponder this, and something clicks. For many years — sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly — seducing people was my job.

Both my parents grew up ***working-class***, sometimes working-poor, and I was raised with an ethos of scarcity — we wasted nothing, ate down to the rind of everything and tried not to buy anything on credit. Though my family was solidly middle-class, my classmates often assumed I was poor because I wore discount shoes and generic brand clothes all through grade school, until I switched to thrift stores as a teen.

My parents weren’t cheap, exactly, but they didn’t locate status in commodities — my mother once told me that driving a luxury car was like giving the finger to all the poor people in the world — and they believed in work. The week I turned 14, the legal employment age in Massachusetts, my dad took me to city hall to get a work permit.

That year, I started working as a dishwasher at a seafood restaurant. Dressed most days in a pair of faded overalls and Doc Martens, I would peer out at the front of the house and watch the wait staff — mostly 20-somethings who held the glamour of low-level celebrities to me.

Tidy in their identical aprons and T-shirts bearing the restaurant logo, they all seemed kind of hot to me in an ineffable way that had little to do with their looks. The source of this attractiveness, I eventually realized, was the skill with which they deployed charisma.

They were practiced seducers, flitting around the dining room, calibrating their affect to suit each diner. The ones with the tallest stacks of bills at the end of a shift cultivated a flirtation with their tables that hit exactly the right note to release money. As if every diner were a slot machine played less by chance than by skill.

At 14, I already had a keen sense that I ought to appeal to people, men especially, but “succeeding” at this had mixed results. Early sexual development had left me vulnerable to early sexual experience — I didn’t really learn how to say no until adulthood — and mostly it had left me feeling powerless and numb. Using my drive to be liked in a context whose endpoint wasn’t sex, and which promised material reward for success, seemed a much safer forum. The idea felt empowering, even, as it gave me control over the encounter.

My first job waiting tables was at Café Algiers, a landmark Middle Eastern restaurant in Harvard Square in Cambridge that catered to professors and graduate students. I was 17 and happily living in a squalid apartment with four friends in Somerville. Amid the wobbly octagonal tables, I balanced silver pots of mint tea and plates of hummus and practiced my approach.

I learned that if my gaze was too intense, the men (and occasionally women) asked sotto voce what time my shift ended; if it was too subtle, they ignored me and left disappointing tips.

The trick was to kindle the right feeling in myself — I have something they want and I want to give it to them, but not yet — to render the plates of food a symbol for something else, to exude an air of slight withholding. I learned what all good salespeople understand: If you suggest that a person wants something with enough confidence, there’s a good chance they’ll believe you.

Every shift was an exercise in the art of seduction, and each one ended with a tally of tips that amounted to a kind of grade — numeric feedback on the degree of my success.

I honed my skills quickly. After just a few weeks, I could balance five entrees on one tray, instantly calculate a bill in my head, and just as instantly read the customers. I could tell if a diner wanted me to tease them, treat them with mild disgust (rare, but they did exist) or welcome them like a long-lost family member. My scatterbrained nature, which made me clumsy in my everyday life, was focused by the stream of social cues. I intuitively understood the rhythm of it, like a dancer catching a beat. When I was working, I didn’t think and I didn’t make errors — which was good, because my livelihood depended on it: In 1996, the minimum wage for tipped employees was $2.13 per hour.

My second job as a server was at the Greenhouse, another storied Cambridge institution. The overpriced diner had an iconic green sign and a dining room that was perpetually fogged with cigarette smoke. The female professors generally tipped big and wanted a dry little flirt, sprinkled with irony, as if we were in on the same joke. The blue-collar guys who ate at the counter liked to trade endearments, to be teased a little. A natural mimic, I sometimes dropped my Rs when talking with them. You want that on mahble rye?

After the Greenhouse, there were eight or 10 more restaurant jobs — the Jewish deli where families came for brunch, the bakery frequented by moneyed lesbians, the Mexican restaurant that hosted a lot of tourists and bachelorette parties. Whatever their differences, every restaurant was a microcosm of larger social hierarchies. I once worked a brunch shift in Belmont with a guy I was dating. He often got high before work and was terrible at his job. He never thought about what the customer wanted, never read their faces for subtle cues, never seduced anyone. He didn’t have to. He could get orders wrong, mix up tables, spill water on a customer, and still end the shift with a tall stack of tips. Meanwhile, my earnings dropped if I smiled too little or too much.

I came to learn that this was a rule in restaurants: No matter the quality of their service, male waiters got bigger tips. They also rarely had to put up with the kind of abuse that we did.

I remember one table I had during my stint at the Mexican restaurant. It was a big family, replete with a preening patriarch who emanated insecurity that he expressed by treating every woman in sight like garbage. I smiled through it, even when he patted my ass in full view of his wife, who then glared at me.

A knot of shame and fury tightened in me. I ignored it and imagined the tip this kind of treatment inevitably led to — a ten, maybe a twenty, even. I smiled at that vision and then directed it at the table. But in this instance, after they’d left as I cleared their oily dishes, I realized the man had stiffed me. I seethed for days. It stoked a fire in me that felt elemental. More than 20 years later, I can feel its heat. It wasn’t so much the money as the humiliation.

Over time, exposure inured me to the humiliations of the job. A person can get used to almost anything given enough time — personality will grow around adversity the way tree roots will grow around a rock, shaping itself in response to the immovable.

Plus, I needed the money. I was a teenager for most of the years I worked in restaurants. I didn’t have a degree, or even a high school diploma (unless you count the G.E.D.). Even though I was occasionally stiffed, it was the highest-paying job I was qualified for, by a long shot.

The humiliations inherent in waiting tables were also made tolerable by the satisfaction of being good at my job. While I held less power than the diners in many ways — I was there to literally serve them — I also had a subtle control over them, one they couldn’t see and which grew stronger the longer I exercised it. I worked them, like a salesperson or a petty con artist, and they were my chumps, my suckers, my johns.

A skilled seducer can invert a power dynamic to their advantage. The knowledge of how to do this was, I realized, a valuable skill and one I later employed to much more lucrative ends.

When I moved to New York in 1999, it was harder to get restaurant work. Upscale Manhattan places wanted a résumé, and my experience was decidedly downscale. I worked for a few months at a diner in the West Village, serving eggs and fetching jam and ketchup, but not long after that I got into sex work, which paid a lot better.

As a professional dominatrix, I applied all the skills I’d hewed waiting tables — reading people, intuiting their desires, performing interest and indifference. And the beauty of it was that the subtext became text. Before I worked with any client, we had a consultation in which he told me exactly what he wanted, and I agreed to it or didn’t. Of course, my demeanor in these meetings was calibrated according to my instinct for what the clients wanted. (They wanted to be treated with disgust far more frequently than restaurant diners had, which I enjoyed.)

During the sessions themselves, I relied upon my honed instinct for timing and intensity — even when they had a script, there was still a lot to improvise. The work was primarily that of seduction: the assessment of desire and how to draw it out, grow it, leave it wanting a little. The main difference — and it was not small — is that I was paid well no matter how the session went.

During my second year of grad school, I started adjunct teaching, which paid worse than either sex work or waiting tables. Some semesters, I taught six classes at three different schools, for which I traveled across four boroughs. I got used to writing on commuter trains and slowly built a very different wardrobe than that I had needed for any previous job.

Teaching was also a performance, but like sex work, I got paid whether it was good or not. Mostly I performed well, and not having to flirt with anyone to do so was a revelation, however meager the pay. The principal difference between teaching and my previous jobs was that in the classroom the role I played was not predicated on a lie. I acted a persona derived from true parts of me, perhaps the truest parts of me.

Good teachers seduce, but not with the aim of bedding students. Good teachers deploy their charisma with the goal of making the audience fall in love with the subject they teach. My goal was never to extract money, or even esteem, from my students but instead to infect them with the love I felt for the writers I taught. After teaching I was tired, but not drained the way I used to be after a restaurant shift, with my spirit as spent as my body. I arrived home from class electrified by my own love for the books I taught and for the craft of making art out of life.

After I finished grad school and before I sold my first book, I went back to food service. I got a job at a small restaurant that was named after a spice in my rapidly gentrifying Brooklyn neighborhood. It was a much nicer joint than any I had worked in before. There were candles on the tables and a new menu was printed every night.

It had been a few years, and as I dug out my waist aprons for my first shift, I thrilled a little at the prospect of returning to the familiar rhythm of service.

An hour or so in, however, my confidence began to waver. I still knew how to do the job, but a woodenness came over me when it was time to smile and wink and mold myself around the unspoken desires of strangers. Over the evening’s course, my body’s unwillingness to comply dismayed me. What was wrong? Had I lost my touch?

At the end of the night, I made a small error, and the chef shouted at me from behind the line: “What are you, stupid?”

Chefs had shouted many worse things at me in the past; verbal abuse from chefs was a given in many restaurants and rated a pretty minor offense overall. But I was no longer used to it.

I had just spent two years at the front of college classrooms, in which, while underpaid, I was never called stupid. I was treated with respect, even deference. I had ascended to a different realm of employment where, while the option was still available to me, I didn’t need to use my sexuality to make money. Nor was I required to suffer these kinds of overt humiliations. When I cashed out, I was left with more than I had ever reaped from a single shift waiting tables. I zipped the wad of bills into my coat pocket and told the house manager that I wouldn’t be back the following night, or any thereafter. I never worked the floor of a restaurant again.

Sometimes I miss it, but I am always grateful I had the privilege to quit that life.

Now I teach full time, and when I walk into a classroom on the first day of the semester, I scan the room of faces and feel their expectations swell like waves toward me.

There is a thrilling power in holding people’s attention, in intuiting their interests and igniting their curiosity; all seducers know it. I learned that feeling not in the dungeon, but in the dining rooms of restaurants, the clatter of dishes wafting with the smell of garlic from the kitchen, clashing with the low music of the front of the house.

It’s impossible to fully account for the ways that education influenced not only my relationship to work, but to every person I encounter. Spending years thinking of people as slot machines to win by extracting their favor, knowing the security of my life depended on it, did not set me up for healthy relationships.

I’ve outgrown a lot of skills that once served my survival, and learned that holding on to them does its own damage. There is grace in letting go of what no longer serves me or those whose paths I cross. I’m grateful, also, for the occasional opportunity to repurpose them. I like to think my years of seduction have made me a more empathic teacher, that the skill of eliciting desire has become one for sharing love.

Melissa Febos is the author of “Girlhood,” “Whip Smart,” “Abandon Me” and “Body Work.” She teaches in the nonfiction writing program at the University of Iowa.

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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This article appeared in print on page SR12.

**Load-Date:** November 15, 2022

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[***Can Biden Save Americans Like My Old Pal Mike?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:620J-B951-JBG3-64DN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 13, 2021 Saturday 10:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 2402 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Kristof

**Highlight:** A childhood friend’s deadly mistakes prompt reflection on our country’s — and my own.

**Body**

YAMHILL, Ore. — Joe Biden’s father struggled financially, at one point commuting long distances to clean boilers and later working for a time as a used-car salesman. The owner of the used-car dealership amused himself at a Christmas party by [*tossing out silver dollars*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) to watch his employees scramble for them on the floor. Biden Sr. was repulsed: He and his wife walked out of the party, and away from his job.

President Biden tells that story to highlight his appreciation of the importance of the dignity of work. It’s a tale my old pal Mike Stepp would have relished, because Mike spent his life scrambling on America’s floor for coins — and not liking it one bit. Yet Mike, too, sustained his dignity and humor, which is an impressive feat when you’re homeless, wrestling with addictions and sleeping in a city park.

Mike was a good man whom America left behind, and one measure of Biden’s presidency — and of America’s resilience — will be whether he can offer some kind of a Rooseveltian New Deal to millions of struggling Americans like Mike. As I see it, the nation’s greatest challenge is to restore opportunity and dignity for the bottom third of Americans, not so much the middle class as the ***working class***: white, Black and brown alike.

Biden’s initial moves suggest he is taking that challenge seriously, pursuing an “American Rescue Plan” that includes the most serious antipoverty program, especially for children, in at least half a century. But the burden is not just on the new president, but on all of us.

It is easy for Democrats to blame Republicans for failings like America’s lack of universal health care. But that lets too many of us off the hook. Mike was the kind of person that both political parties claim to speak up for, yet whom both parties betrayed over the decades.

Witnessing the torment of people I grew up with, like Mike, has led me to conclude that I was wrong in many of my own views. Like many liberals with a university education and a reliable paycheck, I was too scornful of labor unions, too unreservedly enthusiastic about international trade, too glib about “creative destruction,” too heartless about its toll.

Mike’s dad had a union job at a sawmill at a time when the timber industry offered well-paying work, and Mike had expected to get a job like that and ride it into a middle-class life. But those jobs disappeared, in part because of an environmental movement that ended logging in old-growth forests by championing a threatened species called the spotted owl.

I am an environmentalist and I love old-growth forests. Thank God we saved them. But we didn’t focus enough on the human price and didn’t try hard enough to mitigate it: I wish that we had shown as much concern for Mike as we did for spotted owls.

Mike and his brother, Bobby, were my closest neighbors in the 1970s. They lived in the house just down the road from our family farm here.

Each morning, Mike, Bobby and I would walk to the school bus stop together, and then amble home from the bus in the afternoon. Mike was six years younger than me, exuberant, good-natured, a ham. Bobby was three years older than me, and equally good-natured.

That was a time when capitalism worked for many blue-collar Americans. My dad had worked in the woods in the 1950s, as a logger in Valsetz, Ore., after arriving in the United States as a refugee from Eastern Europe. He earned enough through logging to work his way through college. Today that would be impossible.

For the Stepps, even back then life had shadows. Their home was often violent, for Mike’s father drank too much and then became abusive. “Dad beat him,” Bobby recalled. “Hand, belt or switch, whatever Dad could get his hands on in a drunken stupor.”

The family wasn’t into education, and I don’t remember a single book in their home. Mike and Bobby both dropped out of high school, figuring that they could get good jobs just as their dad had.

Good jobs were disappearing, however. That’s partly because of the environmentalists’ successes — indignant T-shirts back then urged, “Save a Logger, Eat an Owl.”

But the owls were a scapegoat: Well-paying jobs were also lost because of mechanization, the decline of unions and other trends undermining blue-collar jobs generally. Successive American administrations also didn’t do much to help. Average weekly wages for production workers in America were actually lower two months ago ($860) than they had been, after [*adjusting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) for inflation, in December 1972 ($902 in today’s money), according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Many of us didn’t appreciate how devastating the loss of good jobs would be to the social fabric, and we had no idea that it would lead to family breakdown and a tide of alcoholism, addiction and early death. The economists David Autor, David Dorn and Gordon Hanson [*found*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) that when trade cost men good manufacturing jobs, the result was more unwed mothers, more children living in poverty, more people dying early and more “male idleness.”

\*

“Male idleness” is one way to describe Mike Stepp. He bounced among unsatisfying low-wage jobs, and he and his buddies escaped their frustrations by turning to alcohol and drugs, periodically tangling with the law. His wife, Stephanie Ross, who had gone out with him when she was 14, kicked Mike out of the house when he began leaving needles where their two young children might find them. They divorced in 2003, and he eventually landed in the streets of the nearby town of McMinnville.

“I like it out here,” he told me one time when we chatted in the park where he slept, and then he said with a laugh, “This is the great outdoors!” But it was just a line. He was often lonely, cold and wet. Previously, he had lived under cover in a county parking garage, and when he was forced out, he broke down and wept on the street.

In his shopping cart, which he took everywhere, Mike carried a couple of my books that I had signed for him. We would catch up when I visited McMinnville, and I would also fill him in on Bobby, who was serving a life sentence in a Colorado prison and whom I corresponded with.

I introduced my wife and children to Mike, and he charmed them with his easy humor. As he walked the streets, picking returnable cans out of garbage cans to make a few dollars, he had cheery greetings for everyone who passed.

“Mike always greeted me with, ‘How you doin’, kid?’ and a big smile,” recalled Casey Kulla, a county commissioner. My mother told me to be nice to Mike in writing this article, because “he never asked for anything.” That was the thing about Mike: He was homeless but rich in friends.

So what went wrong with Mike?

“He didn’t want to work,” Stephanie told me. She is angry at Mike for abandoning his kids and failing to pay $68,000 in child support, but then the anger passes and she wistfully refers to him as “the love of my life.”

Perhaps Mike was lazy, but there’s more to the story. Everyone agrees that Mike had mental illnesses that were never treated, and in any case, this wasn’t one person’s stumble but a crisis for an entire generation of low-education workers. Mike and his cohort weren’t dumber or lazier than their parents or grandparents, but their outcomes worsened.

So, sure, we can have a conversation about personal responsibility. But let’s also talk about our collective responsibility: If the federal [*minimum wage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) of 1968 had kept pace with inflation and productivity, it would now be more than $22 an hour, rather than $7.25. We also underinvested in our human capital, so high school graduation rates stagnated beginning in the 1970s along with blue-collar incomes, even as substance abuse soared and family structure for low-education workers collapsed.

One consequence is that an American dies a “death of despair” — from drugs, alcohol or suicide — every two and a half minutes. Long after the coronavirus has retreated, we will still be grappling with a pandemic of despair.

The United States has a mental health crisis that is largely untreated and arises in part from high levels of inequality. [*Researchers find*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) that poverty causes mental illness, and mental illness in turn exacerbates poverty. It’s a vicious cycle, and 20 million Americans, mostly poorly educated, describe every one of the last 30 days as “bad mental health days,” according to David G. Blanchflower, a Dartmouth economist.

I also know this: Taxpayers spent large sums jailing Mike, whose arrest record runs 14 pages (mostly for drug offenses). That money would have been better spent at the front end, with early childhood programs and mentoring to support Mike and help him finish high school and get a job.

Yet politicians have mostly been AWOL. In the 2020 Democratic primaries, the presidential candidates had healthy discussions about increasing college access but largely ignored the reality that one in seven American children don’t even graduate from high school. The term “***working class***” is rarely mentioned by politicians, who prefer to appeal to people a notch higher, in the middle class. And many government programs that are nominally for the benefit of the middle class — such as the mortgage interest deduction, 529 college savings plans, state and local tax deductions and “middle-class tax cuts” — actually primarily benefit the rich.

We fret about competitive challenges from China, but the best way to meet them is to elevate our capabilities at home. China built new universities at the rate of one a week, while the number of colleges in the United States is [*now shrinking*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) — and [*as many Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) have criminal records as have college degrees. “Holding hands, Americans with arrest records could circle the earth three times,” according to the Brennan Center for Justice.

America cannot succeed when so many Americans are failing.

Joe Biden has a fighting chance to make progress on these issues. Partly that’s because he’s impossible to mock as a wild-eyed socialist, partly because he and his team understand that we have a better chance of making progress if we frame the issue less as one of “inequality” — a liberal word — and more as one of “opportunity” and [*“dignity.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html)

That comes naturally to Biden. He intuitively understands ***working-class*** angst and mental health crises, having himself contemplated both [*suicide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) and an escape into alcohol after his wife and daughter were killed in a car accident in 1972. Biden also has spoken candidly and lovingly about his son Hunter’s struggles with addiction.

Biden&#39;s American Rescue Plan includes a $15 federal minimum wage, initiatives to expand medical care and reduce homelessness and, most striking, a historic plan to [*reduce child poverty*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) by about half.

When I’ve previously written about Americans falling behind, readers have challenged me to say what would make a difference. So here are five policies to create opportunity:

1. A national high-quality early childhood and day care program, modeled on the one provided by the United States military for service members.

2. A higher minimum wage and broader effort to train people for well-paying jobs by scaling up proven initiatives like [*Year Up*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) and [*Career Academies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html).

3. Huge expansion of drug treatment programs. It’s scandalous that [*only 20 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) of Americans with addictions get treatment.

4. A child allowance, the heart of Biden’s plan to fight child poverty.

5. “Bandwidth for all” to expand high-speed internet access, modeled on rural electrification from the 1930s to the 1950s.

Rural electrification was part of Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal, and the New Deal is a model for what we need in the 2020s. Is that feasible?

Some liberal initiatives (“defund the police,” banning ICE) are unpopular, but the kinds of populist programs I just listed poll well and have some Republican support. [*Seventy percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html) of voters support expanding early childhood programs. The Republican senators Mitt Romney of Utah, Marco Rubio of Florida and Mike Lee of Utah are among those who have endorsed serious initiatives to address child poverty. And nothing would do more to expand opportunity and build a better future for America than to slash child poverty.

\*

Mike struggled in the last couple of years. He had a bad bicycle accident, circulation problems, gangrene and a toe amputation.

“I’m doing well,” he told me, typically ebullient, the last time we spoke, in late November. “But it’s a little hard to balance without a toe. I never thought it would matter.”

Mike was found on a sidewalk one night in December after suffering a heart attack, and he died soon after in a hospital at the age of 55. Even in a pandemic, people came together to mourn him. A remembrance at a bus shelter where Mike had sometimes stayed drew 30 people who recalled Mike’s generosity and good cheer.

“He would give you anything,” said one man, showing off a cap that Mike had handed him. The headline in the local newspaper, The News-Register, declared, “[*Beloved Downtown Homeless Man Dies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html).”

Mike was a good man who had endured a painful life, and he knew he had inflicted pain on his wife and children.

“It’s strange to me that people remember Mike fondly,” his daughter, Brandie Stepp, 29, told me. She said she had mourned losing him not now but two decades ago when he left his family. But she also believes that his failures were complicated, originating with neglect as a child and compounded by mental illness.

I liked Mike. I respected him. I miss him. I hear constantly from wealthy Americans griping about some setback or pleading for special consideration, and he was a homeless man who sought nothing and would joke about the upside of sleeping in a city park.

There are many complicated Americans like him, struggling in a miasma of addiction, despair or mental illness, suffering unbearable pain and also inflicting it on their loved ones.

Can Biden and all of us rise to the occasion today, as Roosevelt’s generation responded to the Great Depression with the New Deal? Surely we can come together to offer struggling Americans better options than scrambling for coins on the nation’s floor until they die.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.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/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/24/us/politics/24biden.html).

PHOTOS: Mike Stepp in McMinnville, Ore., in 2018; Mike Stepp, center, on a summer day in 2018, in the spot where he regularly slept, in downtown McMinnville. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LYNSEY ADDARIO/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 15, 2021

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[***Is Nevada Turning Red?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65P0-SF01-JBG3-6381-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 13, 2022 Monday 09:02 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1730 words

**Byline:** Blake Hounshell

**Highlight:** No state was walloped harder by the economic impact of the pandemic, and voters may take out their anger on Democrats.

**Body**

No state was walloped harder by the economic impact of the pandemic, and voters may take out their anger on Democrats.

If a red wave arrives in November, as many expect, it will likely wash ashore in landlocked Nevada, a state whose recent history of Democratic victories masks just how hard-fought those triumphs have been.

In presidential elections, Republicans have not won Nevada since 2004, when President George W. Bush carried the state narrowly over John Kerry. Races for statewide office have been more contested, but still dominated by Democrats on the whole.

This year could be different. Nevadans will cast their final ballots on Tuesday in primary elections that will decide what sorts of candidates will be carrying the G.O.P. banner in November. And as of now, it looks as if many of those Republicans might very well be elected.

Much has been written about [*the woes of Senator Catherine Cortez Masto*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/politics/nevada-latino-voters-republicans.html), a Democrat who is up for re-election this year. Whenever her name appears in national news coverage, it’s invariably accompanied by some version of the phrase “one of Democrats’ most endangered incumbents.”

Her likely opponent is Adam Laxalt, a former state attorney general whose father, Pete Domenici, was a senator in New Mexico — a fact that was [*a closely held family secret until 2013*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/02/senator-had-secret-son-pundit-who-praised-him-great-dad/318155/). Laxalt’s grandfather was Paul Laxalt, who served as both governor and senator in Nevada.

Heading into Election Day, [*Laxalt looks to be comfortably ahead of his top primary opponent, Sam Brown*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/poll-laxalt-has-a-14-point-lead-over-brown-in-week-before-election-day), a retired Army captain. Laxalt helped lead Donald Trump’s [*efforts to overturn the presidential election results*](https://thenevadaindependent.com/article/trump-campaign-to-announce-lawsuit-challenging-registration-status-of-10000-voters-amid-razor-thing-election-margin) in Nevada in 2020.

House seats on fire

Less well understood than the Senate stakes is the fact that all three of Democrats’ House seats in Nevada are also at risk in November.

The Cook Political Report [*rates all three districts*](https://www.cookpolitical.com/ratings/house-race-ratings) as Democratic tossups. House Majority PAC, the main outside spending arm of House Democrats, has [*reserved more dollars in ad spending*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/03/31/house-majority-nevada-primary-chaos-00022018) in Las Vegas than in any other media market in the country.

There’s Representative Susie Lee, who squeaked by her Republican opponent by fewer than [*13,000 votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-nevada-house-district-3.html) in 2020. Lee’s likely opponent is April Becker, a lawyer who has the backing of Representative Kevin McCarthy, the top Republican in the House.

Representative Steven Horsford, whose district stretches from northern Las Vegas to the middle of the state, could also be in trouble. In March, his wife, Sonya Douglass, [*popped up on Twitter*](https://mobile.twitter.com/drsonyadouglass/status/1505499943901057029) to say she would “not be silent” about the decade-long affair he has admitted to having with Gabriela Linder, a former intern for Senator Harry Reid.

Douglass criticized his choice to “file for re-election and force us to endure yet another season of living through the sordid details of the [*#horsfordaffair*](https://mobile.twitter.com/hashtag/horsfordaffair?src=hashtag_click) with [*#mistressforcongress*](https://mobile.twitter.com/hashtag/mistressforcongress?src=hashtag_click) rather than granting us the time and space to heal as a family.”

Linder hosted [*an “audio memoir” of the affair*](https://www.audacy.com/podcasts/mistress-for-congress-36975) under a pseudonym, Love Jones, called “Mistress for Congress.”

After Horsford responded to her first series of tweets, Douglass wrote: “This statement is worse than the first from May 2020. The lies never end. Let’s pray @stevenhorsford comes to grips with reality and gets the help he needs.”

Horsford’s likely opponent is Annie Black, a state lawmaker [*who was outside the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021*](https://apnews.com/article/joe-biden-donald-trump-elections-west-virginia-electoral-college-34f93ca08799997ba96dce7a2921d087). Last week, Black sent out a fund-raising appeal to supporters with the subject line, “The Real ‘Big Lie’ is that Biden Won ‘Fair and Square.’”

The Democratic primary to watch

Then there’s Representative Dina Titus, whose historically safe Las Vegas seat is now decidedly unsafe thanks to a decision by Nevada Democrats to spread some of the voters in her old district across the two others.

That move prompted [*a vulgar complaint by Titus*](https://www.nevadacurrent.com/2021/12/16/titus-unloads-on-fellow-nevada-democrats-says-they-botched-redistricting/), who blasted the redistricting move as “terrible” during remarks at an A.F.L.-C.I.O. town hall event in December.

“They could have created two safe seats for themselves and one swing,” Titus said. “That would have been smart.” She added: “No, no, we have to have three that are very likely going down.”

Titus, in an interview, noted that she had represented parts of her new district when she was in the Nevada Legislature. “It’s like coming home,” she said. “Been gone awhile, but I’m back.”

But first, Titus faces a primary challenge from Amy Vilela, an activist who last week secured the backing of Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont. Vilela was a co-chair of the Sanders presidential campaign in 2020. She previously ran in a primary against Horsford in 2018, losing by a large margin.

This time, Vilela is running a progressive insurgent campaign against what she called “complacency” by Titus and the Democratic establishment, which she said was causing low enthusiasm among voters.

“We definitely have to start delivering on our promises and start addressing the needs of the ***working class*** instead of the donor base,” Vilela said in an interview.

“Well, let’s put it in perspective,” Titus responded, pointing to her record of bringing federal dollars to Nevada. “When Amy tries to portray herself as the progressive and me as the establishment, look at all the endorsements I have. She’s a Democratic Socialist, and I’m the progressive Democrat.”

‘We fell off the skyscraper and quickly hit bottom’

If Nevada flips to red in November, the state’s economic struggles will be a powerful reason.

Nevada’s unemployment rate surged to 28.5 percent in April 2020, just after the coronavirus pandemic throttled the tourism industry, which makes up a huge portion of the state’s economy. The unemployment rate is now 5 percent, still not quite at prepandemic levels.

Democrats say that without their help, the economic suffering would have been worse. And Mike Noble, a pollster who works in Nevada, said that while a Republican sweep was a possibility, “a lot of things would need to go right for the G.O.P. to make that come to fruition since the Democrats have the advantage of incumbency.”

Inflation is posing a potent new threat. As of Monday, the average price of a gallon of gasoline in Nevada was $5.66, well above the $5 national average. That’s in a state with an anemic public transit system, where you need a car to get most places. And rents in Las Vegas, a place with a famously transient population, are rising [*faster than in nearly any other city in the country*](https://www.reviewjournal.com/business/housing/las-vegas-rental-price-growth-blows-past-us-average-2549179/).

“Our recovery has been in fits and starts,” said Stephen Miller, research director at the Center for Business and Economic Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. “We fell off the skyscraper and quickly hit bottom, then we just went kind of sideways for a while.”

What to read

* William Barr, the former attorney general, said that Donald Trump had become “detached from reality” in a videotaped interview broadcast on the second day of public hearings by the panel investigating the Jan. 6 assault at the Capitol. [*View The Times’s live coverage here*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/13/us/jan-6-hearings-trump).

1. Maya King [*looks at the different paths*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/13/us/politics/mace-rice-south-carolina-trump.html) taken by Representatives Nancy Mace and Tom Rice, two South Carolina Republicans who criticized Trump after Jan. 6.
2. Eric Adams has been New York’s mayor for only five months, but with the city facing a series of urgent challenges, he has already kicked off a cross-country fund-raising blitz for re-election, [*write Emma G. Fitzsimmons and Dana Rubinstein*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/13/nyregion/eric-adams-fundraising-mayor.html).

A deep-red New Mexico county tries to ditch voting machines and drop boxes

In a New Mexico county that Donald Trump carried by 26 percentage points in the 2020 election, officials have voted unanimously to abandon the use of electronic voting machines and drop boxes for absentee ballots, persuaded by an “audit force” that [*critics say has sowed baseless fraud claims*](https://twitter.com/NMSOSMaggie/status/1499211841696059397).

The Otero County Commission, which is made up entirely of Republicans, took the step on Thursday after a two-hour presentation by the New Mexico Audit Force, a partisan group whose canvassing activities and embrace of conspiracy theories has [*drawn scrutiny from Congress*](https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/congress/house-oversight-investigating-new-mexico-audit-force-rcna20387).

Couy Griffin, the commissioner who introduced the measures, defended the work of the audit force before the [*3-to-0 vote*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z_2SNcUSdlI).

“If the 2020 election was built on a lie,” Griffin said, “which we believe it was, we hope that it does overturn it. We live in a time right now whenever we say, ‘I’m not sure the vote’s secure,’ and it’s just like you get attacked from every angle like you’re a crazy person.”

The commissioners acknowledged that the vote might be symbolic more than anything, pointing out that the county clerk, a Republican, will have the final say.

A spokesman for New Mexico’s top election official — Maggie Toulouse Oliver, the Democratic secretary of state — said in an email on Monday that state law governed voting systems and drop boxes. The county will continue to maintain and utilize the current systems under the authority of the state and the county clerk, he said.

“The vote taken by the Otero County Commission last week has no legal authority,” Alex Curtas, the spokesman, said.

In a move that echoed other Republican efforts across the country to switch to hand-counting of votes, the commission also voted to conduct a hand count of ballots cast in last Tuesday’s primary elections, but state officials said there was no mechanism for the county to simply order that.

Representatives of the audit force told the commissioners that ballots should be hand-counted for the November election and said that the electronic machines — made by Dominion Voting Systems — were vulnerable to being hacked, in addition to incorrectly interpreting and marking ballots.

A representative for Dominion Voting Systems, the [*target of baseless pro-Trump conspiracy theories about rigged voting machines*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/business/media/dominion-newsmax-one-america-lawsuit.html), said, “This is yet another example of how lies about Dominion have damaged our company and diminished the public’s faith in elections.”

Gerald Matherly, a commissioner, said that he had been persuaded that drop boxes were a “scam thing” after watching “2000 Mules,” a film by the conservative commentator Dinesh D’Souza that makes [*numerous false claims*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/29/us/politics/2000-mules-trump-conspiracy-theory.html) about “ballot trafficking” and election fraud. An Associated Press analysis of the film [*found gaping holes in its supposed findings*](https://apnews.com/article/2022-midterm-elections-covid-technology-health-arizona-e1b49d2311bf900f44fa5c6dac406762).

— Blake

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: Adam Laxalt helped lead Donald J. Trump’s efforts to overturn the presidential election in Nevada. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE BUGLEWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 14, 2022

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[***Can Biden Save People Like My Pal Mike?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:620R-9MD1-DXY4-X40W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 14, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 2396 words

**Byline:** By Nicholas Kristof

**Body**

YAMHILL, Ore. -- Joe Biden's father struggled financially, at one point commuting long distances to clean boilers and later working for a time as a used-car salesman. The owner of the used-car dealership amused himself at a Christmas party by tossing out silver dollars to watch his employees scramble for them on the floor. Biden Sr. was repulsed: He and his wife walked out of the party, and away from his job.

President Biden tells that story to highlight his appreciation of the importance of the dignity of work. It's a tale my old pal Mike Stepp would have relished, because Mike spent his life scrambling on America's floor for coins -- and not liking it one bit. Yet Mike, too, sustained his dignity and humor, which is an impressive feat when you're homeless, wrestling with addictions and sleeping in a city park.

Mike was a good man whom America left behind, and one measure of Biden's presidency -- and of America's resilience -- will be whether he can offer some kind of a Rooseveltian New Deal to millions of struggling Americans like Mike. As I see it, the nation's greatest challenge is to restore opportunity and dignity for the bottom third of Americans, not so much the middle class as the ***working class***: white, Black and brown alike.

Biden's initial moves suggest he is taking that challenge seriously, pursuing an ''American Rescue Plan'' that includes the most serious antipoverty program, especially for children, in at least half a century. But the burden is not just on the new president, but on all of us.

It is easy for Democrats to blame Republicans for failings like America's lack of universal health care. But that lets too many of us off the hook. Mike was the kind of person that both political parties claim to speak up for, yet whom both parties betrayed over the decades.

Witnessing the torment of people I grew up with, like Mike, has led me to conclude that I was wrong in many of my own views. Like many liberals with a university education and a reliable paycheck, I was too scornful of labor unions, too unreservedly enthusiastic about international trade, too glib about ''creative destruction,'' too heartless about its toll.

Mike's dad had a union job at a sawmill at a time when the timber industry offered well-paying work, and Mike had expected to get a job like that and ride it into a middle-class life. But those jobs disappeared, in part because of an environmental movement that ended logging in old-growth forests by championing a threatened species called the spotted owl.

I am an environmentalist and I love old-growth forests. Thank God we saved them. But we didn't focus enough on the human price and didn't try hard enough to mitigate it: I wish that we had shown as much concern for Mike as we did for spotted owls.

Mike and his brother, Bobby, were my closest neighbors in the 1970s. They lived in the house just down the road from our family farm here.

Each morning, Mike, Bobby and I would walk to the school bus stop together, and then amble home from the bus in the afternoon. Mike was six years younger than me, exuberant, good-natured, a ham. Bobby was three years older than me, and equally good-natured.

That was a time when capitalism worked for many blue-collar Americans. My dad had worked in the woods in the 1950s, as a logger in Valsetz, Ore., after arriving in the United States as a refugee from Eastern Europe. He earned enough through logging to work his way through college. Today that would be impossible.

For the Stepps, even back then life had shadows. Their home was often violent, for Mike's father drank too much and then became abusive. ''Dad beat him,'' Bobby recalled. ''Hand, belt or switch, whatever Dad could get his hands on in a drunken stupor.''

The family wasn't into education, and I don't remember a single book in their home. Mike and Bobby both dropped out of high school, figuring that they could get good jobs just as their dad had.

Good jobs were disappearing, however. That's partly because of the environmentalists' successes -- indignant T-shirts back then urged, ''Save a Logger, Eat an Owl.''

But the owls were a scapegoat: Well-paying jobs were also lost because of mechanization, the decline of unions and other trends undermining blue-collar jobs generally. Successive American administrations also didn't do much to help. Average weekly wages for production workers in America were actually lower two months ago ($860) than they had been, after adjusting for inflation, in December 1972 ($902 in today's money), according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

Many of us didn't appreciate how devastating the loss of good jobs would be to the social fabric, and we had no idea that it would lead to family breakdown and a tide of alcoholism, addiction and early death. The economists David Autor, David Dorn and Gordon Hanson found that when trade cost men good manufacturing jobs, the result was more unwed mothers, more children living in poverty, more people dying early and more ''male idleness.''

\*

''Male idleness'' is one way to describe Mike Stepp. He bounced among unsatisfying low-wage jobs, and he and his buddies escaped their frustrations by turning to alcohol and drugs, periodically tangling with the law. His wife, Stephanie Ross, who had gone out with him when she was 14, kicked Mike out of the house when he began leaving needles where their two young children might find them. They divorced in 2003, and he eventually landed in the streets of the nearby town of McMinnville.

''I like it out here,'' he told me one time when we chatted in the park where he slept, and then he said with a laugh, ''This is the great outdoors!'' But it was just a line. He was often lonely, cold and wet. Previously, he had lived under cover in a county parking garage, and when he was forced out, he broke down and wept on the street.

In his shopping cart, which he took everywhere, Mike carried a couple of my books that I had signed for him. We would catch up when I visited McMinnville, and I would also fill him in on Bobby, who was serving a life sentence in a Colorado prison and whom I corresponded with.

I introduced my wife and children to Mike, and he charmed them with his easy humor. As he walked the streets, picking returnable cans out of garbage cans to make a few dollars, he had cheery greetings for everyone who passed.

''Mike always greeted me with, 'How you doin', kid?' and a big smile,'' recalled Casey Kulla, a county commissioner. My mother told me to be nice to Mike in writing this article, because ''he never asked for anything.'' That was the thing about Mike: He was homeless but rich in friends.

So what went wrong with Mike?

''He didn't want to work,'' Stephanie told me. She is angry at Mike for abandoning his kids and failing to pay $68,000 in child support, but then the anger passes and she wistfully refers to him as ''the love of my life.''

Perhaps Mike was lazy, but there's more to the story. Everyone agrees that Mike had mental illnesses that were never treated, and in any case, this wasn't one person's stumble but a crisis for an entire generation of low-education workers. Mike and his cohort weren't dumber or lazier than their parents or grandparents, but their outcomes worsened.

So, sure, we can have a conversation about personal responsibility. But let's also talk about our collective responsibility: If the federal minimum wage of 1968 had kept pace with inflation and productivity, it would now be more than $22 an hour, rather than $7.25. We also underinvested in our human capital, so high school graduation rates stagnated beginning in the 1970s along with blue-collar incomes, even as substance abuse soared and family structure for low-education workers collapsed.

One consequence is that an American dies a ''death of despair'' -- from drugs, alcohol or suicide -- every two and a half minutes. Long after the coronavirus has retreated, we will still be grappling with a pandemic of despair.

The United States has a mental health crisis that is largely untreated and arises in part from high levels of inequality. Researchers find that poverty causes mental illness, and mental illness in turn exacerbates poverty. It's a vicious cycle, and 20 million Americans, mostly poorly educated, describe every one of the last 30 days as ''bad mental health days,'' according to David G. Blanchflower, a Dartmouth economist.

I also know this: Taxpayers spent large sums jailing Mike, whose arrest record runs 14 pages (mostly for drug offenses). That money would have been better spent at the front end, with early childhood programs and mentoring to support Mike and help him finish high school and get a job.

Yet politicians have mostly been AWOL. In the 2020 Democratic primaries, the presidential candidates had healthy discussions about increasing college access but largely ignored the reality that one in seven American children don't even graduate from high school. The term ''***working class***'' is rarely mentioned by politicians, who prefer to appeal to people a notch higher, in the middle class. And many government programs that are nominally for the benefit of the middle class -- such as the mortgage interest deduction, 529 college savings plans, state and local tax deductions and ''middle-class tax cuts'' -- actually primarily benefit the rich.

We fret about competitive challenges from China, but the best way to meet them is to elevate our capabilities at home. China built new universities at the rate of one a week, while the number of colleges in the United States is now shrinking -- and as many Americans have criminal records as have college degrees. ''Holding hands, Americans with arrest records could circle the earth three times,'' according to the Brennan Center for Justice.

America cannot succeed when so many Americans are failing.

Joe Biden has a fighting chance to make progress on these issues. Partly that's because he's impossible to mock as a wild-eyed socialist, partly because he and his team understand that we have a better chance of making progress if we frame the issue less as one of ''inequality'' -- a liberal word -- and more as one of ''opportunity'' and ''dignity.''

That comes naturally to Biden. He intuitively understands ***working-class*** angst and mental health crises, having himself contemplated both suicide and an escape into alcohol after his wife and daughter were killed in a car accident in 1972. Biden also has spoken candidly and lovingly about his son Hunter's struggles with addiction.

Biden's American Rescue Plan includes a $15 federal minimum wage, initiatives to expand medical care and reduce homelessness and, most striking, a historic plan to reduce child poverty by about half.

When I've previously written about Americans falling behind, readers have challenged me to say what would make a difference. So here are five policies to create opportunity:

1. A national high-quality early childhood and day care program, modeled on the one provided by the United States military for service members.

2. A higher minimum wage and broader effort to train people for well-paying jobs by scaling up proven initiatives like Year Up and Career Academies.

3. Huge expansion of drug treatment programs. It's scandalous that only 20 percent of Americans with addictions get treatment.

4. A child allowance, the heart of Biden's plan to fight child poverty.

5. ''Bandwidth for all'' to expand high-speed internet access, modeled on rural electrification from the 1930s to the 1950s.

Rural electrification was part of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, and the New Deal is a model for what we need in the 2020s. Is that feasible?

Some liberal initiatives (''defund the police,'' banning ICE) are unpopular, but the kinds of populist programs I just listed poll well and have some Republican support. Seventy percent of voters support expanding early childhood programs. The Republican senators Mitt Romney of Utah, Marco Rubio of Florida and Mike Lee of Utah are among those who have endorsed serious initiatives to address child poverty. And nothing would do more to expand opportunity and build a better future for America than to slash child poverty.

\*

Mike struggled in the last couple of years. He had a bad bicycle accident, circulation problems, gangrene and a toe amputation.

''I'm doing well,'' he told me, typically ebullient, the last time we spoke, in late November. ''But it's a little hard to balance without a toe. I never thought it would matter.''

Mike was found on a sidewalk one night in December after suffering a heart attack, and he died soon after in a hospital at the age of 55. Even in a pandemic, people came together to mourn him. A remembrance at a bus shelter where Mike had sometimes stayed drew 30 people who recalled Mike's generosity and good cheer.

''He would give you anything,'' said one man, showing off a cap that Mike had handed him. The headline in the local newspaper, The News-Register, declared, ''Beloved Downtown Homeless Man Dies.''

Mike was a good man who had endured a painful life, and he knew he had inflicted pain on his wife and children.

''It's strange to me that people remember Mike fondly,'' his daughter, Brandie Stepp, 29, told me. She said she had mourned losing him not now but two decades ago when he left his family. But she also believes that his failures were complicated, originating with neglect as a child and compounded by mental illness.

I liked Mike. I respected him. I miss him. I hear constantly from wealthy Americans griping about some setback or pleading for special consideration, and he was a homeless man who sought nothing and would joke about the upside of sleeping in a city park.

There are many complicated Americans like him, struggling in a miasma of addiction, despair or mental illness, suffering unbearable pain and also inflicting it on their loved ones.

Can Biden and all of us rise to the occasion today, as Roosevelt's generation responded to the Great Depression with the New Deal? Surely we can come together to offer struggling Americans better options than scrambling for coins on the nation's floor until they die.

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**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Mike Stepp in McMinnville, Ore., in 2018

Mike Stepp, center, on a summer day in 2018, in the spot where he regularly slept, in downtown McMinnville. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LYNSEY ADDARIO/GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***When Production Design Plays a Supporting Role***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64H9-XKB1-JBG3-64G3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 11, 2022 Tuesday 23:02 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1209 words

**Byline:** Mekado Murphy

**Highlight:** The visual environments of “West Side Story,” “The Humans” and “Nightmare Alley” feel as alive as the actors.

**Body**

The visual environments of “West Side Story,” “The Humans” and “Nightmare Alley” feel as alive as the actors.

We’ve all seen films with production design that is so dynamic that the setting or look is often considered an additional character. That may bring to mind the heightened or outsize realities in the work of stylist auteurs like Tim Burton and Wes Anderson. But a handful of likely Oscar contenders have built intriguing design worlds by burrowing into ***working-class*** realities, particularly the blue-collar struggles of building and sustaining a life in an ever-changing America.

Those struggles can be seen in water-stained walls, amid the brick piles of a bulldozed neighborhood or on the tattered carnival tents of [*“The Humans,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=7&amp;v=dp3Whb77eXc&amp;feature=emb_logo) [*“West Side Story”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5GJLwWiYSg&amp;feature=emb_imp_woyt) and [*“Nightmare Alley.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q81Yf46Oj3s&amp;feature=emb_imp_woyt) Below, we spoke to the production designers of those movies about how they created such solemn, living backdrops.

‘The Humans’

David Gropman

[*Stephen Karam’s drama*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/23/movies/the-humans-review.html), an adaptation of his play, spends an evening with a family whose Thanksgiving gathering is more festering than festive. The dinner takes place in a Manhattan apartment that is newly home to a young couple, yet that is all that is new about the place. Paint is peeling, tiles are missing, pipes are gurgling. Many apartment-hunting New Yorkers have inevitably encountered this kind of rental.

The production designer David Gropman, whose credits include other stage-to-screen adaptations like “Fences” and “August: Osage County,” said that to get the feel of this apartment right, he started by inviting Karam to spend time in a friend’s place uptown.

Gropman liked the scale of the rooms, the long hallway and the mazelike layout. There they discussed the film and how a real space would work. “We talked about the width of the hallway,” Gropman said, “how you get from one room to the next, where the kitchen sits and how it’s forced into a space that wasn’t meant to be a kitchen, what the texture of the walls are like, painted white about a million times.”

The apartment truly does drive the narrative, forcing characters together in one room, pulling them apart in others. It’s a grim environment for the struggles of a financially squeezed family that is holding grudges and secrets. Gropman and his team built the duplex apartment set at Steiner Studios in Brooklyn, with each floor on a different stage. But it was important that the place felt as real as possible, Gropman said, so that the actors could forget they were on a soundstage and “feel that this is where they’re supposed to be or where they’re not supposed to be.”

‘West Side Story’

Adam Stockhausen

The 1961 big-screen version of “West Side Story” took to the streets of New York City in its vibrant opening, filming around areas that were being razed to make way for new buildings that included Lincoln Center. That demolition becomes a plot point in [*Steven Spielberg’s new adaptation of the musical*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/movies/west-side-story-review.html). So what we see are the Jets and the Sharks waging turf wars in a neighborhood that is disintegrating before residents’ eyes.

The production designer Adam Stockhausen (who frequently works on Wes Anderson’s films) noted that he and Spielberg agreed from the start that a lot of the movie would be filmed on location in and around New York. “Real street, real dirt, real grit, real jeopardy,” he said. In his research, Stockhausen said, he was struck by an image in a “slum clearance report” for the rezoning: an aerial shot with a giant red line outlining the neighborhood. Stockhausen was overwhelmed by the expanse that would be razed but used it as a tool to shape the geography of the story.

They decided that the Jets’ territory would have already met the wrecking ball. And they gave the Sharks a space where that same fate was imminent. The rumble would be held in a salt shed by the river, and the number “Cool” would be filmed on the rickety piers where pieces of wood had fallen away.

Stockhausen said they knew they would need a lot of urban space: “It’s not like we were just doing a little discreet scene on a stoop or something,” he said. “These were hundreds of dancers running out into the middle of the street at full speed.”

They skipped the Columbus Circle section, where the film takes place, because it’s “too built up and modernized,” Stockhausen said, Instead, they went to northern Manhattan neighborhoods like Washington Heights, as well as spots in the Bronx to find suitable settings. For the Jets’ scenes amid rubble, they traveled to Paterson, N.J. “That’s where we found this wonderful pair of parking lots that were adjacent to a really nice period street,” Stockhausen said. “And so that became our core of where we built the Jets’ demolition zone.”

‘Nightmare Alley’

Tamara Deverell

In [*Guillermo del Toro’s noir telling*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/movies/nightmare-alley-review.html) of a carny who hustles his way to the big time, the carnival scenes are cast in a color palette that has a somewhat muted vibrancy. Both the grandeur and the grime, the tugging weight of life on the circuit, is seen in each tattered tent, each murky banner. It was important to the production designer Tamara Deverell (the television series “Suits” and “Star Trek: Discovery”) to match her design to the moods of the characters and the scenes.

She started by building small wooden blocks to represent the characters and tents, “almost like a toy,” she said, and “we played around with the shape of the carnival for the movement through it, because that was very important to Guillermo.”

At the same time, she researched carnivals and circuses of the 1920s, ’30s and ’40s, and the work of the artist [*Fred G. Johnson*](https://showmensmuseum.org/carnival-circus-sideshow-banners/#wppa-container-1), “the Picasso of banner art,” as Deverell put it. She drew from his work but made her interpretation less joyful for this melancholy film.

Then she and her team built many of the sideshow sets on an empty field north of Toronto. “I approached the whole carnival as a kind of canvas painting,” she said. For the tents, the fabric was hand-dyed and aged, then sent to a family business in the Midwest that built them. Once the tents came back, the film crew would paint and age them some more.

“We wanted that patina of something that feels timeless because it’s been kicked around,” she said.

The production had to shut down, along with the rest of the film industry, during the first wave of the pandemic. “When we came back,” Deverell said, “some of the tents had ripped and we had to fix the tears. And some of the stuff that we had up already had aged even more, and that was great.”

PHOTOS: Steven Yeun, top left, and Richard Jenkins in “The Humans,” with production design by David Gropman. The layout of the decrepit apartment drives the film’s narrative. Above is a 3-D set model made for the film. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY A24; ALI KASHFI); One of Adam Stockhausen’s sketch designs for “West Side Story,” above. In the film, the Jets stake out territory on actual city streets, right. Locales like Washington Heights and spots in the Bronx provided suitable settings. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY 20TH CENTURY STUDIOS); Sets for “Nightmare Alley” were built on a field, above, and extensively aged. “We wanted that patina of something that feels timeless because it’s been kicked around,” the production designer Tamara Deverell said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KERRY HAYES/SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES; SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES)

**Load-Date:** January 11, 2022

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[***A Writer Brought 'Ryan's Hope' to Life***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WB-9341-DXY4-X3NJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 27, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 3; BIG CITY

**Length:** 1178 words

**Byline:** By Ginia Bellafante

**Body**

Mary Ryan Munisteri worked on ''Ryan's Hope,'' a soap opera set in a real place, New York City, and grounded in reality about women's lives.

Growing up in the 1970s and early 1980s, that great period of parental absenteeism, I spent most weekday afternoons on the floor of my grandmother's bedroom in front of a small television that sat next to the door to her veranda, a sunlit space covered in wisteria that still could not compete with the pleasures of ABC's daytime lineup.

Home by 3, I could join my grandmother for ''General Hospital'' and, later, ''The Edge of Night,'' whose story lines bent toward crime and courtroom drama but nevertheless accommodated the absurdist narrative mandates of soap opera.

A chilly and practical immigrant who spent her evenings writing poetry in her native Sicilian dialect, my grandmother was an unlikely candidate for addiction to the Amnesia Plot, but there we were, picking at butter cookies, enthralled every time another socialite with a split personality couldn't remember the murder she committed when she was someone else with darker hair.

At the time, nearly every soap on television was set in a fictional affluent suburb -- to my mind, always in eastern Pennsylvania -- dominated by some wealthy Protestant clan or another. It became clear years later that my grandmother's pristine English, delivered as if she had entered the world via the Main Line, was the result of her daily ritual.

One summer in the late '70s, I discovered a new daytime series -- ''Ryan's Hope'' -- but I couldn't get her on board. It dealt with the generational tension between Old World cultural and religious values and the new freedoms embraced by the young; the modernity did not appeal to her.

Lacking the deracinated quality of the others, the show was set in a city -- an actual one, New York -- specifically in Washington Heights, amid a Catholic, ***working-class*** Irish American family whose matriarch, Maeve Ryan (played by the Tony Award-winning actress Helen Gallagher), loved Yeats and spoke with a brogue.

This and other aspects of the show felt revolutionary. Unlike most soaps, which were claustrophobic, ''Ryan's Hope'' let the world in. It was grounded in a reality -- about women's actual lives -- that the genre had otherwise disavowed.

Maeve and her husband owned a bar and had five children; one of them, Mary Ryan, was named after a real person: a Brooklyn writer. Married to a lawyer she met when she was getting a master's degree in literature at Yale, the real Mary Ryan (Mary Ryan Munisteri by way of marriage) bought a brownstone in Park Slope in the late 1960s. It was there, through a local church, that she met Claire Labine, who encouraged her to write for television.

She began writing skits for ''Sesame Street'' and ''The Electric Company.'' Then, in 1975, Ms. Labine and a partner created ''Ryan's Hope'' and quickly brought Mary on to write dialogue.

By the early '80s, Mary was the show's head writer and had won seven Emmys. Before she died last month at the age of 82, she was the last surviving member of a creative triumvirate that had made the show such a success.

The fictional Mary Ryan, for example, was an ambitious journalist who stood up to a temperamental husband who did not want her to put career over family. When her brother Frank runs for a Senate seat, he struggles to balance his obligations to his campaign with the ones he has to his baby.

The show reveled in local political detail, making Frank take a position on Westway, the West Side Highway project that was sidelined after years of debate. There was mention of issues and feuds among district leaders and donors in Nassau County.

One character, a politician named Charlie Ferris, was thought to be an amalgam of a state assemblyman named Joe Ferris, who represented Park Slope at the time, and a familiar reform Democrat, Charles Monaghan. Another character had slipped under the radar of immigration officials and faced the threat of deportation to Ireland.

There were sophisticated nods and winks throughout; another character, Stanley Bosworth, was named after the founder and head of St. Ann's, the private school in Brooklyn Heights where Mary's children were enrolled.

The writers had no interest in condescending to a female audience. This in itself seemed novel, given that by 1981 ''General Hospital'' had a plot in which a family of rich lunatics was building a weather machine to freeze the planet and take over the world. In the beginning and for a long stretch, ''Ryan's Hope'' benefited from network neglect.

''We worked in a studio on 53rd Street between Ninth and Tenth, which was not the best place to be working at the time, but what was good about it was that the executives didn't want to go there either, so they'd leave us alone,'' said Jeffrey Lane, who was mentored by Ms. Ryan Munisteri and Ms. Labine and who went on to write for popular prime-time series like ''Mad About You.''

The network did occasionally interfere. Once, the writers wound up with a plotline in which a gorilla, escaped from the Central Park Zoo, kidnaps one of the female leads and takes her to the top of Belvedere Castle. This turned out not to be good for ratings, Mr. Lane said, because the craziness was so out of step with the show's ethos.

Until the mid-1980s, with the rise of comedies like ''Designing Women,'' prime-time writers' rooms were not the easiest spaces for women to penetrate. This left daytime television as a refuge, a place where women could wield a lot of creative power and work in a way that suited their personal circumstance.

''There was a real integration of work life and home life that is common now but wasn't then,'' Mary's son Matt Munisteri, a jazz guitarist, told me recently. ''We were all in the Slope,'' he said -- the Labines on Berkeley Place, the Munisteris on Carroll Street. ''At night, my mom would be writing and on deadline, and the kids would go back and forth as messengers with scripts.''

''Whenever the children were home from school during lunchtime, they would all gather at the Labine apartment to watch ''Ryan's Hope,'' which aired at 12:30, he said. ''When the show was on, you couldn't speak.''

I contacted Matt, whom I knew through friends in college, when I learned that his mother had died. I had met her once in the '80s in her apartment in a Rosario Candela building overlooking Prospect Park. She was the first professional writer I had ever met, and she was dazzling. Mary went on to run writers' rooms for several other soaps for many years. I asked Matt if she ever wished she had written more broadly.

A grandchild of traveling vaudevillians, she never felt as though she was doing something beneath her. ''When she'd sit writing dialogue, she'd be mouthing it, and her fingers were flying on the keyboard, and you'd walk in the door and you'd just be ignored, ignored, ignored,'' Matt told me.

''She had no tolerance for looking down on any kind of art as lowbrow,'' he said. ''It's difficult for people to understand -- but she loved it.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/nyregion/ryans-hope-soap-opera.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/nyregion/ryans-hope-soap-opera.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above from left, Malcolm Groome, Kate Mulgrew, Bernard Barrow, Helen Gallagher and Andrew Robinson in ''Ryan's Hope'' from 1977. Left, Mary Ryan Munisteri at her desk. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES/DISNEY GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, VIA GETTY IMAGES

MATT MUNISTERI)

**Load-Date:** February 27, 2022

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[***The Courts Take a Hammer to Labor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642Y-BSP1-DXY4-X4XK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 14, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 2; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1089 words

**Byline:** By Sara Nelson

**Body**

Workers are flexing collective power in major strikes, workplace actions and organizing drives, as they are forced to fight battles that labor won decades earlier: over workplace safety, an eight-hour day, vacation, sick leave, a living wage, health care and retirement security. But even as workers build power and wield it, we are thwarted by laws and judges who reliably side with corporations over workers.

America needs more judges who understand and support the rights of workers. For too long, the courts have sided with corporations over labor, fundamentally and perniciously reshaping American law, life and liberty. Today, they are doing their part to unravel the American dream -- and the social contract that has been in place since the 1940s, offering the ***working class*** a good life if they spend 40 hours on the job, the means to enjoy it in off hours and a secure retirement.

In one stark example, a judge in Alabama in October barred union mineworkers from picketing within 300 yards of mine entrances, even as the authorities there have failed to charge the drivers of vehicles that struck lawful picketers. In a more common infringement of free speech, a judge in Iowa limited United Auto Workers picket lines outside a John Deere plant in Davenport last month to just four people at each entrance to the plant.

The wholesale theft of workers' rights is happening in broad daylight.

With the help of conservative judges, corporations have systematically weakened labor laws for decades, leaving workers fewer and fewer tools to hold their bosses accountable. In the rare cases when workers win judgments against a bad boss, employers rarely face more than a slap on the wrist.

This didn't happen by accident. Republican presidents have stacked the federal courts with judges who hail from elite law schools, white-shoe law firms and corporate boardrooms. (More than a quarter of all federal judges on the bench in January had been appointed by Donald Trump.) As a result, the corporate win rate in American courts is sky-high.

This is especially true in cases heard by the Supreme Court, which has sided with the Chamber of Commerce 70 percent of the time since 2006. A study published in 2013 ranked Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas among the five most-corporate-friendly members of the court since 1946, and the pro-corporate voting rate of its conservative wing is only growing. According to one recent report, the court agrees with the Chamber of Commerce more now than it had at any other time in recent history.

Two other cases this year vividly demonstrate how the business lobby is using the courts to undermine workers' rights.

In June, in Cedar Point Nursery v. Hassid, the Supreme Court elevated property rights above the rights of workers, upending a 1975 California law that allowed union organizers to speak with farmworkers in the fields and vineyards. This law had been a seminal accomplishment for the farmworker labor movement led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. As if to emphasize the court's hostility to workers' rights, Chief Justice Roberts declared that the California law granted union organizers the ''right to invade the growers' property.''

In another case decided in June, Trinity Services Group v. National Labor Relations Board, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia gave employers a free pass to hoodwink their employees into voting against the union as long as they don't make threats or promises or evoke future consequences.

Because judges have created loopholes and carve-outs in labor law over the years, companies can seek to weaken the collective power of workers by forcing them to attend anti-union ''captive audience meetings,'' firing workers who organize their colleagues and disseminating propaganda smearing unions, as well as employing other intimidation tactics to keep employees from organizing.

Congress wrote labor laws to foster union organizing and encourage collective bargaining, recognizing that workers are the foundation of our economy, and their collective power can check corporate abuses. Congress is today considering landmark legislation to update outdated, broken (and in some cases overtly racist and sexist) labor laws and give workers a fair chance to organize, bargain and hold employers accountable. But its passage would prove hollow if the courts dismantled it or wouldn't enforce it.

This isn't just an academic question, or even an economic one -- it's often a matter of life and death. Before he joined the Supreme Court, Neil Gorsuch, as a judge on the Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, voted to allow the firing of an employee who abandoned an unheated company truck in a blizzard to avoid freezing to death. This is just one example of the judicial callousness toward workers that has put our livelihoods and lives in real danger.

President Biden has an important opportunity to appoint judges who have been in the trenches with workers, and who know that strong labor laws and union contracts create workplace protections and rights for workers. By nominating union lawyers and worker advocates, he can help break the cycle of courts undermining our rights to benefit their corporate friends.

Workers have seen progress when presidents appointed judges who had a personal understanding of injustice. Justices like Thurgood Marshall and Ruth Bader Ginsburg devoted their careers as lawyers to arguing for civil and women's rights and changed our nation for the better from the bench. We've had laws to protect workers' rights for nearly 100 years, but workers have learned that seeking justice in the courts leads all too often to frustration. No workers are immune from having their rights snatched away as long as judges reflexively side with employers.

With the midterm elections approaching, it's imperative that the White House act swiftly to fill vacancies while Democrats hold a Senate majority to confirm Mr. Biden's nominees.

In this moment of historic economic inequality, the president can take a powerful action to help workers build -- and keep -- power.

Sara Nelson (@FlyingWithSara) is the president of the Association of Flight Attendants-C.W.A.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Schubert FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Singular American Painter and His Perennially Disregarded Wife; Critic’s Picks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65F4-G3G1-JBG3-623D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 12, 2022 Thursday 09:33 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1484 words

**Byline:** Roberta Smith

**Highlight:** Shows in Hartford and New York spotlight great works by Milton Avery from every decade, and those of Sally Michel, who helped shape her husband’s art.

**Body**

Shows in Hartford and New York spotlight great works by Milton Avery from every decade, and those of Sally Michel, who helped shape her husband’s art.

HARTFORD, Conn. — There has always been a certain fluidity in our appreciation of the American modernist maverick Milton Avery (1885-1965). And this is not just because of the light, airy, daringly simplified, almost abstract paintings of sand, sea and sky that characterized his last decade. Avery was artistically unaffiliated, never part of a particular group or movement, which means that general awareness of his work has fluctuated a great deal. It’s always surprising to realize the range of his styles and subjects, and the chance to do so has been too rare.

Now, one of those rare moments has arrived, with quite a bit of Avery’s work on view in shows in New York City and Hartford, Conn. The [*Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art*](https://www.thewadsworth.org/explore/on-view/milton-avery/)in Hartford is presenting “Milton Avery,” a lavish survey of nearly 70 paintings (organized by the Royal Academy of Arts, London in collaboration with the Wadsworth and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth). It is the largest since the artist’s retrospective at the Whitney Museum in 1982. In New York, [*Yares Art*](https://www.yaresart.com/) is celebrating 50 years of representing the Avery estate with an exhibition of 50 Averys; mostly paintings, with some watercolors.

And as a sidebar to these shows, [*D. Wigmore Fine Art*](https://dwigmore.com/) has mounted its third show of the work of Sally Michel [*(1902-2003*](https://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/26/nyregion/sally-michel-avery-100-illustrator-and-artist.html)), the painter from Brooklyn who married Avery in 1926. She worked full time as a freelance illustrator for more than 30 years so that he could paint full time. Her painting style has been seen as a knockoff of her husband’s, but her contribution to its formation has yet to be fully recognized, especially his tendency to distill forms to their essence.

The Wadsworth show begins on a cringey note. Its first work is a small oil on board from around 1910 that features tufts of yellow and green leafy brushwork supported by trunks and branches whose skinny, brittle lines suggest the use of a quill pen. Yick. If that painting promises anything, it’s a future in greeting card design. But Avery, whose simplified use of flat, saturated color would influence fledgling Abstract Expressionists like Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb and Barnett Newman, virtually acknowledged the problem: He called the scene “Spindly Trees” and went on to use line more loosely and inventively, making them a staple of his radiant, notational art.

The development of Avery’s use of line is visible nearby in a charming little Impressionist work from 1918, where the lines disappear in a richly colored, palette-knifed surface. In two hilly vistas — “Moody Landscape” (1930) and “Fall in Vermont” (1935) — Avery begins to exploit the physicality of paint. Softer, thicker lines and autumnal colors suggest the influence of Marsden Hartley’s dark early landscapes, also inspired by Vermont. Then the thin lines return, gentler and more supple, in “Blue Trees” of 1945, an early mature painting; they seem almost to sway within the soft masses of blue and mauve leafiness of different trees.

If this seems like a lot of ground for a show to cover in its first 15 paintings, it is. The Wadsworth presentation is arranged thematically, divided according to traditional subjects — landscape, still life, portraits and self-portraits, figures and figure groups — as well as “Urban Scenes,” “The Breakthrough Moment” and “Color Harmonies.” Each of the first several galleries backtracks to around 1930 and marches forward again, which becomes confusing. Then, toward the show’s finish, the divisions dissolve into one another, culminating in a final gallery of late work from the 1950s and early ’60s, when Avery enlarged his canvases, thinned his paint, and turned for the most part to unpopulated views of the sea, arguably nature’s most abstract element. The few times he edged into abstraction, however, he held back with a descriptive title like “Boathouse by the Sea,” which converts this 1959 painting’s bands of color orange, blue, yellow and black into sky, water, sand and shadow.

Born into a ***working-class*** family in New York State, Avery grew up in Hartford and never really had an easy life. He left school at 16, taking a succession of jobs — mostly manual — to help support his family. Upon the death of his father in 1905, he decided that a job in commercial lettering would pay better and enrolled in a class at the Connecticut League of Art Students. The teacher encouraged him to switch to life-drawing class; by 1911 he listed his occupation as “artist” in the Hartford directory, studying at night while working during the day.

In 1924, he met Sally Michel at an art colony in Gloucester, Mass. She was 17 years his junior, which was one reason that, around this time, he moved his birth date up to 1893. Upon their marriage two years later, they established their routine in a small apartment in Manhattan. He painted in the living room — he never had a studio. She also worked “from home” as we now say, as a freelance illustrator, including for The New York Times Magazine and Macy’s department store for three decades, and thus could also care for their daughter, March, who was born in 1932. On the weekends the couple visited art galleries and museums. Michel also painted, but only on board in modest sizes; she did not use canvas or begin to have solo shows until after Avery’s death .

Life was not easy for Avery and Michel but its harshness did not affect his art. Avery consistently made gentle, optimistic, profoundly optical paintings that defined their own strip of no man’s land between representation and abstraction, refusing both extremes through their use of simple shapes and saturated colors. (Only in the late 1950s did his work begin to earn enough that she could quit her day jobs.)

The big ocean-oriented paintings of Avery’s final decade are considered his greatest works because they are closest to the pinnacle of Abstract Expressionism. But the shows at the Wadsworth exhibition and to some extent Yares attest that there are great Averys from every decade. He remained a singular hybrid, who never settled into any niche, but constantly circulated, combining different ratios of cartooning, folk art, European modernism and American Scene painting.

In the 1941 “Bus Ride” at Yares — which has slightly more late paintings than the Wadsworth, including his last one — the Avery family is pictured on a New York City bus. Avery’s hair is wild and so is the spatial design in this odd fusion of American Scene and folk art, with a touch of cartooning. In the 1931 “Seaside” at the Wadsworth, he widely spaces five figures on a beach, combining American Scene in a modernist meditation on pale colors. The ensemble is stagelike and feels a little like a Shakespeare tragedy, or a Beckett farce, primarily because of the startled expression in the main figure’s face. It takes a moment to realize that the woman behind her is probably simply zipping up her friend’s beach dress.

The view that Avery worked for decades to achieve a final blast of brilliance seems as antediluvian as the idea that he worked alone in a style that overpowered his wife’s work. First of all, they were more or less joined at the hip, working side by side, looking at and talking about art, for 40 years. As other art historians have suggested, it may be impossible to think of their style as anything but collaborative, especially since Michel was an illustrator, adept at abbreviating forms.

The 17 paintings in “Sally Michel: Reshaping Realism” at Wigmore include landscapes, still lifes, nudes and figures. They are not as suave as Avery but they have a sharpness of composition and a boldness of color that gives them their own weight, tension and emotional force. They confirm that without Sally Michel there would have been no Milton Avery, and not just because she brought home the bacon for much of his artistic career.

Milton Avery

Through June 5 at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, 600 Main Street, Hartford, Conn., 860-278-2670, [*thewadsworth.org*](https://www.thewadsworth.org/explore/on-view/milton-avery/).

Milton Avery

Through July 30 at Yares Art, 745 Fifth Avenue at 57th Street, Manhattan, 212-256-0969, [*yaresart.com.*](https://www.yaresart.com/)

Sally Michel: Reshaping Realism

Through June 10 at D. Wigmore Fine Art, 152 West 57th Street, Manhattan, 212-581-1657, [*dwigmore.com*](https://dwigmore.com/).

PHOTOS: Clockwise from above left: Milton Avery’s “Seaside” (1931) at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art in Hartford, Conn.; Avery’s “Blue Trees” (1945) at the Wadsworth; Sally Michel’s “Mother and Son” (1975) at the D. Wigmore Fine Art gallery; and, center, Avery’s “Bus Ride” (1941) at Yares Art. Below, a view of the Avery exhibition at the Wadsworth. Late abstractions of Avery’s final decade are ocean-oriented and closest to the pinnacle of Abstract Expressionism. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MILTON AVERY TRUST/ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NY; WADSWORTH ATHENEUM MUSEUM OF ART)

**Load-Date:** May 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Joe Biden Is Stronger Than You Think***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y2M-HXP1-JBG3-61T0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 24, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 25

**Length:** 905 words

**Byline:** By David Brooks

**Body**

Here's why he is still winning.

It was yet another epic failure of political punditry. Go back to the early months of Joe Biden's presidential campaign and read what the consultants and commentators were saying about him: His support is just name recognition; he'll fade! He's too old! He's running a zombie campaign! The party has moved left and he's out of touch! He voted for the crime bill!

Almost everybody was bearish on Joe. But now look where we are, weeks from actual voting. If the polls are to be believed, Biden will win Iowa, he'll come in second in New Hampshire, he will easily win Nevada, he will dominate in South Carolina. He's now tied for the lead in California and he's way ahead in Texas.

I don't know if he'll win the nomination (both he and Bernie Sanders look strong), but this is not where a lot of people six months ago thought we'd be.

It's the 947th consecutive sign that we in the coastal chattering classes have not cured our insularity problem. It's the 947th case in which we see that every second you spend on Twitter detracts from your knowledge of American politics, and that the only cure to this insularity disease is constant travel and interviewing, close attention to state and local data and raw abject humility about the fact that the attitudes and academic degrees that you think make you clever are actually the attitudes and academic degrees that separate you from the real texture of American life.

Biden didn't just luck into this. He and his team grasped six truths:

Understand the year you are running in. Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are running the same basic campaign they would have run in 2012 or 2016. Biden's campaign is completely focused on the central problem of 2020: that Donald Trump is a steaming hot mess in the middle of national life.

Biden has fixated his campaign on the Trump problem and fighting for the soul of America. Nearly twice as many Democrats say it's more important to beat Trump than to have a candidate with whom they agree on all issues.

Understand your party's core challenge. All around the world parties on the left are losing because they have lost touch with the ***working class***. These parties think they can reconnect with that class by swinging even further left. But Jeremy Corbyn in Britain and Bernie Sanders here are a doctoral student's idea of a ***working-class*** candidate, not an actual working person's idea of one.

Biden has criticized his own party for losing touch with this class. He emerged from it, is focusing his attention on it and is winning support from it.

Moderates are still powerful. The Democratic Party is moving left, but about half of Democrats still say they are moderate or conservative. No candidate has ever won a nomination without strong support from these voters, while college-town candidates -- Howard Dean, Gary Hart -- tend to falter. In every presidential general election that Democrats have won since 1988, they carried moderates by more than 12 percentage points. In every race they have lost, they failed to do that. Biden kept his moderate credentials when many other candidates saw A.O.C. on Twitter and decided to move left.

Many Democrats resent their own elites. There is a quiet tension between Democrats who wield cultural power and those who don't. The former are active on social media, and clobber the latter -- people who say or write the ''wrong'' thing.

The non-elites tend to feel judged and looked down on by the self-appointed savior class. ''Politically correct'' has become the phrase people use to define those who use cultural power to enforce ideological conformity. Seventy percent of Democrats who are not on social media say political correctness is a big problem. These are people silently but vehemently reacting against this social reign of terror. Biden communicates affection, not judgment, acceptance, not expulsion.

Have a better theory of social change. Sanders and Warren imagine they can rally movements of progressive supermajorities to transform American politics. The reality is that if they are elected we'll be stuck with the same 42 percent-to-42 percent stagnant political war we have now.

Biden starts with the understanding that we are a closely divided nation. He understands the elemental fact that if you want to pass laws you have to go through Congress. As Damon Linker pointed out recently in The Week, Biden's argument is that a center-left congressional coalition is the best we can do under present circumstances. That's a more realistic theory of change. A beloved legislator like Biden is more likely to transform the political landscape than a down-the-line progressive.

Connection. Connection. Connection. Many candidates pound the podium and lecture at their rallies. It's the big leader onstage and the passionate mass of followers down below. Nobody makes an individual connection as well as Biden. In a time when people feel exhausted, isolated and alienated, a candidate who seems normal and emotionally relatable is going to have a lot of appeal.

The ironic fact is that the candidate who can be vulnerable has a surprising power.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joe Biden this week in South Carolina. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sam Wolfe/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2020

**End of Document**



[***The Mess in New York; The Morning Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:631X-WGB1-DXY4-X44M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 1, 2021 Thursday 17:06 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1778 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** We make sense of the mayoral election.

**Body**

We make sense of the mayoral election.

New York City [*released another round of results*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) in the Democratic mayoral primary — and city officials insist that they’re accurate this time. They say they have resolved the “discrepancy” that caused them to report inaccurate results on Tuesday from their new ranked-choice voting system.

Today’s newsletter tries to sort through the mess.

Does ranked choice have to be so complicated?

No.

In a ranked-choice system, voters don’t select only one candidate. They can rank several, in order. The goal is to let people both note their first choices and also state a preference among the others. It’s become [*increasingly popular*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) in recent years.

Several cities — including Minneapolis; Portland, Maine; and Santa Fe, N.M. — manage to conduct ranked-choice voting and announce results on election night. The cities scan the ballots, and computers quickly tabulate the results, as Rob Richie, the president of FairVote, a group that advocates ranked-choice voting, told me.

Tabulating the results of a ranked-choice election is not a difficult process for modern computers.

What’s New York’s problem?

The slow and flawed counting of ballots is part of the city’s broader problems with election administration. The New York City Board of Elections has suffered from “decades of nepotism and bungling,” [*a Times investigation by Brian M. Rosenthal and Michael Rothfeld*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) found last year.

As their story explained:

As the workings of American democracy have become more complex — with sophisticated technology, early voting and the threat of foreign interference — New York has clung to a century-old system of local election administration that is one of the last vestiges of pure patronage in government, a relic from the era of powerful political clubhouses and Tammany Hall. …

Some staffers read or watch Netflix at the office, the employees said. Others regularly fail to show up for work, with no fear of discipline. Several employees said some staffers punch in and then leave to go shopping or to the gym.

(Here’s a new Times story [*about recent chaos at the elections board*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).)

How is this allowed?

Part of the issue is New York State. Unlike most states, New York lets party leaders fill local election boards, rather than staffing them with nonpartisan experts.

New York State has also decided not to prioritize a quick reporting of election results. Absentee ballots can arrive up to a week after Election Day so long as they are postmarked by Election Day, and voters can later fix errors in their ballots, as Jerry Goldfeder, an elections lawyer, told my colleague Dana Rubinstein. State officials don’t start counting absentee ballots until at least a week after Election Day.

That’s why officials [*took weeks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) to release results in some congressional races last year.

The mayor’s race was another example of New York’s slowness. On primary night, the city announced only the first choices of in-person voters. A week later (this past Tuesday) came the full ranked-choice results from those voters. Not until sometime in July will the city release the absentee results.

It’s true that there are some unavoidable tensions between efficiency and voting access. But New York’s slowness also stems from a lack of competence. States with higher voter turnout report results much faster than New York does.

What about the ‘discrepancy’?

The Election Board committed a stunning error in its announcement of results on Tuesday. In its count, it included 135,000 votes that did not actually exist — made-up votes that the board had created to test its ranked-choice software. It described the mistake as a “discrepancy” in a tweet on Tuesday.

Yesterday, the board released [*a new count*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), with the made-up votes removed. But the damage to the election’s credibility is significant. “This is the most botched election results reporting by an official agency I’ve ever seen in the U.S.,” Dave Wasserman of the Cook Political Report [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

What are the latest results?

The new results are similar to the earlier ones, with Eric Adams having a small lead over Kathryn Garcia — of 15,000 votes, or 2.2 percentage points — in the final round. But [*the unreleased absentee ballots*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) seem likely to favor Garcia, given the neighborhoods they come from, Wasserman and other election analysts noted. (It is still possible that Maya Wiley could vault over Garcia into the final two, with either Wiley or Adams then winning.)

The key reason the race has narrowed, compared with Adams’s sizable lead after the first round, is that far more of Wiley’s supporters [*preferred Garcia than him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

Adams ran the most conservative campaign of the three candidates and did best among ***working-class*** voters across racial groups. Wiley, the most liberal of the three, fared better among college graduates, especially those who were Black or Hispanic. Garcia was strongest among white college graduates, [*The Times’s Thomas Edsall noted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

I see two main takeaways: One is that ***working-class*** voters across races — even in a Democratic primary in New York City — are fairly moderate, as I described [*in Tuesday’s newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage). Two is that New York suffers from some of the worst-run elections in the United States.

Related:

* Democrats lost ground among Hispanic and Black voters in the 2020 national elections, [*a detailed polling analysis shows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

1. Many have [*tried to overhaul*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) New York’s Board of Elections. None have succeeded.

THE LATEST NEWS

The Virus

* The director of the C.D.C. [*reiterated that vaccinated people usually did not need masks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), but she said that areas with low inoculation rates might choose to enact mask mandates.

1. “If you are among the vaccinated, most experts say you don’t need to be fearful,” [*The Times’s Tara Parker-Pope writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) in an explainer on the Delta variant.
2. Delta [*is fueling a rise in cases*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) — and in countries with low vaccination rates, in deaths — around the world.

Politics

* The House voted — largely along party lines — to [*create a special committee*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) to investigate the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol.

1. The Times’s Visual Investigations team has created [*a comprehensive picture of the Capitol riot*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).
2. President Biden said that he would [*raise the pay of federal firefighters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), calling the current wage — around $13 an hour — “ridiculously low.”

Other Big Stories

* Donald Rumsfeld [*died at 88*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage). He served as defense secretary for two Republican presidents and was an architect of the 2003 invasion of Iraq.

1. A grand jury [*indicted the Trump Organization and Alan Weisselberg, a top executive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), in a tax investigation over “fringe benefits” handed out at the company.
2. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court [*overturned Bill Cosby’s sexual assault conviction*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), [*releasing him from prison*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) and barring a retrial. ([*Here’s an explainer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).)
3. Commemorating 100 years of the Chinese Communist Party, Xi Jinping cast it as China’s savior and [*warned foreign powers not to interfere*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).
4. Floor by floor, [*these are the lives lost*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) in the building collapse near Miami. Biden [*will visit the families of the victims today*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).
5. An international tribunal [*convicted two former Serbian officials*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) of war crimes from the 1990s, closing the final case from the Balkan wars.

Opinions

Those in the West who are banking on the Chinese Communist Party’s demise [*are mistaken*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), the journalist Yi-Zheng Lian argues. “The party may well outlive us all.”

On “[*Sway*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage),” Kara Swisher interviews Ron Klain, the White House chief of staff.

MORNING READS

Nickelodeon’s hitmaker: Dan Schneider once reigned over children’s TV. [*What happened*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage)

An Instagram whodunit: [*Who is rg\_bunny1*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage)

Peek inside: Betsey Johnson’s [*Malibu dream house*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

A Times classic: The Food desk taste-tested 10 hot dogs. [*Here are the best*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

Lives Lived: Greg Noll, a fearless surfer known as “Da Bull,” tackled stunningly big waves in Hawaii in the 1960s. With his bodybuilder’s physique and black-and-white prison-stripe trunks he was difficult to miss in the water. [*Noll died at 84*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Why many tennis pros barely scrape by

In pro tennis, the biggest stars earn fortunes in prize money and endorsements. But for the rank-and-file, the sport is far less lucrative: After travel, coaching and other expenses, most players barely scrape by.

“If you are not in the top 100, you are basically not making any money,” Vasek Pospisil, a player who has been ranked as high as 25th in the world, said. Contrast that with the N.H.L., Pospisil noted, which has roughly 700 players and a guaranteed minimum salary of $700,000.

The inequality also means many players lack the resources to improve. “The players ranked 150 to 250 are on the cusp of breaking through, but they need to be able to invest in themselves,” Gaby Dabrowski, another player, said. “You need a coach to guide you, to have a vision for your tennis, to see your blind spots, and you need money for that.”

One thing that separates tennis from many other sports is that its players are not in a union. Last year, Pospisil and Novak Djokovic announced the formation of the Professional Tennis Players Association, which would negotiate on behalf of players.

The fledgling organization has yet to win the support of other top players on both the men’s and women’s sides. And it faces opposition from the game’s most powerful institutions. For more, read [*Michael Steinberger’s article in The Times Magazine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage). — Sanam Yar, a Morning writer

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

These [*turkey pitas with tahini*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) have the flavors of falafel, without the frying. Here are [*more no-cook*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) recipes for a heat wave.

What to Read

Meet T.J. Newman, [*who wrote her debut thriller, “Falling,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) while working as a flight attendant.

Hollywood Revisited

Mae West vamped and winked. She [*was also a trailblazing screenwriter in the 1930s,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) with an interest in lives on the margins.

Music

The art of whistling almost died. Can a 31-year-old [*who has whistled in the studio for Dr. Dre*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) keep it alive?

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from yesterday’s Spelling Bee were habitual and halibut. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), and a clue: History (four letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. The word [*“dudealicious”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage) appeared for the first time in The Times yesterday.

Here’s [*today’s print front page*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage)” is about a new era in college sports. On [*the Modern Love Podcast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage), the collision of two marriages.

Claire Moses, Tom Wright-Piersanti and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/30/nyregion/mayoral-results-vote-count.html?action=click&amp;module=Top%20Stories&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

PHOTO: Board of Elections volunteers count absentee ballots in Queens yesterday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Dave Sanders for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 28, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Reporting for Duty***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GW-R391-JBG3-60NM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 9, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 11; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1225 words

**Byline:** By Jill Abramson

**Body**

CHASING HISTORYA Kid in the NewsroomBy Carl Bernstein

Nearly 25 percent of the 9,000 U.S. newspapers that were published 15 years ago are gone, leaving behind a vast news desert and signs of a weakened democracy. So it's bittersweet to read Carl Bernstein's ''Chasing History,'' a rollicking memoir about the golden age of newspapers. Bernstein ignores the bad karma engulfing the newspaper industry to recreate his rookie days at The Washington Evening Star, a robust afternoon paper that ceased publication in 1981. Bernstein's nostalgia for those times is so deep that after the first 30 pages I could hear ghostly voices shouting, ''Honey, get me rewrite.''

If you count the books Bernstein co-authored with Bob Woodward about their legendary coverage of Watergate for The Washington Post (''All the President's Men'' and ''The Final Days'') and ''Loyalties,'' the book he published in 1989 about his parents' struggles during McCarthyism, this is Bernstein's fourth time writing about his life and work. Even for one of the country's most famous reporters, that's a lot of Bernstein.

But he's as well placed as anyone to tell the story of what gets lost when the presses stop. Counting his current work as a CNN political analyst, Bernstein, 77, has been a journalist for more than half a century. His career spans the profession's best of times and the worst, though the story he tells in ''Chasing History'' evokes only the happy days.

The Carl Bernstein who stars here isn't the trench-coated investigative reporter from ''All the President's Men.'' He's a teenage version of Hildy Johnson, the wisecracking ace reporter in the 1928 stage classic ''The Front Page.'' After buying a cheap, cream-colored suit from the cousin of a street vendor, young Carl managed to fast-talk his way into getting hired as a copyboy at The Evening Star, then the chief rival of The Washington Post. He was only 16 and still in high school.

Unsurprisingly, it was love at first sight once he entered the newsroom. ''People were shouting. Typewriters clattered and chinged. Beneath my feet I could feel the rumble of the presses,'' he recalls. ''In my whole life I had never heard such glorious chaos or seen such purposeful commotion as I now beheld in that newsroom. By the time I had walked from one end to the other, I knew that I wanted to be a newspaperman.'' Bernstein quickly graduated from copyboy to the dictation desk, the now-extinct place where reporters once phoned in their stories and where Bernstein's typing skills won accolades from top editors. It didn't take long for the talented kid to find himself at a local hangout, swilling after-deadline martinis with The Star's stars.

All of this is good fun, though the book is clotted with a dizzying number of names, people, streets and stores. And there's an ever-present cloud called school. Bernstein almost flunked out of high school and then got kicked out of the University of Maryland. School assignments were no competition for the bylines he coveted and proudly pasted into his Washington Star scrapbook.

Although his nose for news was unquestioned, Bernstein could not be promoted to full reporter without a college diploma. His early career coincided with journalism's transition away from a trade for poker-playing, ***working-class*** tough guys to a more genteel profession recruiting from the Ivy League. A few women have cameos in ''Chasing History,'' including frustrated reporters confined to the women's department. Bernstein almost married one of them when he was 19.

''Chasing History'' vividly captures the bonds between a local newspaper and the community it covers. Reporters truly knew the people and territory they wrote about. Bernstein, for example, grew up in suburban Washington, where one of his neighbors was a United States senator. A great-aunt from Silver Spring, Md., who spoke Yiddish with a twang, offered him an education about the area's grandees. She called them ''the Wesorts,'' as in ''We sorts of people are different than you sorts of people.'' Papers like The Evening Star were trusted because they published accurately reported stories that actually impacted the lives of their readers.

The Star was known as a writer's paper, often more creative and entertaining than the stodgier Post. It was the early proving ground for some of the best journalists of our time, including the national political reporter David Broder, who eventually migrated to The Post, the investigative star Jane Mayer of The New Yorker and The New York Times's columnist Maureen Dowd. It was where Mary McGrory, another must-read political columnist for The Post, sharpened her pen.

Having made a living chronicling the lives of others, many journalists understandably feel compelled to write memoirs, even though these books often wind up on the $2 shelves at used-book sales. (I have a small library of them, including the memoir of a Los Angeles Examiner reporter, Will Fowler, who in 1947 found the severed body of a woman who became known as the Black Dahlia. The most grandiose title in my collection is ''From Kristallnacht to Watergate: Memoirs of a Newspaperman,'' by the former Post editor Harry Rosenfeld.) McGrory, whom Bernstein absolutely worshiped, resisted memoir-mania and snapped at me when I once asked her if she intended to write one, saying, ''I'm much too busy writing my column,'' which she produced three times a week.

McGrory always said she would have happily worked forever at The Star. For his part, Bernstein wanted nothing more than to become its city editor. The well-tailored man who actually held the job, Sidney Epstein, was his role model and is, besides the author, the most intriguing character in the book. Epstein mentored his young cub during the hours they spent making up the weekly schedule for all the employees in the city room. Bernstein's excitement is palpable when, early on, he watched the city editor marshal his troops to cover the tragedy of two boys electrocuted at a local pool. He also vividly recaptures the paper's herculean efforts to cover the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

Sadly, Epstein could not save his protégé from the Star's rule requiring a college diploma, so at age 21 Bernstein quit and, after an interim job at a paper in New Jersey, was snapped up by The Post. As we know, there was plenty of history left for Carl Bernstein to chase. But that's a story he has already told.

In 2008, as the digital revolution was destroying newspaper advertising and circulation, Clay Shirky, an influential media analyst at New York University, warned in a widely read article called ''Newspapers and Thinking the Unthinkable'' against spilling tears for the past. He argued that the survival of journalism was crucial, but that print newspapers could -- and would -- fade away. ''They'll miss us when we're gone'' was not, he chided, a sustainable business model.

Maybe not. But people still do value the connection between a newspaper and its readers and want journalists to be knowledgeable about the communities they cover. Carl Bernstein's book, which is ultimately a eulogy for print newspapers, is a passionate reminder of exactly what is being lost.Jill Abramson is a former executive editor of The Times.CHASING HISTORYA Kid in the NewsroomBy Carl Bernstein384 pp. Henry Holt & Company. $29.99.

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Carl Bernstein, 1973. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Joe Biden Is Stronger Than You Think***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y25-6Y11-DXY4-X1S5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 23, 2020 Thursday 19:13 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 923 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** Here’s why he is still winning.

**Body**

Here’s why he is still winning.

It was yet another epic failure of political punditry. Go back to the early months of Joe Biden’s presidential campaign and read what the consultants and commentators were saying about him: His support is just name recognition; he’ll fade! He’s too old! He’s running a zombie campaign! The party has moved left and he’s out of touch! He voted for the crime bill!

Almost everybody was bearish on Joe. But now look where we are, weeks from actual voting. If the polls are to be believed, Biden will win Iowa, he’ll come in second in New Hampshire, he will easily win Nevada, he will dominate in South Carolina. He’s now tied for the lead in California and he’s way ahead in Texas.

I don’t know if he’ll win the nomination (both he and Bernie Sanders look strong), but this is not where a lot of people six months ago thought we’d be.

It’s the 947th consecutive sign that we in the coastal chattering classes have not cured our insularity problem. It’s the 947th case in which we see that every second you spend on Twitter detracts from your knowledge of American politics, and that the only cure to this insularity disease is constant travel and interviewing, close attention to state and local data and raw abject humility about the fact that the attitudes and academic degrees that you think make you clever are actually the attitudes and academic degrees that separate you from the real texture of American life.

Biden didn’t just luck into this. He and his team grasped six truths:

Understand the year you are running in. Sanders and Elizabeth Warren are running the same basic campaign they would have run in 2012 or 2016. Biden’s campaign is completely focused on the central problem of 2020: that Donald Trump is a steaming hot mess in the middle of national life.

Biden has fixated his campaign on the Trump problem and fighting for the soul of America. Nearly twice as many Democrats say it’s more important to beat Trump than to have a candidate with whom they agree on all issues.

Understand your party’s core challenge. All around the world parties on the left are losing because they have lost touch with the ***working class***. These parties think they can reconnect with that class by swinging even further left. But Jeremy Corbyn in Britain and Bernie Sanders here are a doctoral student’s idea of a ***working-class*** candidate, not an actual working person’s idea of one.

Biden has criticized his own party for losing touch with this class. He emerged from it, is focusing his attention on it and is winning support from it.

Moderates are still powerful. The Democratic Party is moving left, but about half of Democrats still say they are moderate or conservative. No candidate has ever won a nomination without strong support from these voters, while college-town candidates — Howard Dean, Gary Hart — tend to falter. In every presidential general election that Democrats have won since 1988, they carried moderates by more than 12 percentage points. In every race they have lost, they failed to do that. Biden kept his moderate credentials when many other candidates saw A.O.C. on Twitter and decided to move left.

Many Democrats resent their own elites. There is a quiet tension between Democrats who wield cultural power and those who don’t. The former are active on social media, and clobber the latter — people who say or write the “wrong” thing.

The non-elites tend to feel judged and looked down on by the self-appointed savior class. “Politically correct” has become the phrase people use to define those who use cultural power to enforce ideological conformity. Seventy percent of Democrats who are not on social media [*say political correctness is a big problem*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html). These are people silently but vehemently reacting against this social reign of terror. Biden communicates affection, not judgment, acceptance, not expulsion.

Have a better theory of social change. Sanders and Warren imagine they can rally movements of progressive supermajorities to transform American politics. The reality is that if they are elected we’ll be stuck with the same 42 percent-to-42 percent stagnant political war we have now.

Biden starts with the understanding that we are a closely divided nation. He understands the elemental fact that if you want to pass laws you have to go through Congress. As Damon Linker [*pointed out*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html) recently in The Week, Biden’s argument is that a center-left congressional coalition is the best we can do under present circumstances. That’s a more realistic theory of change. A beloved legislator like Biden is more likely to transform the political landscape than a down-the-line progressive.

Connection. Connection. Connection. Many candidates pound the podium and lecture at their rallies. It’s the big leader onstage and the passionate mass of followers down below. Nobody makes an individual connection as well as Biden. In a time when people feel exhausted, isolated and alienated, a candidate who seems normal and emotionally relatable is going to have a lot of appeal.

The ironic fact is that the candidate who can be vulnerable has a surprising power.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some   [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html). And here’s our email:   [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html).

Follow The New York Times Opinion section on [*Facebook*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html),   [*Twitter (@NYTopinion)*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html) and   [*Instagram*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/08/upshot/democratic-electorate-twitter-real-life.html).

PHOTO: Joe Biden this week in South Carolina. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sam Wolfe/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 24, 2020

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[***Los Angeles Police Erred on Weight of Fireworks in Blast That Injured 17***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:636C-RY51-DXY4-X0YS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 22, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 19

**Length:** 854 words

**Byline:** By Isabella Grullón Paz

**Body**

An apologetic police chief said the bomb squad had determined the explosives to weigh 16.5 pounds without using a scale. Investigators found the weight was over 42 pounds.

Los Angeles police bomb technicians attempting to safely dispose of 42 pounds of illegal fireworks they seized at a home in June vastly underestimated the weight of the explosives before their armored containment vessel was breached by a powerful blast, a contrite police chief announced Monday.

The explosion injured 17 people, including 10 law enforcement officers, and caused extensive damage to more than 20 homes and over a dozen businesses.

Chief Michel Moore of the Los Angeles Police Department said at a news conference on Monday that instead of weighing the fireworks with a scale, the bomb squad personnel estimated their weight based on a physical inspection and arrived at 16.5 pounds -- 60 percent less than the weight of the fireworks later determined during an investigation by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

''I want to personally express my apologies to every resident, business operator and customer that was traumatically impacted by this incident,'' Chief Moore said. ''I'm sorry that this occurred.''

He assured that the officers involved were acting in ''good faith'' and following protocol when handling the explosives.

The miscalculation is the first major revelation from a continuing investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives into the cause of the blast, which occurred after the police discovered more than 32,000 pounds of illegal fireworks in a June 30 raid at a home in South Los Angeles.

At the news conference, Chief Moore said that during the raid, officers found some leaky homemade fireworks that were deemed too unstable to transport. The officers decided to eliminate the fireworks in a chamber known as a total containment vessel, in accordance with the department's protocol. Total containment vessels are armored vehicles designed to keep people and property safe from the blast effect of an explosion, Chief Moore said.

The police department's bomb squad put 280 M-80s -- fireworks that pack powerful explosives -- and 40 soda-can-size fireworks into the vessel. They calculated the explosives to weigh 16.5 pounds without using a scale, Chief Moore said. The vessel is designed to handle, at most, 25 pounds for a single use and 15 pounds for multiple uses. The investigation by the federal explosives bureau's National Response Team found that the actual weight of the explosives was more than 42 pounds.

''That amount in itself could have taken out the entire neighborhood,'' Michael Hoffman, assistant special agent in charge of the bureau's Los Angeles office, said during the news conference.

Agent Hoffman said his agency hypothesized that this significant underestimation, along with the failure of some components in the vessel, could have resulted in the powerful uncontrolled blast. The full findings of the team's investigation will be released in a month or two, he estimated, pending the report's peer review.

Chief Moore said that five members of the bomb squad had been removed as a result of the explosion while they await the full investigation.

After the blast, which left many displaced without access to their homes, the Los Angeles police came under heavy scrutiny, with many questioning whether the department could have done more to protect residents in such a densely populated area, according to The Los Angeles Times.

Residents and activists in South Los Angeles have demanded full accountability from the Police Department for the blast and the extensive property damage. Some have accused the L.A.P.D. of showing disregard for the neighborhood by handling the fireworks in the middle of a lower-income residential area.

City Councilman Curren D. Price Jr., who represents the district where the explosion occurred, called the explosion an ''act of negligence'' and ''one of the L.A.P.D.'s largest blunders in recent history, which has further betrayed the trust of our South L.A. community,'' in a statement after Monday's news conference.

Others said the police would not have acted as they did in a wealthier neighborhood.

''We believe, as so many believe, that if this had been another neighborhood, not a ***working-class*** Black and brown neighborhood in South L.A., they would not have detonated those explosives,'' Paula Minor of the Los Angeles chapter of Black Lives Matter said in a news conference held Tuesday.

On July 5, the South Central Neighborhood Council passed a resolution demanding that the city financially compensate those affected by the explosion. The council called the act a ''reckless decision by the L.A.P.D.'' as it primarily hurt the well-being of a Black and Latino community.

''As we wait for the final report to be released, I hope L.A.P.D. is taking the actions now to address their shortcomings and are making plans to step up and support the victims of the devastation who have been traumatized and will be suffering from the effects for years to come,'' Mr. Price said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/us/los-angeles-fireworks-explosion.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/us/los-angeles-fireworks-explosion.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The remains of an armored containment vessel that the Los Angeles police used to dispose of illegal fireworks in June. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMIAN DOVARGANES/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** July 22, 2021

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[***The Woman Who Brought Real-Life Brooklyn to Soap Operas; Big CITY***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VW-SXV1-DXY4-X1WH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 25, 2022 Friday 15:59 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1209 words

**Byline:** Ginia Bellafante

**Highlight:** Mary Ryan Munisteri worked on “Ryan’s Hope,” one of the first soap operas set in a real place and grounded in reality about women’s lives.

**Body**

Mary Ryan Munisteri worked on “Ryan’s Hope,” one of the first soap operas set in a real place and grounded in reality about women’s lives.

Growing up in the 1970s and early 1980s, that great period of parental absenteeism, I spent most weekday afternoons on the floor of my grandmother’s bedroom in front of a small television that sat next to the door to her veranda, a sunlit space covered in wisteria that still could not compete with the pleasures of ABC’s daytime lineup.

Home by 3, I could join my grandmother for “General Hospital” and, later, “The Edge of Night,” whose story lines bent toward crime and courtroom drama but nevertheless accommodated the absurdist narrative mandates of soap opera.

A chilly and practical immigrant who spent her evenings writing poetry in her native Sicilian dialect, my grandmother was an unlikely candidate for addiction to the Amnesia Plot, but there we were, picking at butter cookies, enthralled every time another socialite with a split personality couldn’t remember the murder she committed when she was someone else with darker hair.

At the time, nearly every soap on television was set in a fictional affluent suburb — to my mind, always in eastern Pennsylvania — dominated by some wealthy Protestant clan or another. It became clear years later that my grandmother’s pristine English, delivered as if she had entered the world via the Main Line, was the result of her daily ritual.

One summer in the late ’70s, I discovered a new daytime series — ‘‘Ryan’s Hope” — but I couldn’t get her on board. It dealt with the generational tension between Old World cultural and religious values and the new freedoms embraced by the young; the modernity did not appeal to her.

Lacking the deracinated quality of the others, the show was set in a city — an actual one, New York — specifically in Washington Heights, amid a Catholic, ***working-class*** Irish American family whose matriarch, Maeve Ryan (played by the Tony Award-winning actress [*Helen Gallagher*](https://www.broadwayworld.com/people/Helen-Gallagher/)), loved Yeats and spoke with a brogue.

This and other aspects of the show felt revolutionary. Unlike most soaps, which were claustrophobic, “Ryan’s Hope” let the world in. It was grounded in a reality — about women’s actual lives — that the genre had otherwise disavowed.

Maeve and her husband owned a bar and had five children; one of them, Mary Ryan, was named after a real person: a Brooklyn writer. Married to a lawyer she met when she was getting a master&#39;s degree in literature at Yale, the real Mary Ryan (Mary Ryan Munisteri by way of marriage) bought a brownstone in Park Slope in the late 1960s. It was there, through a local church, that she met [*Claire Labine*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/15/arts/television/claire-labine-scriptwriter-of-several-soap-operas-dies-at-82.html), who encouraged her to write for television.

She began writing skits for “Sesame Street” and “The Electric Company.” Then, in 1975, Ms. Labine and a partner created “Ryan’s Hope” and quickly brought Mary on to write dialogue.

By the early ’80s, Mary was the show’s head writer and had won seven Emmys. Before she died last month at the age of 82, she was the last surviving member of a creative triumvirate that had made the show such a success.

The fictional Mary Ryan, for example, was an ambitious journalist who stood up to a temperamental husband who did not want her to put career over family. When her brother Frank runs for a Senate seat, he struggles to balance his obligations to his campaign with the ones he has to his baby.

The show reveled in local political detail, making Frank take a position on Westway, the West Side Highway project that was sidelined after years of debate. There was mention of issues and feuds among district leaders and donors in Nassau County.

One character, a politician named Charlie Ferris, [*was thought to be an amalgam*](https://www.nytimes.com/1976/11/27/archives/about-new-york-ryans-hope-is-a-new-yorkers-fantasy.html?searchResultPosition=4) of a state assemblyman named Joe Ferris, who represented Park Slope at the time, and a familiar reform Democrat, Charles Monaghan. Another character had slipped under the radar of immigration officials and faced the threat of deportation to Ireland.

There were sophisticated nods and winks throughout; another character, Stanley Bosworth, was named after [*the founder and head of St. Ann’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/08/12/nyregion/stanley-bosworth-unconventional-founder-of-saint-anns-dies-at-83.html), the private school in Brooklyn Heights where Mary’s children were enrolled.

The writers had no interest in condescending to a female audience. This in itself seemed novel, given that by 1981 “General Hospital” had a plot in which a family of rich lunatics was building a weather machine to freeze the planet and take over the world. In the beginning and for a long stretch, “Ryan’s Hope” benefited from network neglect.

“We worked in a studio on 53rd Street between Ninth and Tenth, which was not the best place to be working at the time, but what was good about it was that the executives didn’t want to go there either, so they’d leave us alone,” said Jeffrey Lane, who was mentored by Ms. Ryan Munisteri and Ms. Labine and who went on to write for popular prime-time series like “Mad About You.”

The network did occasionally interfere. Once, the writers wound up with a plotline in which a gorilla, escaped from the Central Park Zoo, kidnaps one of the female leads and takes her to the top of Belvedere Castle. This turned out not to be good for ratings, Mr. Lane said, because the craziness was so out of step with the show’s ethos.

Until the mid-1980s, with the rise of comedies like “Designing Women,” prime-time writers’ rooms were not the easiest spaces for women to penetrate. This left daytime television as a refuge, a place where women could wield a lot of creative power and work in a way that suited their personal circumstance.

“There was a real integration of work life and home life that is common now but wasn’t then,’’ Mary’s son [*Matt Munisteri*](http://mattmunisteri.com/), a jazz guitarist, told me recently. “We were all in the Slope,” he said — the Labines on Berkeley Place, the Munisteris on Carroll Street. “At night, my mom would be writing and on deadline, and the kids would go back and forth as messengers with scripts.”

“Whenever the children were home from school during lunchtime, they would all gather at the Labine apartment to watch “Ryan’s Hope,” which aired at 12:30, he said. “When the show was on, you couldn’t speak.”

I contacted Matt, whom I knew through friends in college, when I learned that his mother had died. I had met her once in the ’80s in her apartment in a [*Rosario Candela*](https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/rosario-candela-architecture)building overlooking Prospect Park. She was the first professional writer I had ever met, and she was dazzling. Mary went on to run writers’ rooms for several other soaps for many years. I asked Matt if she ever wished she had written more broadly.

A grandchild of traveling vaudevillians, she never felt as though she was doing something beneath her. “When she’d sit writing dialogue, she’d be mouthing it, and her fingers were flying on the keyboard, and you’d walk in the door and you’d just be ignored, ignored, ignored,” Matt told me.

“She had no tolerance for looking down on any kind of art as lowbrow,” he said. “It’s difficult for people to understand — but she loved it.”

PHOTOS: Above from left, Malcolm Groome, Kate Mulgrew, Bernard Barrow, Helen Gallagher and Andrew Robinson in “Ryan’s Hope” from 1977. Left, Mary Ryan Munisteri at her desk. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ABC PHOTO ARCHIVES/DISNEY GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT CONTENT, VIA GETTY IMAGES; MATT MUNISTERI)

**Load-Date:** August 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Sam Springsteen Joins Fire Department***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y14-RKT1-JBG3-655R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 18, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 377 words

**Byline:** By Johnny Diaz

**Body**

The musician's youngest son, Sam Springsteen, was sworn in as a Jersey City firefighter on Tuesday.

If there's a fire in Jersey City or a cat stuck in a tree, there's a good chance that Bruce Springsteen's son may be dispatched to the scene.

Sam Springsteen was one of 15 new firefighters who were sworn in Tuesday by Mayor Steven M. Fulop of Jersey City and the director of public safety, James Shea.

Bruce Springsteen, the rock star whose songs have for decades celebrated New Jersey's ***working class***, and Patti Scialfa, his wife and longtime bandmate, looked on and clapped as their youngest son joined the newest members of the city's Fire Department, according to TV news coverage of the ceremony.

''It was a long road,'' the senior Mr. Springsteen told WCBS at the ceremony held at City Hall. ''He was very dedicated for quite a few years and we are just excited for him today.''

When asked by reporters about his journey to becoming a firefighter, the younger Springsteen said that ''it wasn't easy,'' according to NBC News. He is one of Mr. Springsteen and Ms. Scialfa's three children. (Their daughter, Jessica, has gained fame in the world of competitive show jumping.)

Mr. Springsteen graduated from the Monmouth County Fire Academy in January 2014, according to an Instagram post by Ms. Scialfa. He also worked as a volunteer firefighter in Colts Neck, the New Jersey township where he grew up, according to NBC.

The new recruits bring the number of uniformed firefighters and superiors to 666, a historic high for the city, according to a news release by Mayor Fulop. The new class of firefighters trained at the Morris County Public Safety Training Academy, a county spokesman said. In all, Jersey City has 26 firehouses.

''Our fire department responds to 1,300 fires a year, which is why these 15 recruits have gone through rigorous training necessary to be part of the best fire department this city has ever seen,'' Mayor Fulop said in a statement.

He also posed for photos with the Springsteen family and posted them on Twitter.

''We got to spend some time in my office talking about music but more than that they're proud parents of a new JC Firefighter,'' he said on Twitter. ''Congrats to all the new FF joining the best FD anywhere.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/15/nyregion/bruce-springsteen-son-firefighter.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/15/nyregion/bruce-springsteen-son-firefighter.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER BROWN/JERSEY CITY MAYOR'S OFFICE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** January 19, 2020

**End of Document**



[***America’s Judges Are Putting My Life on the Line; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6428-WG71-DXY4-X1DF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 11, 2021 Thursday 22:55 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1092 words

**Byline:** Sara Nelson

**Highlight:** For too long, judges have sided with corporations over labor. Biden needs to change that.

**Body**

Workers are flexing collective power in major strikes, workplace actions and organizing drives, as they are forced to fight battles that labor won decades earlier: over workplace safety, an eight-hour day, vacation, sick leave, a living wage, health care and retirement security. But even as workers build power and wield it, we are thwarted by laws and judges who reliably side with corporations over workers.

America needs more judges who understand and support the rights of workers. For too long, the courts have sided with corporations over labor, fundamentally and perniciously reshaping American law, life and liberty. Today, they are doing their part to unravel the American dream — and the social contract that has been in place since the 1940s, offering the ***working class*** a good life if they spend 40 hours on the job, the means to enjoy it in off hours and a secure retirement.

In one stark example, a judge in Alabama in October [*barred union mineworkers*](https://apnews.com/article/business-alabama-tuscaloosa-strikes-united-mine-workers-of-america-ae76d7d627cdbb90f8845c7a6ce29c9f) from picketing within 300 yards of mine entrances, even as the authorities there have [*failed to charge*](https://umwa.org/news-media/press/open-season-on-strikers-in-nlrb-region-10/) the drivers of vehicles that struck lawful picketers. In a more common infringement of free speech, a judge in Iowa [*limited United Auto Workers picket lines*](https://www.kwqc.com/2021/10/20/deere-co-granted-temporary-injunction-against-striking-davenport-union-workers/) outside a John Deere plant in Davenport last month to just four people at each entrance to the plant.

The wholesale theft of workers’ rights is happening in broad daylight.

With the help of conservative judges, corporations have systematically weakened labor laws for decades, leaving workers fewer and fewer tools to hold their bosses accountable. In the rare cases when workers win judgments against a bad boss, employers rarely face more than a [*slap on the wrist*](https://www.epi.org/blog/civil-monetary-penalties-for-labor-violations-are-woefully-insufficient-to-protect-workers/).

This didn’t happen by accident. Republican presidents have stacked the federal courts with judges who hail from elite law schools, white-shoe law firms and corporate boardrooms. ([*More than a quarter of all federal judges*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/01/13/how-trump-compares-with-other-recent-presidents-in-appointing-federal-judges/) on the bench in January had been appointed by Donald Trump.) As a result, the corporate win rate in American courts is sky-high.

This is especially true in cases heard by the Supreme Court, which has [*sided*](https://www.theusconstitution.org/think_tank/big-business-powers-ahead-with-another-successful-term-at-the-roberts-court-2019-2020-term/) with the Chamber of Commerce 70 percent of the time since 2006. A study published in 2013 [*ranked*](https://www.minnesotalawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/EpsteinLanderPosner_MLR.pdf) Chief Justice John Roberts and Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas among the five most-corporate-friendly members of the court since 1946, and the pro-corporate voting rate of its conservative wing is only [*growing*](https://www.theusconstitution.org/think_tank/big-business-powers-ahead-with-another-successful-term-at-the-roberts-court-2019-2020-term/). According to one recent [*report*](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60383088576eb25a150fab7f/t/61316cf1a6601973c2e66625/1630629121561/Working+Overtime+-+The+Supreme+Court%27s+Assault+on+the+Labor+Movement.pdf), the court agrees with the Chamber of Commerce more now than it had at any other time in recent history.

Two other cases this year vividly demonstrate how the business lobby is using the courts to undermine workers’ rights.

In June, in Cedar Point Nursery v. Hassid, the Supreme Court elevated property rights above the rights of workers, [*upending a 1975 California law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/23/us/supreme-court-unions-farms-california.html) that allowed union organizers to speak with farmworkers in the fields and vineyards. This law had been a seminal accomplishment for the farmworker labor movement led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. As if to emphasize the court’s hostility to workers’ rights, Chief Justice Roberts declared that the California law granted union organizers the “right to invade the growers’ property.”

In another case decided in June, Trinity Services Group v. National Labor Relations Board, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia gave employers a free pass to hoodwink their employees into voting against the union as long as they don’t make threats or promises or evoke future consequences.

Because judges have created loopholes and carve-outs in labor law over the years, companies can seek to weaken the collective power of workers by [*forcing*](https://prospect.org/labor/anatomy-of-an-anti-union-meeting/) them to attend anti-union “captive audience meetings,” [*firing workers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/28/business/coronavirus-unions-layoffs.html) who organize their colleagues and [*disseminating propaganda*](https://apnews.com/article/amazoncom-inc-alabama-a99923fc521fc119019dec5f7f7979e8) smearing unions, as well as [*employing other intimidation*](https://fortune.com/2021/11/08/starbucks-union-vote-buffalo-busting-progressive/) tactics to keep employees from organizing.

Congress wrote labor laws to foster union organizing and encourage collective bargaining, recognizing that workers are the foundation of our economy, and their collective power can check corporate abuses. Congress is today considering [*landmark legislation*](https://www.npr.org/2021/03/09/975259434/house-democrats-pass-bill-that-would-protect-worker-organizing-efforts) to update outdated, broken (and in some cases [*overtly racist and sexist*](https://lawecommons.luc.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1150&amp;context=facpubs)) labor laws and give workers a fair chance to organize, bargain and hold employers accountable. But its passage would prove hollow if the courts dismantled it or wouldn’t enforce it.

This isn’t just an academic question, or even an economic one — it’s often a matter of life and death. Before he joined the Supreme Court, Neil Gorsuch, as a judge on the Court of Appeals for the 10th Circuit, [*voted*](https://www.theguardian.com/law/2017/mar/23/neil-gorsuch-supreme-court-frozen-trucker-alphonse-maddin) to allow the firing of an employee who abandoned an unheated company truck in a blizzard to avoid freezing to death. This is just one example of the judicial callousness toward workers that has put our livelihoods and lives in real danger.

President Biden has an important opportunity to appoint judges who have been in the trenches with workers, and who know that strong labor laws and union contracts create workplace protections and rights for workers. By nominating union lawyers and worker advocates, he can help break the cycle of courts undermining our rights to benefit their corporate friends.

Workers have seen progress when presidents appointed judges who had a personal understanding of injustice. Justices like Thurgood Marshall and Ruth Bader Ginsburg devoted their careers as lawyers to arguing for civil and women’s rights and changed our nation for the better from the bench. We’ve had laws to protect workers’ rights for nearly 100 years, but workers have learned that seeking justice in the courts leads all too often to frustration. No workers are immune from having their rights snatched away as long as judges reflexively side with employers.

With the midterm elections approaching, it’s imperative that the White House act swiftly to fill vacancies while Democrats hold a Senate majority to confirm Mr. Biden’s nominees.

In this moment of historic economic inequality, the president can take a powerful action to help workers build — and keep — power.

Sara Nelson (@FlyingWithSara) is the president of the Association of Flight Attendants-C.W.A.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alex Schubert FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2021

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[***In Hong Kong, a Leader Inherits a Changed City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65DF-5701-DXY4-X0WT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 9, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1545 words

**Byline:** By Austin Ramzy and Alexandra Stevenson

**Body**

John Lee, who won a rubber-stamp leadership election on Sunday, will implement the next stage of China's agenda for the former British colony.

HONG KONG -- John Lee ''will make Hong Kongers and international investors feel relaxed, at ease and full of confidence,'' a pro-Beijing newspaper declared. He will help the city ''start anew to achieve greater glories,'' the state-run China Daily wrote, in one of a series of articles praising him.

His rise to the top leadership position is ''a concentrated embodiment of public opinion,'' said China's official arm in Hong Kong, though only 1,424 members of a government-vetted committee voted for him on Sunday, in an uncontested race controlled by Beijing.

Having officially become the next chief executive, Mr. Lee is now Beijing's man, a security-minded official who can be relied on to follow orders and keep Hong Kong in line.

His political agenda is the next chapter in China's vision for the former British colony, set in motion by the sweeping national security law imposed two years ago, which quashed dissent in a city once known for its vibrant civil society and freewheeling press.

Mr. Lee, a top architect of the crackdown on the antigovernment protests that roiled Hong Kong in 2019, inherits a city that has been tamed and cowed, with Beijing's most outspoken critics behind bars or in exile. Unlike his predecessor, he will encounter little resistance to a legislative slate that prioritizes social stability and bureaucratic loyalty, the ideals of China's ruling Communist Party.

But he will also face a city embattled by the coronavirus and some of the world's toughest pandemic restrictions. The economy is shrinking, unemployment is rising and growing numbers of people are leaving the city, imperiling Hong Kong's status as a global financial center.

Mr. Lee waved and bowed to applauding voters on Sunday after being declared the winner. ''Having restored order from chaos, it is high time that Hong Kong starts a new chapter of development, a chapter that will be geared toward greater prosperity for all,'' he said.

Since Hong Kong was reclaimed by China in 1997, Beijing has always let it be known who it wants in the top job, though it did so more subtly in the past.

Jiang Zemin, China's then-leader, gave his tacit support to Tung Chee-hwa, the first chief executive, by singling him out for a long handshake at a 1996 meeting in Beijing. In 2012, the Central Liaison Office, which officially represents the Chinese government in Hong Kong, quietly told electors to pick Leung Chun-ying, the eventual winner.

When Mr. Lee announced his intention to run, he noted that he first needed Beijing's permission to step down as chief secretary, the city's No. 2 job. It was a simple matter of procedure, but also a public declaration of who was calling the shots.

Mr. Lee's ascension was all but assured a month ago when his predecessor, Carrie Lam, said she would not seek a second term and Beijing approved his candidacy. Nobody else garnered enough nominations to make the ballot.

The process has always been tightly controlled, but China removed any veneer of competition or opposition this time. Between new electoral rules and the national security law, the pro-democracy camp was effectively neutered.

As chief secretary, Mr. Lee led a panel that vetted the election committee members for loyalty last year. On Sunday, 1,416 members of them voted for Mr. Lee, with just eight opposed. He will be sworn in on July 1, the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong's return to China.

''Beijing has completely stacked the election committee with its loyalists and further twisted the process into a meaningless competition,'' said Larry Diamond, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University. ''Even in Iran, there is more of a contest for the head of government.''

Mr. Lee's pedigree reinforces Beijing's intentions in Hong Kong. After joining the police as a probationary inspector at 19, he rose through the ranks, eventually becoming the security secretary in 2017.

Mr. Lee will be the first former police officer to assume Hong Kong's top job in more than a century, and security remains a priority for him.

He plans to push through a package of new laws on treason, secession, sedition and subversion, known collectively as Article 23. The laws are required by Hong Kong's mini-constitution, the Basic Law, but its leaders have never managed to pass them. The government tried in 2003, only to retreat after hundreds of thousands of people protested.

This time, Mr. Lee won't face similar opposition.

News outlets, unions, political parties and human rights groups have closed under government pressure and national security investigations. Dozens of pro-democracy politicians and activists are in custody awaiting trial on national security charges.

''In order to deal with future national security risks, it is urgent to complete the legislation of Article 23, and the legislation must be a 'tiger with teeth,''' the state-owned Ta Kung Pao newspaper said last month.

Mr. Lee has been a staunch advocate of security legislation. He told the United Nations Human Rights Council in March that the 2020 security law had ''restored peace and stability'' by ending the ''violence, destruction and chaos'' of the protests.

He also wants to root out critics in Hong Kong's civil service, which has been under attack from pro-Beijing politicians since some government employees joined the 2019 demonstrations. Beijing loyalists have also accused the bureaucracy of resisting efforts to carry out mainland-style coronavirus controls, including lockdowns and mandatory testing.

As chief secretary, Mr. Lee expanded a requirement for public office holders to take fealty pledges similar to those required for bureaucrats on the mainland. And he headed a committee to vet candidates for elected office, to ensure that they were sufficiently loyal (the same panel that vetted his future voters).

''We need to make sure the civil service will faithfully implement the policies of the government,'' said Lau Siu-kai, an adviser to Beijing on Hong Kong policy.

Mr. Lee has also embraced the idea, popular among mainland Chinese officials, that a lack of housing and economic opportunities helped ignite the protests of 2019.

Last month, he toured a crowded Hong Kong housing block. Pledging to create more public housing, he described the bleak conditions there, mentioning a mother and two children who lived in a 150-square-foot apartment ''with cockroaches that sometimes climb in through the water pipes.''

''Their greatest wish is to be allocated public housing as soon as possible to improve their living environment,'' he said. The waiting time for public housing is the longest it has been in two decades.

The coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated the challenges Mr. Lee will soon face in one of the world's most expensive and unequal cities.

Life came to a standstill this year as the Omicron variant infected more than a million residents and engulfed hospitals. Officials turned to the ''zero Covid'' strategy, shutting down bars, gyms and schools and reducing restaurant hours. The city's ***working class*** has been hit hard by such measures, which have left the service industry reeling.

The coronavirus policies, which have largely isolated Hong Kong, have also prompted a reassessment of the city by international companies. Business leaders say they are struggling to hire and keep executives in Hong Kong. A growing number of companies have relocated, while others have temporarily moved top executives to cities like Singapore.

''This was the city of opportunity; everyone wanted to come here,'' said Eugenia Bae, a headhunter for international banks and financial firms. ''Now it is no longer a popular city anymore.''

Mr. Lee, who is largely unknown to the business community, has promised to restore Hong Kong's status as a thriving global hub. He has also said he would strengthen its financial ties with mainland China.

''We have the hope and the expectation that the next leadership will lead Hong Kong out of the pandemic and back on track,'' said Frederik Gollob, chairman of the European Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

Felix Chung, a former lawmaker, met with Mr. Lee in early 2019, when the future chief executive was drafting a bill that would allow extradition to mainland China and other places -- legislation that would soon trigger the citywide protests.

At the time, many business leaders took issue with the bill's scope, worrying that it would make them vulnerable to charges on the mainland, where a corruption crackdown was underway. When China first opened up its economy, Mr. Chung said, many businesses operated in legally dubious ways.

After several meetings, Mr. Lee agreed to remove 9 of the 46 categories of crimes originally cited in the bill, largely easing the business leaders' concerns. Whether Mr. Lee will be so willing to negotiate as chief executive is unclear, Mr. Chung said.

''We cannot use our past experience to analyze the present situation because a lot of decisions are being made by Beijing,'' he said.

Tiffany May contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/world/asia/hong-kong-john-lee.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/world/asia/hong-kong-john-lee.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: John Lee and his wife, Janet Lam, on Sunday after Mr. Lee was named Hong Kong's next chief executive. He won the vote 1,416 to 8. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ISAAC LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Riot police circling a protester in 2019. Since then, Beijing has used wide-reaching laws and mass arrests to stifle opposition. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAM YIK FEI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2022

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[***Trump's Fracking Jabs Seem to Be Hurting Biden Little in Pennsylvania***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:612P-78K1-DXY4-X1CG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 15, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1337 words

**Byline:** By Lisa Friedman

**Body**

WASHINGTON -- During the Democratic presidential primaries, James T. Kunz, who leads the operating engineers union in Western Pennsylvania, worried the party would choose a nominee determined to cripple the natural gas industry that has boosted the livelihoods of thousands of fellow Pennsylvanians.

And in recent weeks, President Trump has repeatedly told voters like Mr. Kunz that Democrats had done just that. Joseph R. Biden Jr. will ban the extraction of gas through hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, he and Vice President Mike Pence have said, over and over -- nevermind that the former vice president has said otherwise.

Mr. Kunz isn't buying it.

''I'm very comfortable endorsing Joe Biden,'' Mr. Kunz said.

Lagging in the polls and looking to regain the white, ***working-class*** dominance that narrowly delivered the Upper Midwest to him in 2016, Mr. Trump has made fracking something of a last gasp. His campaign has taken advantage of confusing statements that Mr. Biden has made about fracking despite his consistent position that he will not work to ban the practice.

Mr. Pence, in his debate with Senator Kamala Harris, lobbed the accusation that a Biden administration would ban fracking no fewer than five times.

But it does not appear to be gaining enough traction where Mr. Trump needs it most, in Pennsylvania. Recent polls show Mr. Biden with a 13-percentage point lead in perhaps the most important swing state.

Mr. Kunz is one of more than a half-dozen Western Pennsylvania union officials and members with the steamfitters union, the builder's guild and construction union who had told The New York Times early this year they would not be able to tell their members to vote for a candidate who supported a fracking ban, but who in recent weeks have sided with Mr. Biden. Each of them had expressed concern that the Democratic Party had turned hostile to the fossil fuel industry as they pressed for the development of renewable energy sources like solar and wind power.

But in interviews this month, they said they took Mr. Biden at his word that addressing climate change would not amount to an attack on the natural gas industry.

''The day they can feed the United States economy energy wise with solar and wind, then thank God for it,'' said Kenneth Broadbent, business manager of the Steamfitters Local 449 who has endorsed Mr. Biden. ''But they're going to need natural gas, and Biden understands that.''

The alliance between Western Pennsylvania workers and liberal Democrats remains uneasy.

''Fracking is bad, actually,'' Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, the lead sponsor of the progressive Green New Deal who served as a co-chairwoman of Mr. Biden's climate change task force, tweeted after the vice-presidential debate.

Evan Weber, political director of the Sunrise Movement, a youth-led group of climate activists, criticized Ms. Harris' performance during the vice-presidential debate, saying ''the American people want climate action, and polls show Democrats have no reason to shy away from being bold.''

And even in Pennsylvania, there is evidence that fracking may not be the dominant issue that both Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden seem to think it is.

Several union leaders and members who said they are supporting Mr. Biden said the Trump administration made policy decisions that hurt their way of life, like reshaping the courts with conservative judges who oppose laws protecting union wages on federally-funded projects.

''Four more years of President Trump is just going to destroy our pensions,'' said Thomas R. Melcher, business manager of the Pittsburgh Regional Building Trades Council, an umbrella organization of construction unions.

Mr. Melcher ticked off a list of what he felt were failed promises that Mr. Trump made: to bring manufacturing back, save coal and deliver a major infrastructure package.

''He says a lot of things, but everything that comes out of his mouth is a lie,'' Mr. Melcher said of the president.

But even union leaders who back Mr. Biden acknowledged their rank-and-file is divided. And at least one powerful union leader, Shawn Steffee, a business agent and executive board member with the Boilermakers Local 154, has come out strongly for Mr. Trump.

''Joe Biden and Kamala Harris want nothing to do with the fossil fuel industry. He's flip flopped so many times, and President Trump has embraced fossil fuels, natural gas and coal,'' Mr. Steffee said.

A 35-year Democrat before voting for Mr. Trump in 2016, Mr. Steffee said he plans to vote Republican again and believes most of his membership will, too. Their top issue: energy.

''Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have been totally unclear,'' Mr. Steffee said, citing a comment Mr. Biden made last year that he will ''end fossil fuel'' even as he vowed to protect fracking. ''You can't have it both ways,'' Mr. Steffee said, adding, ''My members and my local, we're done riding the fence. We made a stand.''

Charlie Gerow, a Republican strategist in Pennsylvania, said the Trump campaign's line of attack is having an effect.

''I think Trump tying Biden to the Green New Deal works in areas not only where fracking is significant, but across the state. I think it's helping Trump in the suburbs,'' he said. He dismissed the polls showing Mr. Biden leading in Pennsylvania by double digits.

''That's just about exactly where it was four years ago. Donald Trump has always outperformed polls and certainly outperformed them in Pennsylvania,'' Mr. Gerow said.

G. Terry Madonna, a political-science professor at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa., conducts frequent polling in the state, and sees a critical difference between 2020 and 2016: Hillary Clinton paid little attention to white ***working class*** voters when she campaigned, while Mr. Biden makes them a singular focus.

Mr. Trump ''is not doing as well in these old mining and mill towns as he did four years ago,'' Mr. Madonna said, ''and he's getting hammered in the suburbs'' in large part because of his handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr. Madonna said he is skeptical of the importance of fracking in statewide elections. But, he noted, ''when you win by 44,000 voters,'' as Mr. Trump did in Pennsylvania four years ago, ''you've got to be careful because a little thing here or there can make a difference.''

Ms. Harris was an original co-sponsor of the Green New Deal when it was proposed as a resolution, and in the Democratic primaries her platform included banning fracking. Mr. Biden has said the Green New Deal is a ''crucial framework for meeting the climate challenges we face'' but has not endorsed it. His plan calls for spending $2 trillion over four years to boost clean energy and eliminate fossil fuel emissions from the power sector by 2035.

He has pledged to end new permits for hydraulic fracturing on federal lands and waters, but said fracking ''has to continue because we need a transition'' to renewable energy.

''The Green New Deal is not my plan,'' Mr. Biden said during the presidential debate last month. When asked at the vice-presidential debate what the Biden administration's stance toward the Green New Deal would be, Ms. Harris did not answer.

In Western Pennsylvania, union members backing Mr. Biden said they want to help address climate change and also continue building gas infrastructure. They said they believe Mr. Biden will find a way to do both.

''The Democratic Party needs to be middle of the road. We're for jobs. We're for energy. We're for people making a middle class way of life,'' Mr. Broadbent said.

Jim Harding, a steamfitter in Alleghany County who has worked on gas sites for 30 years, said he is leaning toward Mr. Biden, and the attacks from the Trump campaign on fracking have not swayed him. He said he is not worried that once in office Mr. Biden will work with more liberal Democrats to eliminate gas and other fossil fuels.

''I think we have his ear,'' Mr. Harding said, adding, ''If not, he'll hear from us, believe me.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/13/climate/trump-biden-fracking.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/13/climate/trump-biden-fracking.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Erie, Pa., on Saturday. He appears to be gaining traction in Pennsylvania despite steady attacks from President Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***With Relief Plan, Biden Takes on a New Role: Crusader for the Poor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6261-P7T1-DXY4-X0H7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 11, 2021 Thursday 18:28 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1563 words

**Byline:** Michael D. Shear, Carl Hulse and Jonathan Martin

**Highlight:** President Biden’s new role as a crusader for Americans in poverty is an evolution for a politician who has focused on the ***working class*** and his Senate work on the judiciary and foreign relations.

**Body**

President Biden’s new role as a crusader for Americans in poverty is an evolution for a politician who has focused on the ***working class*** and his Senate work on the judiciary and foreign relations.

WASHINGTON — Days before his inauguration, President-elect [*Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) was eying a $1.3 trillion rescue plan [*aimed squarely at the middle class*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) he has always championed, but pared down to attract some Republican support.

In a private conversation, Senator [*Chuck Schumer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html), the New York Democrat who is now the majority leader, echoed others in the party and urged Mr. Biden to think bigger. True, the coronavirus pandemic had disrupted the lives of those in the middle, but it had also plunged millions of people into poverty. With Democrats in control, the new president should push for something closer to $2 trillion, Mr. Schumer told Mr. Biden.

On Friday, “Scranton Joe” [*Biden*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html), whose five-decade political identity has been largely shaped by his appeal to union workers and blue-collar tradesmen like those from his Pennsylvania hometown, will sign into law a [*$1.9 trillion spending plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) that includes the biggest antipoverty effort in a generation.

The new role as a crusader for the poor represents an evolution for Mr. Biden, who spent much of his 36 years in Congress concentrating on foreign policy, judicial fights, gun control and criminal justice issues by virtue of his committee chairmanships in the Senate. For the most part, he ceded domestic economic policy to others.

But aides say he has embraced his new role. Mr. Biden has done so in part by following progressives in his party to the left and accepting the encouragement of his inner circle to use Democratic power to make sweeping rather than incremental change. He has also been moved by the inequities in pain and suffering that the pandemic has inflicted on the poorest Americans, aides say.

“We all grow,” said Representative James E. Clyburn of South Carolina, the No. 3 House Democrat, whose [*endorsement in the primaries*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) was crucial to Mr. Biden winning the presidency. “During the campaign, he recognized what was happening in this country, this pandemic. It is not like anything we have had in 100 years. If you are going to address Covid-19’s impact, you have to address the economic disparities that exist in this country.”

A vast share of the money approved by Congress will benefit the lowest-income Americans, including [*tax credits and direct checks*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html), of which nearly half will be delivered to people who are unemployed, below the poverty line or barely making enough to feed and shelter their families. Billions of dollars will be used to extend benefits for the unemployed. [*Child tax credits*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) will largely benefit the poorest Americans.

“Millions of people out of work through no fault of their own,” the president said moments after the [*relief act passed the Senate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) over the weekend. “I want to emphasize that: through no fault of their own. [*Food bank lines*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) stretching for miles. Did any of you ever think you’d see that in America, in cities all across this country?”

The president’s closest advisers insist that the far-reaching antipoverty effort — a core tenet of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party — is less of an ideological shift from Mr. Biden’s middle-class roots than it is a response to the moment he finds himself in: presiding over a historic health crisis that has vastly increased the number of poor Americans.

They are quick to note that the president’s American Rescue Plan also directs enormous sums of money to middle-income people who have jobs but are struggling. Working families making up to $150,000 will receive direct payments, help for child care and expanded child tax credits that will bolster their annual incomes during the pandemic.

Mr. Biden is planning a [*public relations blitz*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) across the country during the next several weeks to promote the benefits of the relief package and his role in pushing it through Congress. His campaign will begin on Thursday with a [*prime-time address*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) from the Oval Office for the first anniversary of the Covid restrictions imposed by President Donald J. Trump.

After that, aides say Mr. Biden will travel to communities that benefit from the provisions of the new law, in part to build the case for making some of the temporary measures a permanent part of the social safety net.

Congressional Democrats are also determined to make sure the public understands what is in the new bill. In a letter sent on Tuesday to his colleagues, Mr. Schumer said that “we cannot be shy in telling the American people how this historic legislation directly helps them.”

Among the [*lessons Democrats say they have learned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) from the political backlash in 2010 to their handling of the economic crisis in 2009 is that they were not aggressive enough in selling the benefits of their stimulus package to voters a decade ago. It is not a mistake they intend to make again.

Even as Mr. Biden’s [*stimulus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) victory lap will be embraced by the left, he remains in the cautious middle so far on foreign policy, [*easing off on punishing the crown prince of Saudi Arabia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) for ordering the [*killing of a Washington Post journalist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) and imposing only modest [*sanctions on Russia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) for the [*poisoning*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html) and [*jailing of Aleksei A. Navalny*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/02/us/politics/biden-international-criminal-court-sanctions.html), the opposition leader there.

Mr. Biden’s former Senate colleagues also acknowledge that historically he was never a driver of liberal economic policy.

Once a 29-year-old Senate candidate who pushed for civil rights and opposed the Vietnam War, Mr. Biden later drifted toward the middle, adapting to the political moment in 1996 by backing a bipartisan welfare overhaul supported by President Bill Clinton but opposed by many liberals who saw it as punitive and politically driven. Mr. Biden is now embracing a sweeping expansion of the welfare state with a price tag that is just under half of what the entire federal government spent in 2019.

“He has gotten in front of it and put his stamp on it,” said Rahm Emanuel, the former Chicago mayor and former White House chief of staff.

Tom Daschle, the former Senate Democratic leader and a longtime colleague of Mr. Biden’s, acknowledged that the president — who was the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee from 1987 to 1995 and the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee from 2001 to 2003 — was not a leader in those years on economic policy. But he said it was natural that Mr. Biden would aggressively tackle it now, given conditions in the country.

“Times have changed,” Mr. Daschle said, noting that “economic and racial disparities have become more acute, more understood and more important in recent years.” He pointed to the new $3,000 child tax credit, a temporary benefit included in the package, and compared its transformational potential to the Medicare program enacted under President Lyndon B. Johnson should it become permanent.

“If or when it does,” Mr. Daschle said, “Joe Biden will be seen as the L.B.J. for low-income families in dramatically improving their economic circumstances.”

During the presidential campaign, Mr. Biden spoke about “rebuilding the backbone of the nation,” a phrase that sometimes appeared to include a promise to provide significant help for people at the bottom of the economic ladder.

“Ending poverty won’t be just an aspiration, but a way to build a new economy,” he said in 2019, as he campaigned for the Democratic nomination. Once in the Oval Office, Mr. Biden hung a picture of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and invoked the Depression-era president in his private conversations with lawmakers.

The plight of the middle class has long animated Mr. Biden. He lamented their fortunes when he ran for president in 1988, during the Reagan era, and was often a lonely voice for the same constituency while serving as vice president, when he was President Barack Obama’s de facto liaison to organized labor.

To that end, Mr. Biden has also emphasized the parts of the relief package dedicated to making life easier for the working- and middle-class voters he has always courted.

“For a typical middle-class family of four — husband and wife working, making $100,000 a year total with two kids — will get $5,600, and it’ll be on the way soon,” Mr. Biden told reporters on Saturday.

But for now, his path forward is clear. Even though Mr. Biden listened politely last month when a group of Senate Republicans visited the Oval Office and pitched him on a smaller compromise deal on the relief package, he held fast to the ambitious proposal put forth by congressional Democrats. In his first major act as president, Mr. Biden leveraged the pandemic to fulfill some of the left’s longstanding goals.

Representative Pete Aguilar of California, a member of the Democratic leadership, announced at a news conference on Tuesday that the relief law “represents the boldest action taken on behalf of the American people since the Great Depression.” And Representative Hakeem Jeffries of New York, the fourth-ranking House Democrat, praised the president.

“Joe Biden has been clear that we have to go big at a moment like this,” he said.

PHOTOS: President Biden visiting the Houston Food Bank in February. His American Rescue Plan includes a historic antipoverty effort. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES); Senator Chuck Schumer, the majority leader, helped persuade Mr. Biden to think big on relief. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIN SCHAFF/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18)

**Load-Date:** April 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Journalists at The Daily News Form a Union, Joining a Wave***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61XT-XF11-JBG3-62FD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 5, 2021 Friday 12:37 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS; media

**Length:** 640 words

**Byline:** Marc Tracy

**Highlight:** The organizing effort at the century-old New York tabloid comes roughly 25 years after its editorial union was effectively broken.

**Body**

The organizing effort at the century-old New York tabloid comes roughly 25 years after its editorial union was effectively broken.

Journalists at [*The Daily News*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/20/business/daily-news-editor.html), the 101-year-old New York tabloid that has fallen on hard times after an ownership change, pay cuts and sweeping layoffs, said on Friday that they had formed a union.

Newsroom employees at the paper, once a significant voice for the city’s ***working class***, have not had representation since the mid-1990s, when its owner, Mortimer B. Zuckerman, [*effectively broke*](https://www.nytimes.com/1993/01/09/nyregion/issues-of-survival-for-declining-union.html) their affiliation with the Newspaper Guild of New York.

Workers at The Daily News said they had secured the signatures of more than 80 percent of newsroom staff members and had organized under the same union, now called the NewsGuild of New York. They said they had asked the newspaper’s owner, Tribune Publishing, for voluntary recognition.

“We’re thrilled to welcome our hometown paper back into the Guild,” Susan DeCarava, the president of the NewsGuild of New York, said in a statement.

Tribune Publishing did not immediately reply to a request for comment on Friday.

Union representation for newsroom employees took a hit in the 1990s. Mr. Zuckerman forced journalists to reapply for their old jobs when he bought the struggling Daily News, and Rupert Murdoch, the owner of the rival New York Post, managed to publish daily editions even as the paper’s staff members stood on a picket line. At the same time, journalists started to view themselves as professionals who had little in common with union laborers.

That attitude has shifted in recent years. Writers, editors, fact checkers and editorial assistants at The New Yorker, BuzzFeed News, Slate, Salon and other publications have formed unions, and the same trend has come to Tribune Publishing. Since 2018, newsrooms operated by the company that have gone union include The Chicago Tribune, The Hartford Courant and The Orlando Sentinel.

Newsroom employees at The Arizona Republic, owned by Gannett, and The Miami Herald, owned by Chatham Asset Management, formed unions in 2019. Many newsroom workers have had union representation for generations, including those at The New York Times, under the NewsGuild.

At The Daily News, discussions about rejoining the NewsGuild formally started in April, about a month after staff members started working remotely because of the coronavirus pandemic. Last summer, with workers continuing to do their jobs away from the office, Tribune Publishing said it had permanently closed [*The Daily News’s newsroom*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/12/business/media/daily-news-office.html) in Lower Manhattan.

By year’s end the company had closed newsrooms at many other publications, including [*The Courant*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/04/business/media/the-hartford-courants-newsroom-is-closing-down.html#:~:text=Tribune%20Publishing%20Closes%20Hartford%20Courant%20Newsroom%20%2D%20The%20New%20York%20Times&amp;text=Media%7CThe%20Hartford%20Courant's%20newsroom%20is%20closing%20down.). In addition to the newsroom shutdowns, Tribune Publishing permanently cut pay for employees making more than $67,000 annually and instituted three-week furloughs for those making between $40,000 and $67,000.

Tribune Publishing’s largest shareholder, the hedge fund Alden Global Capital, known for slashing costs at the newspapers it controls, [*has increased its influence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/31/business/media/tribune-alden-global.html) over the company. In a letter to the Tribune board in December, Alden proposed buying the remaining shares in the company for $14.25 apiece. That offer is still pending.

“Alden has been hanging over The Daily News for a while now,” said Larry McShane, a reporter at the tabloid. “But regardless of who owns the paper, I think it’s important for us to be able to sit down and talk with them about decisions that impact our future and our livelihoods.”

The Daily News has struggled in recent years. In 2017, Mr. Zuckerman sold the paper to Tribune Publishing, then known as Tronc, for $1. The next year, the company [*cut the newsroom’s staff in half*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/23/business/media/tronc-daily-news-layoffs.html)and ousted its top editor, Jim Rich.

PHOTO: Newsroom employees, whose office was shut down, haven’t had representation since the mid-1990s. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JEENAH MOON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Four Names to Keep an Eye On in Tuesday’s Elections***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MP-Y9P1-DXY4-X068-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 7, 2022 Tuesday 15:42 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1709 words

**Byline:** Leah Askarinam

**Highlight:** In California, two House Republicans face tough primaries, and Los Angeles voters could elevate a conservative billionaire to lead the city. In South Dakota, a congressman faces a right-wing challenge.

**Body**

In California, two House Republicans face tough primaries, and Los Angeles voters could elevate a conservative billionaire to lead the city. In South Dakota, a congressman faces a right-wing challenge.

As we head into another primary election night, we’re not just looking for races that will determine which party controls Congress or governs battleground states. We’re also looking at individual candidates who are shaping the world of politics.

Tonight, at least three incumbent Republicans are facing challenges from Trump-inspired candidates, though only one represents a safe Republican seat. And in Los Angeles, one candidate for mayor could rewrite what it means to be a Democrat in a liberal oasis.

Here are a few key names to watch as votes are counted tonight. You can [*follow our live updates here*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/06/07/us/election-california-primary-new-jersey), and [*see results arrive here*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/06/07/us/elections/results-california-iowa-montana-new-jersey-new-mexico-south-dakota-primaries.html).

Representative Young Kim of California

Kim symbolizes everything the Republican establishment wanted to move toward after its losses in the 2020 election, when Orange County voters sent her to Congress.

She was a Republican who championed [*fiscal conservatism*](https://youngkimforcongress.com/2019/05/16/young-kim-receives-the-endorsement-of-the-republican-party-of-los-angeles-county/), [*not*](https://youngkim.house.gov/media/press-releases/icymi-young-kim-joins-fitzpatrick-colleagues-introduce-concurrent-resolution) Trumpism. A Korean American immigrant, she appealed to [*voters of color*](https://www.latimes.com/politics/la-pol-ca-young-kim-39th-district-20181005-story.html) in a district with a significant Asian American and Pacific Islander population.

And after the 2018 Democratic wave left House Republicans with just 13 women, she and at least [*17*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/01/15/a-record-number-of-women-are-serving-in-the-117th-congress/) other G.O.P. women elected to the chamber in 2020 [*hoped to change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/14/us/young-kim-california-gop.html) a narrative that their party is the standard-bearer for white men.

Keeping members like Kim in Congress is critical to moderate Republicans’ goal of nudging the party away from Donald Trump — not to mention Representatives Marjorie Taylor Greene, Louie Gohmert and Matt Gaetz.

That’s why [*the stiff challenge Kim now faces*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/us/politics/young-kim-california-primary-republicans.html) from a Trump-inspired candidate, Greg Raths, presents a problem not only for holding a district that Joe Biden carried, but also for demonstrating that the Republican Party is bigger than its white, ***working-class*** base.

“If we want to encourage people with diverse backgrounds to run, when they’re elected, we need to stand up for them,” said Matt Gorman, a Republican consultant and Kim ally who was communications director at the National Republican Congressional Committee in 2018, when she first ran for Congress. “We can’t let them simply go it alone. We need to stand behind them.”

Gorman said Kim provided a template of how to appeal to Asian American voters in an area, Orange County, that has grown tough for Republicans. She has “a background that we need more of in this party,” he said.

Kim and her allies at the Congressional Leadership Fund, an outside group connected to Representative Kevin McCarthy of California, the minority leader, have spent upward of $1.5 million on the primary. In California congressional races, all candidates, regardless of party affiliation, run on the same primary ballot, and the top two compete in the general election. The only Democrat on the ballot, Asif Mahmood, is expected to take one of those spots.

The late spending from Kim’s campaign and the Congressional Leadership Fund might be enough to keep her in the top two. Her leading Republican challenger, Raths, told us last week that he had been running a “stealth” campaign since early February, and that he was confident in his chances up until the barrage of spending from Kim and her allies.

“Now,” Raths said, “I’m a little nervous.”

Representative David Valadao of California

Why are election analysts putting a Central Valley seat in California that Biden carried by [*13 percentage points*](https://rollcall.com/2022/01/04/new-districts-new-ratings-point-to-california-battles-ahead/) in the “tossup” category?

Because of Valadao, the Republican incumbent.

After losing his seat to a Democrat in 2018, Valadao won it back in 2020. Now his concern is a fellow Republican: Chris Mathys, a businessman who said in an interview that he decided to run for Congress after Valadao voted to impeach Trump.

Valadao’s allies at the Congressional Leadership Fund have spent $370,000 in the primary, according to AdImpact, which tracks ad spending, both promoting him and attacking Mathys. In one [*ad*](https://adm0.page.link/v1br), the group calls Mathys “recklessly liberal.”

Valadao may be helped by the fact that, while Mathys has sought out Trump’s endorsement, he has been unable to secure it. Trump has [*endorsed challengers*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/all-but-one-house-republican-who-voted-to-impeach-trump-faces-a-trump-endorsed-challenger/) to every House Republican who voted to impeach him and is running for re-election — except for Valadao.

Mathys was also unsuccessful in a lawsuit to change his title on the [*ballot*](https://www.kget.com/news/politics/your-local-elections/chris-mathys-wants-to-represent-trump-conservative-businessman-party-in-2022-primary-election/) to “Trump Conservative/Businessman.” Instead, he appeared on the [*ballot*](https://elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/statewide-elections/2022-primary/cert-list.pdf) as “Businessman/Cattle Rancher.”

Valadao’s allies aren’t the only ones trying to shape the Republican primary. The Congressional Leadership Fund’s Democratic counterpart, House Majority PAC, which is affiliated with Speaker Nancy Pelosi, is also wading in.

Between broadcast ads supporting the only Democrat in the race, Rudy Salas, and ads on cable, including on Fox News, the Democratic-aligned group has spent more than $100,000.

The group has also bought [*digital ads*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLNpFJo0ADk&amp;t=1s) supporting Mathys, in an apparent effort to lift Mathys into the top two instead of Valadao. “Chris Mathys supports Donald Trump and is a veteran,” the narrator says in one ad. “Valadao voted to impeach Trump and against his border wall.” The ad then shows a segment from Sean Hannity of Fox News condemning Republicans who voted to impeach Trump.

“Both parties know Valadao has a unique ability to outperform a typical Republican,” said Nathan Gonzales, a longtime election analyst and the publisher of Inside Elections, a political newsletter. “I think that’s why we saw a last-minute flurry of spending before the primary.”

Mathys recently [*retweeted*](https://twitter.com/ChrisMathysCA21/status/1532827418951487488) House Majority PAC’s ad, introducing it by saying, “Sean Hannity talks about the impeachment of President Trump.” When asked about the ad, he said that he didn’t have any knowledge of the group or why it had bought the ad. “I have no idea what’s going on there,” he said.

Rick Caruso, a leading candidate for mayor of Los Angeles

Eric Adams’s [*election as mayor of New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor.html) last fall was a clear sign that Democrats were distancing themselves from calls to defund the police. But in Los Angeles, another liberal bastion, voters might take it a step further in the opposite direction.

Caruso, [*a billionaire real estate developer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/03/us/politics/los-angeles-mayors-race-caruso.html) who was until recently a Republican, is likely to qualify for the general election alongside Representative Karen Bass, a longtime Democrat, and he even has a chance to win the mayor’s race outright tonight if he captures more than 50 percent of the vote.

Caruso has focused his campaign on issues of crime and homelessness, and he highlighted his opposition to the movement to defund police departments in an [*ad*](https://adm0.page.link/3m6s) that depicted Los Angeles as a dangerous city, panning over encampments of tents for homeless people and ticking off homicide and shooting statistics.

As my colleagues Jennifer Medina and Jill Cowan [*wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/03/us/politics/los-angeles-mayors-race-caruso.html) recently, a victory for Caruso would “be a stark shift in this overwhelmingly liberal city, which Senator Bernie Sanders easily carried in the 2020 Democratic presidential primary.”

Representative Dusty Johnson of South Dakota

Johnson, South Dakota’s lone member of the House of Representatives, has often been overshadowed by starrier political figures in his state, like Gov. Kristi Noem and Senator John Thune, the second-ranking Senate Republican.

While Johnson has appeared content out of the spotlight he has quietly made some decisions that have upset Trump loyalists, like [*voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html) to certify the results of the 2020 election. Such moves have drawn a right-wing primary challenger, Taffy Howard, a state representative and Air Force veteran.

A super PAC associated with the Republican Main Street Partnership started spending to support Johnson when the race grew a little too close for comfort. The group conducted a poll about a month ago that showed Johnson polling ahead of Howard but hovering around the 50 percent mark, said Sarah Chamberlain, the group’s president. Chamberlain said that attacks on Johnson in campaign mail sent to voters had most likely taken a toll on him.

“We’re not throwing up red flags, but he definitely got a little bit soft,” Chamberlain said. “So we went in there to shore him up.” Now, she expects Johnson to win his primary. The group spent at least $120,000 and aired an [*ad*](https://adm0.page.link/5WvT) that called Howard “liberal” and “anti-small business.” American Dream Federal Action, a [*PAC*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/04/11/new-crypto-pac-launches-00024364) created by a cryptocurrency executive, also aired an ad supporting Johnson.

Before Johnson held the at-large congressional seat, it was represented by Noem. Johnson created some mild political drama a decade ago when he resigned from the state’s Public Utilities Commission shortly after winning his second term to that post in 2010 in order to take a position as [*chief of staff*](https://www.argusleader.com/story/davidmontgomery/2014/10/15/dusty-johnson-resign/17302121/) to Gov. Dennis Daugaard.

Meanwhile, Drain the DC Swamp PAC, a group that supported Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene, aired an [*ad*](https://adm0.page.link/Resd) attacking Johnson for attending Biden’s inauguration, voting to certify the 2020 election and voting to form a House committee to investigate the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol.

What to read

* Seventeen months after the Trump-inspired storming of the Capitol, House Democrats plan to use a landmark set of investigative hearings beginning this week to try to refocus voters’ attention on Jan. 6. [*Annie Karni and Luke Broadwater preview the hearings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/us/politics/jan-6-hearings-tv-democrats.html).

1. Leading Democratic lawmakers in the House [*have signed a letter urging President Biden to take a more guarded approach to Saudi Arabia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/us/politics/biden-saudi-arabia-congress.html) — before the president plans to travel to the country this summer despite Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman’s role in the killing of the journalist Jamal Khashoggi.
2. Blake Hounshell took a break from On Politics to write about a curious political development in New Jersey, where a group of centrists are trying to topple the state’s ban on fusion parties — think New York’s Working Families Party — [*by creating a middle-of-the-road option for voters: the Moderate Party*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/07/us/politics/new-jersey-moderate-party.html).

— 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: Representative Young Kim, a Republican from Orange County, Calif., was elected to Congress in 2020 and now faces a primary challenge. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Philip Cheung for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***When Thousands of Hogs Are Your Neighbors; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65MP-GPP1-DXY4-X04F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 7, 2022 Tuesday 18:55 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1667 words

**Byline:** Eric Schlosser

**Highlight:** In “Wastelands,” Corban Addison tells the extraordinary story of how some North Carolina residents stood up to a meatpacking company polluting their communities.

**Body**

In “Wastelands,” Corban Addison tells the extraordinary story of how some North Carolina residents stood up to a meatpacking company polluting their communities.

WASTELANDS: The True Story of Farm Country on Trial, by Corban Addison

Human beings have been raising pigs for about 10,000 years. But the methods used to breed, raise, process and market them have been profoundly transformed during the last few decades. In the United States, until recently, hogs were raised on small farms, fed leftover grain, allowed to run freely in pens and barns and sold at live auctions with competitive bidding. The typical herd ranged in size from the dozens to the low hundreds. During the 1980s, cheap, federally subsidized grain, an absence of antitrust enforcement, the rise of huge meatpacking companies, and new production techniques devised by those companies turned hogs into industrial commodities — and drove 80 to 90 percent of American hog farmers out of the business.

The places where hogs are now raised are “farms” in name only. They’re essentially livestock factories, dedicated to uniformity and efficiency, that house thousands of hogs crammed together in windowless sheds. And like other factories, they produce a good deal of waste — in this case, about a gallon and a half of urine and excrement per hog every day. All of that waste has to go somewhere. And where it winds up has proved remarkably destructive to America’s rural landscape and the people who live in it.

“Wastelands,” by Corban Addison, tells the extraordinary story of how some neighbors of hog operations in North Carolina battled a meatpacking company polluting their neighborhoods. They sued the company in federal court, launching cases that took years to resolve, with surprising twists and serious implications not only for the future of American agriculture but also for the health of our democracy. Addison, an attorney and best-selling novelist, is the ideal writer to tell this story — and North Carolina is in many ways the perfect setting from which to explore the real-life impact of concentrated animal feeding operations, abbreviated CAFOs, an official term for modern-day livestock factories. In the early 1970s, North Carolina had about 18,000 hog farms, with an average herd of about 75 hogs. Today, it has only 2,000 hog operations, with herds as large as 60,000 hogs. The state’s nine million hogs annually produce from three to 10 times as much waste as New York City does. But that hog waste isn’t sent to high-tech treatment plants. It is pumped into large pools, euphemistically called “lagoons.” Just one of those pools can hold enough waste to cover 15 football fields with crap a foot deep. And when lagoons are full, the untreated waste is sprayed onto nearby fields. Addison describes how giant spray guns shoot 200 gallons of waste per minute into the air, noxious stuff with “a strange muddy-pink color to it” that tends to “drift like a cloud on the breeze.”

The North Carolina hog boom occurred mainly in the coastal plain east of Interstate 95, Addison notes, “a rural region of the state invisible to outsiders and forgotten by most North Carolinians.” From the 1980s through the early 2000s, former tobacco farmers were encouraged to raise hogs under contract to the meatpackers. In one county, the hogs soon outnumbered the humans by a factor of 35 to one. The new hog factories were built without restrictions from local zoning laws, sometimes right next to homes inhabited for generations — mainly by families who were poor and Black. The quality of life in those homes deteriorated greatly. Tractor-trailers carrying hogs drove past day and night. The high mortality rate in the sheds and the dead hogs left outdoors awaiting removal attracted flocks of vultures. The vast pools of waste emitted a terrible, overpowering smell. And the waste sprayed on fields often fell on the roofs of nearby houses, Addison writes, with “the soft pitter-patter of rain.” DNA tests revealed traces of hog excrement inside kitchens, on the surfaces of refrigerators, on top of stoves. It was a textbook case of environmental racism. After years of complaints to local and state authorities went unheeded, more than 500 neighbors of North Carolina CAFOs, almost all of them Black, filed lawsuits against the meatpacking company that seemed the worst offender: Smithfield Foods.

In a David-versus-Goliath tale like this one, you could hardly hope for a more ruthless and intimidating giant than Smithfield. The company is not only the world’s largest producer of pork but also the owner of the world’s largest slaughterhouse. Located in Tar Heel, N.C., that slaughterhouse disassembles about 32,000 hogs a day. For years, the workers at the [*Tar Heel plant*](https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/hog-hell/) were treated almost as poorly as the hogs: [*Smithfield harassed union supporters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/13/us/13smithfield.html), paid workers to spy on fellow workers and employed deputy sheriffs as corporate security officers who beat and arrested workers. The company originated in Smithfield, Va., during the 1930s and later became a corporate dynasty, successively led by Joseph W. Luter Sr., Joseph W. Luter Jr. and Joseph W. Luter III. It grew by pioneering industrial methods of hog production and by taking over its competitors, one by one. But when the North Carolina lawsuits were filed in 2013, Smithfield Foods was no longer an American company. Shuanghui International Holdings, a Chinese corporation now known as WH Group, had bought it the previous year, with financing from the government-owned Bank of China. The cost of raising hogs in North Carolina was about half as expensive as raising them in China — and one of the reasons, Addison explains, is that “the Chinese government doesn’t allow its hog farmers to use lagoons and spray fields.” Instead, Chinese hog operations must invest in “treatment facilities” and “biological odor control systems to protect neighbors.”

“Wastelands” is full of memorable people. An assortment of high-powered attorneys agrees to take on Smithfield, working free in return for a share of any settlement. They fly on private jets, employ focus groups, hire a videographer from National Geographic to convey the neighbors’ plight. Mona Lisa Wallace is the most sympathetic and compelling member of the legal team, brilliant, indefatigable, raised in small-town North Carolina with a ***working-class*** background, dedicated to using the courts to help victims of corporate misbehavior. Among the plaintiffs, Elsie Herring — one of 15 children, who left North Carolina for New York City and returned almost 30 years later only to find herself drenched in a misty rain of manure on a walk near her family home — stands out. As does Violet Branch, one of 11 children, who has lived for more than 70 years in the house where she was born but must endure the pollution from two waste lagoons next door. Before the lawsuit, Branch had tirelessly contacted public health officials, journalists, even the Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, seeking relief from the stench. “Nothing is going to be done about this issue — nothing has been done,” she bravely testifies in court, “because the power structure in those communities is not going to allow something to be done about it.”

Smithfield unabashedly uses its power to avoid responsibility for the legal “nuisance” at issue in court. It threatens to leave the state if the lawsuits are successful. It spies on the attorneys and hires private investigators to keep tabs on the plaintiffs. It helps to create a front group, “NC Farm Families.” It works closely with the state farm bureau, chamber of commerce and Republican Party, whose members introduce bills in the legislature to protect Smithfield from liability. The odors from the company’s hog operations, one Republican legislator boasts, are the “smell of freedom.” The legislature’s only significant departure from industry-friendly policies occurred in 1997, when it passed a temporary moratorium on new hog operations — just as two were about to be built in Moore County, home to the Pinehurst resort and its legendary golf courses.

I am neither a vegan nor a vegetarian. But I think the hog factories described in “Wastelands” and the similar CAFOs in other states are forms of systematic animal cruelty. They are crimes against nature. Hogs are intelligent and sensitive creatures capable of multistage reasoning like dolphins and apes, with a social structure similar to that of elephants. Hogs can recognize themselves in a mirror, differentiate one person from another, remember negative experiences. And they like to be clean. Their lives in hog factories scarcely resemble how they’ve been raised for millenniums. They arrive as small piglets, live crammed together amid one another’s filth and leave a few months later for the slaughterhouse — never having enjoyed a moment outdoors during their entire time at the shed. The foulness of these places, for the animals that live in them and the people who live near them, truly defies words.

Corban Addison hasn’t written a polemic about hog factories, like my paragraph above. He has calmly assembled a legal thriller, full of energy and compassion, that addresses issues of real importance, like the works of John Grisham and Scott Turow. Grisham wrote the foreword to this book, and in it, he says: “Beautifully written, impeccably researched, and told with the air of suspense that few writers can handle, ‘Wastelands’ is a story I wish I had written.” I agree with Grisham. But I wish that “Wastelands” were a work of dystopian science fiction, not a damning portrait of how we feed ourselves now.

Eric Schlosser is the author of “Fast Food Nation” and “Command and Control.”

WASTELANDS: The True Story of Farm Country on Trial, by Corban Addison | 464 pp. | Alfred A. Knopf | $30

Eric Schlosser is the author of “Fast Food Nation” and “Command and Control.”

PHOTO: Young hogs at a Smithfield Foods livestock operation in North Carolina, 2017. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GERRY BROOME/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** July 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Should the Democrats Be Less Progressive?; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:641X-35W1-JBG3-6021-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 9, 2021 Tuesday 00:37 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 984 words

**Highlight:** Readers respond to an editorial that urged the party to be more realistic and moderate. Also: Aaron Rodgers; the anguish of war.

**Body**

To the Editor:

Re “[*Face Reality, Democrats*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/opinion/democrats-election-results.html)” (editorial, Nov. 5):

It is perilous to ignore political reality. What is questionable is The Times’s description of that reality.

Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans (including many Republicans) support many of Build Back Better’s initiatives: lower prescription drug prices, support for child care and early childhood education, and more. Even more consistently, polls make it clear that large majorities want the people and big businesses that make the most money to pay their fair share of taxes — which would go a long way toward paying for the programs Americans want.

Calling this “a sharp leftward push” is mistaken, and focusing on the old boogeymen of costs and growing the government is an anachronistic analysis.

Joe Biden was elected in part to end Donald Trump’s war on our government. His promise was to make government work for Americans, not to make it smaller. The largest part of Democrats’ peril is their failure to do that — largely the fault of moderates. If Democrats can’t make government work, they deserve the consequences. Unfortunately, the nation does not.

Gail Goldey

Harrison, N.Y.

To the Editor:

I certainly hope that this editorial will get the attention of Democratic members of Congress!

I am a liberal Democrat who decries the party infighting and obstructionism. These are not normal times, where we can have arcane political arguments about the fine points of policy. This is now Trump world — an ex-president who actually tried to foment a coup, supported and enabled by his Republican Party.

So while factions in my party are being intransigent, they are also making the president look weak and ineffective and reminding voters that we can be chaotic, too — ergo our recent electoral losses.

Face reality is right! Either coalesce and compromise and do some great things for the American people, or have the G.O.P. take over Congress and re-elect Donald Trump as president, which will cause us to fail as a country.

Carol Kraines

Deerfield, Ill.

To the Editor:

Your editorial gets it exactly wrong.

You call for the Democrats to moderate in the face of the electorate’s lurch toward the angry and disaffected right. The problem is that our society is broken. People are angry, people are disaffected. The progressives are the ones speaking to these people, with salvos against the destruction of the ***working class*** and obscene levels of inequality. Add in the energy of the young and engaged citizens who want to prevent the destruction of our planet.

The progressives among us are our only hope to lead our country with a mandate of the majority.

Mark Knobil

Pittsburgh

To the Editor:

The irony is overwhelming. The advice the editorial page gives to the Democratic Party is to ignore the Times editorial page. This is certainly excellent advice, and had the Democratic Party and the Biden administration followed it, the recent electoral losses might well have been smaller. Nonetheless, it leaves the reader puzzled as to how to apply this advice to the endless stream of progressive editorials that are certain to follow.

Jonathan Blank

New York

To the Editor:

I respectfully disagree with your analysis of the setbacks suffered by the Democratic Party in the recent elections. You give our divided citizenry too much credit. Ask the ordinary voter what he knows — not thinks — about matters like inflation, the state of the pandemic, the teaching of critical race theory, etc., and I am pretty sure you will come up with very little. We voters are vocal about what we think, even if we don’t know much about the subject at hand.

Democrats, notably President Biden, refuse to admit that trying to reason with a party that only offers opposition is futile. The ideal of uniting the country is lofty but currently unrealistic. The G.O.P. over a long period has mastered the art of short, emotionally loaded phrases to manipulate its constituents and the unwary.

The media are being too quick to judge a presidency that is not yet a year old. Disappointing.

Norma Gauster

Avon, Conn.

How Aaron Rodgers Follows the Trump Playbook

To the Editor:

Re “[*Rodgers Sees Covid Rules as Senseless*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/05/sports/football/coronavirus-aaron-rodgers.html)” (Sports, Nov. 6):

Aaron Rodgers’s response is taken right from the former president’s playbook, which is increasingly becoming a template for high-profile people who mess up. The parallels are uncanny.

Let’s be clear. While many folks are angry that Rodgers, the Green Bay Packers’ star quarterback, isn’t vaccinated, the real issue here is that he knowingly broke the rules. And doesn’t think he should be held accountable.

Rather than step up, Rodgers acted indignant, and tried to confuse the issue, provide alternative facts, play down the implications of his actions, highlight his critical thinking, and dare the powers that be to fully hold him accountable. This is the “stable genius” approach. He’s so principled about this issue that he could express his true beliefs only after getting caught.

This isn’t about the woke mob and cancel culture, as he claims. It’s about not being a jerk. And not thinking you’re above the rules. And accountability.

It’s quaint to think about the days when at least some people in leadership positions actually apologized and took responsibility for their misdeeds. Today, too many people instead try to shift the goal posts, just like Rodgers.

John Dudzinsky

Brooklyn

The Anguish of War

To the Editor:

Re “[*Desperation at Abbey Gate: America’s Final Days in Afghanistan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/07/us/politics/afghanistan-war-marines.html?searchResultPosition=1)” (front page, Nov. 8):

The valor of the Marines, the terror of the Afghans, the disastrous denouement of the war. How can anyone read this story and not be moved? The human anguish and the unimaginable waste of these international conflicts are powerful lessons that never seemed to be learned by those who cause them.

Keith W. Hall

Raleigh, N.C.

PHOTO: The U.S. Capitol building. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Samuel Corum for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Beijing’s Man in Hong Kong Inherits a Tamed City***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65D8-2H41-DXY4-X55Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 8, 2022 Sunday 04:22 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 1587 words

**Byline:** Austin Ramzy and Alexandra Stevenson

**Highlight:** John Lee, who won a rubber-stamp leadership election on Sunday, will implement the next stage of China’s agenda for the former British colony.

**Body**

John Lee, who won a rubber-stamp leadership election on Sunday, will implement the next stage of China’s agenda for the former British colony.

HONG KONG — John Lee “will make Hong Kongers and international investors feel relaxed, at ease and full of confidence,” a pro-Beijing newspaper declared. He will help the city “start anew to achieve greater glories,” the state-run China Daily wrote, in one of a series of articles praising him.

His rise to the top leadership position is “a concentrated embodiment of public opinion,” said China’s official arm in Hong Kong, though only 1,424 members of a government-vetted committee voted for him on Sunday, in an uncontested race controlled by Beijing.

Having officially become the next chief executive, Mr. Lee is now Beijing’s man, a security-minded official who can be relied on to follow orders and keep Hong Kong in line.

His political agenda is the next chapter in China’s vision for the former British colony, set in motion by the [*sweeping national security law imposed two years ago*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/29/world/asia/hong-kong-security-law-anniversary.html), which quashed dissent in a city once known for its vibrant civil society and freewheeling press.

Mr. Lee, a top architect of the crackdown on [*the antigovernment protests that roiled Hong Kong*](https://www.nytimes.com/video/world/asia/100000006581732/hong-kong-protesters.html?searchResultPosition=10) in 2019, inherits a city that has been tamed and cowed, with Beijing’s most outspoken critics behind bars or in exile. Unlike his predecessor, he will encounter little resistance to a legislative slate that prioritizes social stability and bureaucratic loyalty, the ideals of China’s ruling Communist Party.

But he will also face a city embattled by the coronavirus and some of the world’s toughest pandemic restrictions. The economy is shrinking, unemployment is rising and growing numbers of people are leaving the city, imperiling Hong Kong’s status as a global financial center.

Mr. Lee waved and bowed to applauding voters on Sunday after being declared the winner. “Having restored order from chaos, it is high time that Hong Kong starts a new chapter of development, a chapter that will be geared toward greater prosperity for all,” he said.

Since Hong Kong was reclaimed by China in 1997, Beijing has always let it be known who it wants in the top job, though it did so more subtly in the past.

Jiang Zemin, China’s then-leader, gave his tacit support to Tung Chee-hwa, the first chief executive, by singling him out for a long handshake at a 1996 meeting in Beijing. In 2012, the Central Liaison Office, which officially represents the Chinese government in Hong Kong, [*quietly told electors to pick Leung Chun-ying*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/26/world/asia/hong-kong-divided-over-future-gets-a-new-leader.html), the eventual winner.

When Mr. Lee announced his intention to run, he noted that he first needed Beijing’s permission to step down as chief secretary, the city’s No. 2 job. It was a simple matter of procedure, but also a public declaration of who was calling the shots.

Mr. Lee’s ascension was all but assured a month ago when his predecessor, Carrie Lam, said she would not seek a second term and Beijing approved his candidacy. Nobody else garnered enough nominations to make the ballot.

The process has always been tightly controlled, but China removed any veneer of competition or opposition this time. Between new electoral rules and the national security law, the pro-democracy camp was effectively neutered.

As chief secretary, Mr. Lee led a panel that vetted the election committee members for loyalty last year. On Sunday, 1,416 members of them voted for Mr. Lee, with just eight opposed. He will be sworn in on July 1, the 25th anniversary of Hong Kong’s return to China.

“Beijing has completely stacked the election committee with its loyalists and further twisted the process into a meaningless competition,” said Larry Diamond, a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University. “Even in Iran, there is more of a contest for the head of government.”

Mr. Lee’s pedigree reinforces Beijing’s intentions in Hong Kong. After joining the police as a probationary inspector at 19, he rose through the ranks, eventually becoming the security secretary in 2017.

Mr. Lee will be the first former police officer to assume Hong Kong’s top job in more than a century, and security remains a priority for him.

He plans to push through a package of new laws on treason, secession, sedition and subversion, known collectively as Article 23. The laws are required by Hong Kong’s mini-constitution, the Basic Law, but its leaders have never managed to pass them. The government tried in 2003, only to retreat after hundreds of thousands of people protested.

This time, Mr. Lee won’t face similar opposition.

News outlets, unions, political parties and human rights groups have closed under government pressure and national security investigations. Dozens of pro-democracy politicians and activists are in custody awaiting trial on national security charges.

“In order to deal with future national security risks, it is urgent to complete the legislation of Article 23, and the legislation must be a ‘tiger with teeth,’” the state-owned Ta Kung Pao newspaper [*said last month*](http://www.takungpao.com.hk/opinion/233119/2022/0423/711672.html).

Mr. Lee has been a staunch advocate of security legislation. He told the United Nations Human Rights Council in March that the 2020 security law had “restored peace and stability” by ending the “violence, destruction and chaos” of the protests.

He also wants to root out critics in Hong Kong’s civil service, which has been under attack from pro-Beijing politicians since some government employees joined the 2019 demonstrations. Beijing loyalists have also accused the bureaucracy of resisting efforts to carry out mainland-style coronavirus controls, including lockdowns and mandatory testing.

As chief secretary, Mr. Lee expanded a requirement for public office holders to take fealty pledges similar to those required for bureaucrats on the mainland. And he headed a committee to vet candidates for elected office, to ensure that they were sufficiently loyal (the same panel that vetted his future voters).

“We need to make sure the civil service will faithfully implement the policies of the government,” said Lau Siu-kai, an adviser to Beijing on Hong Kong policy.

Mr. Lee has also embraced the idea, popular among mainland Chinese officials, that a lack of housing and economic opportunities helped ignite the protests of 2019.

Last month, he toured a crowded Hong Kong housing block. Pledging to create more public housing, he described the bleak conditions there, mentioning a mother and two children who lived in a 150-square-foot apartment “with cockroaches that sometimes climb in through the water pipes.”

“Their greatest wish is to be allocated public housing as soon as possible to improve their living environment,” he said. The waiting time for public housing is the longest it has been in[*two decades*](https://www.housingauthority.gov.hk/en/about-us/publications-and-statistics/prh-applications-average-waiting-time/#:~:text=Hong%20Kong%20Housing%20Authority%20and%20Housing%20Department,-Email%20Alert&amp;text=As%20at%20end%2DDecember%202021,person%20applicants%20was%204%20years.).

The coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated the challenges Mr. Lee will soon face in one of the world’s most expensive and unequal cities.

[*Life came to a standstill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/business/hong-kong-covid-supply-chain.html) this year as the Omicron variant infected more than a million residents and engulfed hospitals. Officials turned to the “[*zero Covid”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/world/asia/hong-kong-covid-omicron-wave.html) strategy, shutting down bars, gyms and schools and reducing restaurant hours. The city’s ***working class*** has been hit hard by such measures, which have left the service industry reeling.

The coronavirus policies, which have largely isolated Hong Kong, have also prompted a reassessment of the city by international companies. Business leaders say they are [*struggling*](https://www.amcham.org.hk/news/amcham-hk-releases-2022-business-sentiment-survey-report) to hire and keep executives in Hong Kong. A growing number of companies have [*relocated*](https://www.eurocham.com.hk/publications/eurocham-survey-on-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-the-business-community), while others have temporarily moved top executives to cities like Singapore.

“This was the city of opportunity; everyone wanted to come here,” said Eugenia Bae, a headhunter for international banks and financial firms. “Now it is no longer a popular city anymore.”

Mr. Lee, who is largely unknown to the business community, has promised to restore Hong Kong’s status as a thriving global hub. He has also said he would strengthen its financial ties with mainland China.

“We have the hope and the expectation that the next leadership will lead Hong Kong out of the pandemic and back on track,” said Frederik Gollob, chairman of the European Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

Felix Chung, a former lawmaker, met with Mr. Lee in early 2019, when the future chief executive was drafting a bill that would allow extradition to mainland China and other places — legislation that would soon trigger the citywide protests.

At the time, many business leaders took issue with the bill’s scope, worrying that it would make them vulnerable to charges on the mainland, where a corruption crackdown was underway. When China first opened up its economy, Mr. Chung said, many businesses operated in legally dubious ways.

After several meetings, Mr. Lee agreed to remove 9 of the 46 categories of crimes originally cited in the bill, largely easing the business leaders’ concerns. Whether Mr. Lee will be so willing to negotiate as chief executive is unclear, Mr. Chung said.

“We cannot use our past experience to analyze the present situation because a lot of decisions are being made by Beijing,” he said.

Tiffany May contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: John Lee and his wife, Janet Lam, on Sunday after Mr. Lee was named Hong Kong’s next chief executive. He won the vote 1,416 to 8. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ISAAC LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Riot police circling a protester in 2019. Since then, Beijing has used wide-reaching laws and mass arrests to stifle opposition. (PHOTOGRAPH BY LAM YIK FEI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 30, 2022

**End of Document**



[***What to Do With Our Covid Rage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63B2-26Y1-JBG3-60B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 8, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1949 words

**Byline:** By Sarah Smarsh

**Body**

In the spring, I received my Covid-19 vaccination shots from county health workers in an old building on the main street of a tiny Kansas town. My first dose came from a quiet nurse wearing a plastic visor over his N-95 mask and a leather cowboy belt with ornate metal inlays. My second dose came from a smiling older woman who, when I reported with vague concern that I had experienced strong side effects from the first shot, patted me on the shoulder and said, ''It's better than a tube down your throat, hon.''

Fellow county residents waited their turn in muddy boots and faded work jackets while the April wind stirred their fields of early wheat. There was corn to plant, but they had found time to make long drives to what was then the only vaccination site in 500 square miles. Our ages, politics and backgrounds varied, but we were mostly white, rural people who wanted to live.

Today, the wheat has been harvested and the corn is high, but still roughly one in three people approved for the vaccine across the country has not yet received -- in many cases, has willfully refused -- a single dose.

Abetted by that slow rollout, Covid-19 has resurged. Following a short, beautiful moment of relaxed precautions while cases were down at the start of summer, we again don masks, change plans and worry about how to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe. Vaccination rates are on the rise as the hesitant become less so, but the coronavirus will likely be with us indefinitely. How does one process this brutal reality?

Many vaccinated Americans are tired, disgusted and eager to assign blame. Public health experts and government officials, including some Republicans, have shifted from sensitive prodding to firm condemnation of those forgoing vaccination. Private conversations among the inoculated take an even less diplomatic turn: ''We were so close, and these stupid, unvaccinated jerks ruined it for the rest of us.''

Fatigue and outrage are appropriate emotions, considering all that has been lost to Covid-19: lives, jobs, experiences, money, physical and mental health. But those feelings, if not properly channeled, can themselves take a heavy toll. What do we do with our anger?

\*

I am a progressive woman who resides in a conservative state. I am on record in this fractured political era as a proponent of maintaining connection across gulfs of understanding, with the caveat that this civic burden falls to people whose social privileges allow them to engage safely with ''the other side.'' But seeking to understand dangerous behaviors and beliefs is quite different than permitting them. I myself, by many accounts an amiable person, once yelled at a truck stop full of unmasked people to read the sign on the goddamn door.

Fury -- collective, generational, political, cultural, individual -- is utterly familiar to me, more so than the happy serenity of my current life. I was a child in poverty during the 1980s ''farm crisis,'' when federal policies favoring big corporations devastated rural communities. Everywhere I turned, something was dying: the local grocery store, the family farm, the cancer victims whose water supply contained agricultural runoff. There was joy in my family, but there was also addiction, abuse and neglect that drew from a deep well of justifiable rage and sorrow.

Anger is a contagious energy that jumps quickly from one person to the next. It will seize your mind and body as its host. If allowed to explode, it will hurt others. If allowed to implode, it will hurt you. I had to learn early how to transmute it for the sake of my own survival. I found that it can be the source of a powerful alchemy. If we are up to the task, it could help us create something good together.

That alchemy begins with awareness. Are we justified in our indignation? Do we have the facts? If we do not understand the problem, our feelings are untethered from reality. Untethered anger tends to be unproductive and selfish, delighting our own egos rather than directing us toward necessary action.

So when you are ready -- and if you are never ready, whether because you mourn a loved one's death or your own altered future, I won't judge -- let us hold our rage in our hands and look closely to see what it contains.

\*

Our national conversation has reached the point where many Americans are done with any and all excuses offered by the unvaccinated. Some of the inoculated are not just self-righteous but downright venomous, arguing on social media that hospitals should refuse to admit unvaccinated Covid-19 patients, calling them trash and wishing them a painful death. Residents of blue America have pronounced this a red-America problem. ''Our state did a great job fighting the pandemic,'' one person tweeted. ''Our reward? The mouth-breathing knuckle-draggers in adjacent red states flooded their hospitals and spilled over into ours.''

Old political resentments have found a new outlet in the fraught vaccine debate. ''I've been pissed off since Reagan was elected,'' another Twitter user quipped in a thread parsing the emotions of the vaccinated. Exhausted, despairing minds find comfort in turning complex realities into simple, opposing categories. The noble, upstanding vaccinated American and the selfish, stupid, unvaccinated one. The good liberal citizen and the far-right anti-vaxxer.

Available images reinforce these notions. A vocal contingent of conservatives appear at meetings holding hypocritical signs about liberty, on the Internet sharing memes about liberal sheep, on the nightly news spitting on public health officials. They command attention, and their share of the unvaccinated will increase as more persuadable people get their shots. But they are not yet the overwhelming majority of the vaccine reluctant. A study of survey results from March showed that 16 percent of eligible Americans refused the vaccine because of skepticism about the pandemic, marked by a belief in at least one conspiracy theory. The same study found that a higher number, some 22 percent, hadn't gotten vaccinated because of concerns about cost, safety or systems that previously did them wrong. Millions more, of course, are children under 12 and those disqualified by underlying health conditions.

My white, ***working-class*** family contains liberal women and men who have been vaccinated; liberal men who have not for fear of losing a day of work to side effects; conservative men who refuse under the influence of disinformation; liberal women and men who have delayed for fear of the for-profit health care industry; and conservative women who are considering getting their first dose. My grandmother -- a former Bernie Sanders voter, a childhood polio survivor and a strong compulsory vaccination proponent -- was the first among us to get a shot.

I cringe when I see the rampant stereotypes on social media painting the unvaccinated as rural white folks, by now a frequent scapegoat for our country's ills. ''Spreadnecks,'' I've seen them newly termed (as in, ''rednecks'' spreading the virus). Never mind that, per the C.D.C., the daily case rates in urban and nonmetropolitan areas closely track one another.

This archetypal bumpkin villain of post-Trump America has long received too much credit in a country where Trumpism thrives in affluent, white urban communities bursting with college degrees. In handling the pandemic, such misdirection of attention keeps us from what we should be doing: trying to reach the vast group of people who might choose vaccination if barriers to access and knowledge were removed.

\*

One overlooked barrier, as ever in this country, is socioeconomic class. Polls conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation earlier this year found that ***working-class*** people -- white, Black, Hispanic, Democrat, Republican -- were less likely to be vaccinated. Vaccination rates for Black and white college graduates, meanwhile, were almost identical. The so-called ''uneducated'' of all races and backgrounds are hampered not by a lack of good sense but by a lack of money and power. Their education status keeps their income low, and income predicts insurance status. When the highly contagious Delta variant was taking hold, uninsured Americans had the lowest vaccination rate of 22 subgroups examined by Kaiser.

Having gone without health insurance for much of my life, I can attest that the experience does not promote trust in the health care system, better known to the uninsured as a crippling source of debt than a helpful provider of cures. The Center for Economic and Policy Research found that states with higher rates of insured people generally have higher vaccination rates. People of color are disproportionately uninsured, as conditions of class -- poverty and lack of education -- intersect with systemic racism. Nonetheless, myriad news stories investigating the vaccination divide fail to mention the words class, education or income once.

The longer we spend furious at the bad actors among us, the further we move from the truth: That many unvaccinated people are scared just like us, and that with the right help and information, they would sit down next to nurses and pull up their sleeves. We must instead turn our anger into actions that help our cause.

We can demand public-health mandates, political blowback be damned. We can communicate with the cost-anxious and wait-and-see people who remain open-minded despite skepticism wrought by a lifetime of disadvantage. We can do good deeds to negate harmful ones, like donating money to a nonprofit health clinic when we see anti-science protesters on the sidewalk or in the news. We can also, in my opinion, occasionally tell those protesters to screw off, if it gets us to our next moment of grace. (I didn't say I was enlightened.)

Most importantly, we can direct our rage not at lost individuals but at systems of power that made our grim national death count the only plausible outcome. Is it so shocking that a caste-based society that exalts individualism and prioritizes profit above wellness -- one of the only industrialized nations without universal health care -- would fail to rise to the challenges of a collective health crisis?

Despite our failings of national character, Americans were the fortunate few at the front of an eight-billion-person line, saved by stockpiles of quickly developed vaccines that poor countries around the world have struggled to access. We were among the first of our entire species invited to receive a tremendous feat of modern science into our blood -- a choice that hundreds of thousands of Covid-19 victims, who died before vaccines were available to them, did not live to make. Those of us who get the vaccines, current data tells us, will almost certainly survive this pandemic and even a lifetime of seasonal, endemic Covid-19 outbreaks.

Maintaining that perspective can be hard when staying healthy requires keeping track of case counts, changing guidelines, the science of booster shots and the safety rankings of face masks. So when all else fails, if your anger at ''the unvaccinated'' feels unbearable, focus less on those whose actions are beyond your control. Remember how you felt last spring, at a city stadium or a suburban pharmacy or a rural community building, when you got a shot. How will you remember its blessing? What will you do with the life that it saved?

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/07/opinion/sunday/covid-unvaccinated-anger.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/07/opinion/sunday/covid-unvaccinated-anger.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joan Wong FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 8, 2021

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[***Iran, Meghan Markle, Ireland: Your Monday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y01-GNH1-DXY4-X2TP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 13, 2020 Monday 03:51 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1560 words

**Byline:** Mike Ives

**Highlight:** Here’s what you need to know.

**Body**

Here’s what you need to know.

(Want to get this briefing by email? Here’s the [*sign-up*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).)

Good morning.

We’re covering protests in Iran, a leadership transition in Malta, and a satirical ditty that has caused a stir in Germany.

Anger erupts in Iran over downed jet

[*Iranians protested in several cities over the weekend*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), criticizing their government for errantly shooting down a Ukrainian jetliner last week on the same day that Iranian missiles struck American bases in Iraq.

The disaster has turned into a domestic political crisis that has for now overshadowed Iran’s struggle with the United States. In one sign of [*public anger*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), a moderate Iranian newspaper declared in a banner headline on Sunday: “Apologize and resign.”

Iran admitted responsibility for downing the plane, after denying it for days, and the country’s president, Hassan Rouhani, called the error an “unforgivable mistake.” But Ukrainian officials said the admission came only because its own investigators had found evidence of a missile strike at the crash site.

Related: President Trump’s defense secretary, Mark Esper, said on Sunday that he [*never saw specific evidence*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) of the president’s claim that the U.S. killed a top Iranian general in part because Tehran was planning attacks on four American embassies.

Go deeper: Our reporters pieced together the story of how American officials secretly planned the attack on the general — and why the two countries [*came close to open war*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Video: [*Here’s what we know*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) about the doomed jet’s seven-minute flight.

Looking back: The downing of the Ukrainian jet has an eerie echo of a crash in 1988, when the U.S. Navy [*accidentally shot down a Dubai-bound Iranian passenger jet*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) in the waning days of the Iran-Iraq war.

A fragile truce in Libya

[*A truce brokered by Turkey and Russia*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) took effect in Libya on Sunday, after months of escalating fighting around the capital, Tripoli. The country’s two warring parties were set to sign a cease-fire agreement in Moscow today.

Early this morning, Fayez al-Sarraj, the leader of Libya’s United Nations-backed government, called on Libyans “to turn the page on the past, reject discord and to close ranks to move towards stability and peace.” But there were already reports of continuing fighting around Tripoli.

Background: The conflict is part of a broader struggle for strategic and economic advantage in the Mediterranean, fought by loosely allied local militias with backing from foreign militaries. [*Turkey is sending troops*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) to bolster the beleaguered U.N.-backed Tripoli government. But Khalifa Hifter, the commander based in eastern Libya whose forces have been laying siege to the city since April, is backed by Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and   [*Russia*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

What’s next: During a trip to Moscow over the weekend, Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany repeated her offer to host a summit meeting in Berlin to seek an end to Libya’s crisis.

Prince Harry to discuss #Megxit with Queen Elizabeth

Queen Elizabeth II has summoned Prince Harry, his brother, Prince William, and their father, Prince Charles, for a meeting today to discuss the future of the monarchy’s relationship with Harry and his wife, the former Meghan Markle.

The meeting, at the queen’s Sandringham estate, comes in response to the couple’s bombshell announcement last week that they would “step back” as senior royals, live partly in North America and try to become financially independent. [*Here’s how we got to this point*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

The announcement took Buckingham Palace by surprise, and it’s still unclear how Harry and Meghan will earn money or who will pay for their security.

Related: Meghan is in Canada, where she lived for seven years during a previous career as an actress. And many Canadians are [*giddy at the prospect that she and Harry could be moving there*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

If you have 8 minutes, this is worth it

Can France’s Socialists go beyond ‘bobo’?

François Hollande, who served as France’s president from 2012 to 2017, presided over what some see as a break between his Socialist Party and its ***working-class*** supporters. Now the party’s survival is in doubt.

The party recently moved its headquarters from central Paris to a ***working-class*** suburb, above. Some [*sense an opportunity for the party to reconnect with the* ***working class***](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) — and shed its image as the party of the urban “bobo,” or bourgeois bohemian.

Here’s what else is happening

Malta: Amid demands for accountability over the 2017 murder of an anticorruption journalist, Prime Minister Joseph Muscat said on Twitter that [*he would formally resign today*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing). His replacement is Robert Abela, a first-term lawmaker.

Ireland: Prime Minister Leo Varadkar [*suggested on Sunday*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) that a snap election would be called next month. He spoke two days after Northern Ireland’s two main parties — including Sinn Fein, a nationalist party that supports unification with the Republic of Ireland —   [*agreed to restore a coalition government*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) after three years of political paralysis.

France: The government’s latest concession to unions — agreeing to[*scrap a proposal*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) to raise the full-benefits retirement age from 62 to 64 — is unlikely to end a weekslong transit strike or the demonstrations gripping French cities.

Taiwan: After President Tsai Ing-wen won a landslide election victory over the weekend, on a platform of preserving the democratically ruled island’s sovereignty, she [*urged China to resume talks with her government*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Oman: The Persian Gulf nation on Saturday [*named a new leader*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) and announced the death of   [*Sultan Qaboos bin Said*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), who ruled for half a century and championed a foreign policy of independence and nonalignment.

Impeachment: Speaker Nancy Pelosi is [*expected to send articles of impeachment against President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) to the U.S. Senate this week, paving the way for an impeachment trial to begin as soon as Wednesday.

Germany: The far right’s move to [*foment a controversy over a satirical song,*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) “Granny Is an Old Environmental Swine,” has stoked concerns about the breakdown of the country’s social fabric.

Snapshot: Above, the [*Taal volcano in the Philippines*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), which erupted on Sunday, leading to mass evacuations amid fears of a “volcanic tsunami.”

Opinion: The breakup of the United Kingdom would be “one of the few good things to come out of Brexit,” [*a history professor in London argues*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Oscar nominations: Our awards season columnist breaks down [*what to expect*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) when this year’s nods are announced today in Los Angeles.

What we’re listening to: This [*interview with the journalist Ronan Farrow*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing) on the “Armchair Expert” podcast. Melina Delkic, on the Briefings team, writes: “You’re surely familiar with the journalist’s award-winning investigation of Harvey Weinstein, but the way his life story and background contribute to his reporting adds fascinating context.”

Now, a break from the news

Cook: Start the week with [*vegan mac and cheese*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), ready in 30 minutes.

Watch: The HBO series “The New Pope,” starring John Malkovich, starts today. [*Here’s our review*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

Smarter Living: If you’ve been thinking about taking a cruise, now through March may be the best time to book. You can [*snap up savings and better accommodations*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

And now for the Back Story on …

The making of a telling photo

A photograph that ran in The Times recently has come to symbolize the destruction wrought by the wildfires in Australia. Matthew Abbott, a photographer based there, was vacationing in the country’s southeast with his family the day he accepted an assignment from The Times and took the picture. Here is an edited excerpt from [*his account of how it happened*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

The fire that hit Lake Conjola was one of the biggest. So I headed there on the highway.

It was mayhem. People were clearly frightened. Some had their possessions with them. Down the road, in Conjola Park, every house was burning. It was catastrophic.

In the town of Lake Conjola, there was a stretch of about four or five homes, with one engulfed in flames. The neighbors on each side were trying to hose down their own houses. They were using their shirts as masks because there was smoke everywhere.

A little after 1 p.m., a power line to the burning house fell. It was then that I saw a group of kangaroos coming up the middle of the road, obviously running from another fire. And one ran right between me and the house. I reacted and raised the camera so I could compose that one image.

I remembered thinking, Yeah, got it, good shot, but I never allow myself to get too excited about a photo in the middle of something.

A photojournalist is trying to tell the story with pictures, and you need a series of strong images. You’re looking to document everything that’s happening. So I kept moving.

That’s it for this briefing. See you next time.

— Mike

Thank you

To Mark Josephson and Eleanor Stanford for the break from the news. You can reach the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

P.S.

We’re listening to “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).” Our latest episode is the second of a two-part series about the Harvey Weinstein case.

Here’s today’s   [*Mini Crossword puzzle*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing), and a clue: Mars, Mercury and Neptune (four letters).   [*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

To create some sense of routine and a chance for reflection in a year of expansive traveling, our 52 Places columnist   [*sent himself a postcard from each of the places he visited last year*](https://www.nytimes.com/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Abedin Taherkenareh/EPA, via Shutterstock FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 14, 2020

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[***How Conservatives Can Love ‘the Family’ and ‘the Free Market’; Jamelle Bouie***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65D2-HWH1-DXY4-X4BW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 7, 2022 Saturday 11:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1678 words

**Byline:** Jamelle Bouie

**Highlight:** It is easier to reconcile than you might think.

**Body**

We are witnessing, right now, a flurry of attacks on the freedom of Americans to live as they choose. Conservatives have renewed their war against L.G.B.T.Q. inclusion and are poised to excise the right to have an abortion from our constitutional order. At the same time, they have continued to fight against [*public goods*](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/public-goods/) and what’s left of the welfare state, slashing spending and cutting taxes in states where they have control.

There’s a tendency among liberals to treat the conservative social agenda — and the attack on abortion, specifically — as being in tension with the conservative economic agenda and its commitment to the “free market,” meaning the domination of capital and the total erosion of the social safety net. But, as the sociologist Melinda Cooper has shown, that tension is exaggerated, if it even exists.

In “[*Family Values*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/ebook/9781942130055/family-values): Between Neoliberalism and the New Social Conservatism,” she argues that social conservative and neoliberal critics of the state — facing the crisis of inflation in the 1970s — called for a profound reform of the welfare system. “It was now agreed that the redistributive welfare programs of the New Deal and Great Society would need to be radically restricted, even while the private institution of the family was to be strengthened as an alternative to social welfare,” Cooper writes. These right-wing critics of the social safety net, along with some liberals and others on the center-left, “looked back to a much older tradition of public relief — one embedded in the poor-law tradition with its attendant notions of family and personal responsibility — as an imagined alternative to the New Deal welfare state.”

The two groups held very different assumptions about the role of the state vis-à-vis the family. Social conservatives, says Cooper, saw “the primary function of the state as that of sustaining the family, the foundation of all social order, if necessary through the use of force.” Neoliberals, by contrast, envisaged “the private paternalism of the family as a spontaneous source of welfare in the free-market order,” which had been undermined by the “perverse of incentives of redistributive welfare but also restored through the diminution of state paternalism.” Meaning, in short, that the family would thrive as long as perverse government incentives could be kept at bay.

Despite this seemingly fundamental difference, Cooper writes, “neoliberals have in practice relied on the much more overt forms of behavioral correction favored by social conservatives.” In order for neoliberals to realize their vision of a “naturally equilibrating free-market order and a spontaneously self-sufficient family,” they must delegate power to social conservatives who then use the state to impose traditional family forms.

Cooper cites Bill Clinton’s welfare reform as the prime example of how this took shape. Under the “Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act,” states were required to “increase their efforts to police, track down, and enforce paternity obligations, on the presumption that the biological father of a child on welfare should be forced to pay child support whether or not a mother wished to maintain a relationship with him.”

Cooper goes on:

And in what must be understood as a blurring of the boundaries between the free and unfree sexual contract, sanctions were to be imposed on mothers who did not sufficiently cooperate in helping welfare agencies to locate the biological father of their children. By diverting a substantial portion of the federal welfare budget to the task of extracting child support from fathers, welfare reform served to remind women that an individual man, not the state, was ultimately responsible for their economic security. Unless a woman could assume “personal responsibility” for her economic fate, she would have to accept her condition of economic dependence on an absent father or substitute husband.

This social conservative/neoliberal focus on the “family” becomes the basis for further destruction of public goods and for the devolution of social responsibilities to individual households. Free (or at least reasonably priced) tuition for university students becomes state-backed loans that individuals and families are obligated to pay back. Rather than support high wages and full employment, the government would “scale back spending, repress wages, and instead let long-term interest rates fall” in order to “generate an abundance of cheap consumer credit.”

Government would step back, the private sector would step in and the market would take control, with the traditional family — shaped by policy and disciplined by capital — as the foundation of the social and political order.

Cooper, it should be said, sees much of this as the recapitulation of an earlier period in the history of American capitalism. And when she describes that period, it is even easier to see how her argument relates to the present.

The social upheaval brought on by the rise of industrial capitalism produced a movement of reformers and critics who feared that “the traditional moral fabric of American life was being destroyed by a perfect storm of malign influences,” from “the dispersion of households as young people migrated en masse to the industrial heartlands” to “interracial mixing and the rise of a feminist movement intent on questioning male authority in the household.” These reformers and critics were joined by free-market liberals who tied this undisciplined ***working-class*** to the growth of public relief programs and other forms of collective assistance.

They converged on the traditional family as the solution. “While free-market liberals were concerned with enforcing the economic obligations of family,” Cooper writes, “conservatives were convinced that moral and legal foundations of the family needed to be shored up before the economic costs of marital breakdown could be properly attended to.”

In accordance with this view, she notes, “the laws governing intimate relationships became considerably stricter in the last decades” of the 19th century. “During this period, most states moved to restrict or outlaw common-law marriages, raised the age of consent, reestablished waiting periods for marriage, banned interracial unions, and criminalized abortion and contraception.”

For these reformers, she continues, “the economic obligations of kin could not be properly enforced without a comprehensive effort to rebuild the family as the very foundation of social order.”

Then and now, both social conservatives and free-market liberals have had a vested interest in the traditional family as the building block for their favored political and economic regimes. The traditional family would safeguard hierarchies of gender and status as well as handle the consequences of capitalist inequality.

Which is to say that the imposition of traditional family forms — the reassertion of patriarchal control over women and children, the suppression of alternative gender expression and re-establishment of the heterosexual binary — is what undergirds the destruction of the welfare state and the erosion of public goods. And the segmentation of labor that results — women relegated either to unpaid work in the home or low-pay, low-status work in the marketplaces — helps capital tighten its grip on society.

Or, as the conservative commentator and provocateur Ben Shapiro recently [*declared*](https://twitter.com/benshapiro/status/1519672380284706816) on Twitter, “The family is the basis of free markets; it represents a core economic unit against the ravages of a confiscatory state.”

That, I suppose, is one way to put it.

What I Wrote

[*My Friday column*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/06/opinion/supreme-court-roe-dobbs-legitimacy.html) was on the ridiculous idea that the Supreme Court has any legitimacy to lose.

It matters whether a president has democratic legitimacy. Donald Trump did not. But rather than act with that in mind, he used his power to pursue the interests of a narrow ideological faction, giving its representatives free rein to shape the Supreme Court as they saw fit. The court, then, is stained by the same democratic illegitimacy that marked Trump and his administration.

Now Reading

[*Rebecca Traister*](https://www.thecut.com/2022/05/roe-v-wade-abortion-democrats.html) on the post-Roe world for New York magazine.

[*Peggy Cooper Davis*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2022/05/03/reconstruction-amendments-matter-when-considering-abortion-rights/) on slavery, the Fourteenth Amendment and abortion in The Washington Post.

[*Meaghan Winter*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/where-was-everyone-the-fatal-siloing-of-abortion-advocacy) on the fight for abortion rights in Dissent magazine.

[*Liza Batkin*](https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2022/05/05/deceit-in-plain-sight/) on Samuel Alito’s draft opinion overturning Roe v. Wade in The New York Review of Books.

[*Miles Mogulescu*](https://prospect.org/justice/end-of-the-right-to-privacy-roe-v-wade/) on the end to the right to privacy in The American Prospect.

Photo of the Week

A few of the flowers in our garden bloomed, and I dutifully went out to take a few pictures with my macro lens. It had rained overnight, and I tried to focus on how the raindrops rested on the petal. I think the photo turned out pretty well.

Now Eating: Olive Oil-Braised Chickpeas and Broccoli Rabe

An easy weeknight dinner to serve with some nice bread, a sprinkle of feta cheese and a crisp salad. Recipe comes from [*NYT Cooking*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019559-olive-oil-braised-chickpeas-and-broccoli-rabe?action=click&amp;module=RecipeBox&amp;pgType=recipebox-page&amp;region=all&amp;rank=73).

Ingredients

* 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1. 6 garlic cloves, peeled and smashed
2. 1 rosemary sprig
3. 1 teaspoon fennel seeds
4. \xC2 teaspoon dried chile flakes
5. 1 bunch broccoli rabe (about 1 pound), woody stems trimmed
6. 1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
7. Kosher salt and black pepper
8. Crusty bread, for serving

Directions

Heat the oven to 375 degrees. In a large ovenproof skillet or Dutch oven over medium heat, combine the oil, garlic, rosemary, fennel seeds and chile flakes. Cook until the mixture is fragrant and the garlic is golden, 3 to 5 minutes.

Turn off the heat, then add the broccoli rabe and toss until coated in oil. Scatter the chickpeas around the broccoli rabe and stir to coat in oil. Season generously with salt and pepper.

Cover with a lid or foil and bake for about 40 minutes, until the chickpeas are soft and crispy in parts and the broccoli rabe is tender, but the stems are not mushy.

Let cool slightly. Before serving, remove the rosemary and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with crusty bread for mopping up the seasoned oil.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Gian James Maagad / EyeEm / Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 7, 2022

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[***Hero or 'Charlatan'? An Economist's Push For In-Person School.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6306-S411-DXY4-X36M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 23, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1824 words

**Byline:** By Dana Goldstein

**Body**

Emily Oster, an economist at Brown University, has a lot to say.

In July 2020, in the middle of the raging coronavirus pandemic, she wrote an opinion essay suggesting that schools and child care centers might be able to reopen safely, noting that working parents ''can't wait around forever.'' In her popular parenting books, she tossed away longstanding medical guidelines, arguing that an occasional sushi roll and glass of wine are safe during pregnancy and that breastfeeding is overrated. More recently, she has cast doubt on whether students need to wear masks or remain physically distanced at school.

This steady stream of counterintuitive advice has made Dr. Oster a lodestar for a certain set of parents, generally college-educated, liberal and affluent. Many had first latched onto her data-driven child-rearing books. Her popularity grew during the pandemic, as she collected case counts of Covid-19 in schools and advanced her own strongly held views on the importance of returning to in-person learning.

Some parents said, half-seriously, ''Emily Oster is my C.D.C.''

But others -- teachers, epidemiologists and labor activists -- criticized her, pointing out that she was not an infectious disease expert, nor did she have any deep personal or professional experience with public education. (Her two children attend private school, as did she.) On social media, the reaction could be brutal, with people calling her a ''charlatan'' and ''monster'' pushing ''morally reprehensible'' positions that ''endangered many lives needlessly.''

And those were some of the more polite critiques.

None of the pushback has deterred Dr. Oster. She is launching an ambitious project to collect data on how schools operated during the crisis. She also has a new book, ''The Family Firm,'' that will be released in August, aimed at helping parents make decisions about schooling, nutrition, discipline and screen time.

''I am always out of my lane,'' she said, jokingly, in an interview.

Dr. Oster emerged as a central figure in the vociferous debate about school reopenings. While not an educational or medical expert, she used her skills as an economist to make a case for in-person learning, using data and logic. And at a time when traditional guidance was confusing and contradictory -- masks on or off? -- many parents were drawn to her clear and consistent opinions. But data sets, as Dr. Oster learned, can't completely capture the complicated calculations families and educators make about education during a pandemic.

Whitney Robinson, an epidemiologist at the University of North Carolina, has been critical of some of Dr. Oster's writing. But she credits the economist with helping a relatively privileged set of parents, including herself, make practical decisions during the pandemic.

''That really is her gift,'' she said. ''Synthesizing quantitative studies and spitting out rough guidelines or ways of thinking that can guide choices for upper-middle class, urban, suburban, sort of coastal people.''

Speaking over Skype, Dr. Oster was very much the picture of pandemic motherhood. She sat in the basement of her home in Providence, R.I., wearing a casual black T-shirt, an old treadmill nearby. The room was far from stage managed, but it did buffer her from her two young children.

Dr. Oster said she doesn't relish the heated debate about her. ''I am, like, a tremendously sensitive person,'' she said. ''I feel bad about all of it, all of the time.''

Still, she has never shied away from contentious subjects, and her new career trajectory is a continuation of her boundary-crossing work. She has always enjoyed interpreting academic research on health for a broad audience, and has long been frustrated by what she perceives as impractical parenting advice, which offers blanket rules -- ''Don't sleep next to your baby'' -- instead of research findings that individuals can use to make personal choices.

The same was true during the pandemic, Dr. Oster noted. ''I'd get questions like, is it better to have my in-laws watch my kid or send them to day care?'' she said. ''We've been told to do neither, but that isn't a choice'' for working parents.

Indeed, the lack of great choices is one reason the school reopening debate has often been toxic, pitting parents and teachers against each other and one another. White and college-educated parents were more likely to want in-person schooling than ***working-class*** parents of color whose families were more likely to contract the virus or die from it, and who had more distrust of schools. Some teachers were eager to stay safe at home, teaching remotely, while others desperately wanted to return to their classrooms.

Amid all this, Dr. Oster stepped in to collect national data on Covid-19 cases in schools because, she said, the federal government had failed to do so. By last fall, the database she set up, seeded with information voluntarily submitted by school administrators, suggested that with simple precautions, schools could be operated without significant on-site transmission.

Her data work was discounted by some teachers' union activists because it was funded, in part, by philanthropies that support nonunion charter schools. And it didn't adhere to traditional research norms; the data collection wasn't randomized, and initially it skewed toward private and suburban schools. But eventually, the database grew to include schools serving more than 12 million of the nation's 56 million K-12 students, including all of the public schools in New York, Florida, Texas and Massachusetts. And despite its limitations, Dr. Oster's conclusions were eventually echoed by research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the European Union and many independent scholars.

With a growing stash of evidence under her belt, Dr. Oster acknowledged that she became ''more extreme'' in her conviction that schools should be open, and wrote ever more prescriptively on the subject.

Through her free Substack newsletter and a series of opinion essays, she repeatedly summarized new research, reiterated that children were generally not at high risk to either catch or transmit Covid-19, and offered struggling parents the permission so many of them craved: to go forth carefully with summer camp, day care, in-person school and vacations.

But the question of how to behave during a pandemic is fundamentally different from the question of whether to breastfeed. In an environment of viral transmission, your choice potentially affects many others outside of your own family.

''That was the hardest to write about,'' Dr. Oster admitted.

It turned out that many educators would not accept a coolly intellectual framework for balancing risk and reward, especially not one advanced from the environs of Brown University. Public schoolteachers had experienced sealed-shut classroom windows and bathrooms without soap. Backed by their unions, they wanted to work safely at home during the pandemic, just as many of their students' parents were.

They had also observed that ***working-class*** parents of color were the least likely to want to rush back into classrooms during the pandemic. When urban schools did reopen, many teachers found themselves standing in front of near-empty classrooms.

Dr. Oster had envisioned parents and teachers logging onto school district dashboards, reassured by charts and graphs demonstrating low case rates in schools. But she discovered that data alone would not determine pandemic education policy, nor shape many parents' choices, at least not in the country's decentralized, yet highly bureaucratic public school system, rife with labor tensions and stratified by every disparity -- race, class, region, politics -- that defines American life.

''I had maybe somewhat of a naïve approach,'' she said.

The fact that Dr. Oster wasn't an infectious disease expert was, at times, a strength, noted Dr. Robinson, the epidemiologist. Dr. Oster did not assume incorrectly that Covid-19 would behave similarly in children to the flu, which initially led many experts to overstate the risks of opening schools.

Still, Dr. Robinson said, Dr. Oster's advice is not equally relevant to all parents, given uneven rates of vaccination by region, race and income. Some parents, even this fall, may opt out of in-person learning.

In some of Dr. Oster's recent writing, ''There was a tone of, 'It's safe, it's done,''' Dr. Robinson said. ''But we can't predict what is going to happen. Covid is definitely not over.''

Dr. Oster has repeatedly acknowledged that while children of all races appear to be equally unlikely to contract Covid-19 within school buildings, overall risks do differ by demographics. Nor is she cavalier about the pandemic's progression. A recent newsletter on emerging variants concluded, ''we need to continue to be vigilant,'' while returning to ''some normalcy.''

Despite these caveats, Dr. Oster's prominence has been galling to some educators.

Maya Chavez, a high school social studies teacher in Providence, worked in-person the majority of this school year. Rhode Island was one of the few liberal states to push schools to reopen last fall, in part because of the influence of Dr. Oster and other Brown University experts; Dr. Oster spoke regularly to state officials.

''There is a serious disconnect between her idea of what school looks like and the reality,'' Ms. Chavez said. At least 30 students learning in-person at her predominantly low-income school tested positive for Covid-19, among more than 8,000 such student cases statewide. That does not mean students caught the virus in school or spread it there, but it does illustrate the reality that people came into close contact with the virus within classrooms. Several of her students, many of whom live in intergenerational homes, had family members who were hospitalized or died.

''There is enormous emotional trauma,'' Ms. Chavez said.

There have been moments of pullback for Dr. Oster. In March, she apologized after writing in The Atlantic that unvaccinated children could be considered as protected against the virus this summer as vaccinated grandparents. ''I didn't stress that the situation is different for higher risk children, or emphasize the importance of equitable vaccine distribution,'' she wrote in response to heavy criticism.

But on the whole, she sticks by her writing. There is also some uncertainty about whether opening schools increased virus rates in their communities as parents returned to work. But even if it did in some cases, Dr. Oster said she questions whether that justifies a policy that led to academic, social and emotional hardship for so many families.

Perhaps in-school contact tracing and testing could have been better. But ''it wasn't a mistake to open schools,'' she said definitively, and more of them should have opened faster. She is sure of it. After all, she has looked at the data.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/emily-oster-school-reopening.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/emily-oster-school-reopening.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: ''Emily Oster is my C.D.C.,'' some parents said, even as others said her opinions put lives in danger. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JILLIAN FREYER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Clockwise from top: Social distancing in a Wausau, Wis., classroom last December

a rally to reopen schools in Jersey City, N.J., in April

a teachers' protest in Summit, N.J., in August against returning to school while Covid-19 was still spreading at high rates. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2021

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[***He's a Guide in the Shadows***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:660N-VHB1-DXY4-X3JB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 24, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1887 words

**Byline:** By Alex Traub

**Body**

Will Malitek owns and operates Film Noir Cinema. If you've never heard of it, fine with him.

As the founder and sole employee of Film Noir Cinema, Will Malitek appears to be the final movie rental clerk left in New York City.

While his industry collapsed, Mr. Malitek flourished. Film Noir began in 2005 as a walk-in closet of recondite DVDs angled into a Brooklyn commercial drag. In 2017, it became a spacious den of films and film memorabilia attached to a 54-seat cinema.

Mr. Malitek, 55, who has worked in New York movie rentals for more than 20 years, perpetuates a way of life that faded with the closure of rental and record shops. He is the storefront scholar, the ***working-class*** aesthete, the connoisseur whose respect must be earned but also the enthusiast whose recommendations might change your life.

A review of five lists published between 2014 and 2018 of New York City's remaining movie rental places indicates that all except Film Noir have closed. The Lower Manhattan outlet of Alamo Drafthouse, a small chain of theaters, now does rentals, but it does not employ a movie rental clerk.

On a recent afternoon at Film Noir, which is located in the traditionally Polish section of Greenpoint, Brooklyn, Mr. Malitek nursed a plastic container of borscht and considered the shrine-like quality of his store: no furniture, no digital gizmos, just niche film posters (such as one for the 1984 superhero black comedy ''The Toxic Avenger'') and wooden shelves with DVDs.

''I am trying to keep it as old school as possible,'' he said, ''so when people are here they feel like they're in a different world.''

Catherine Curtin, an actress who grew up in New York and recently visited Film Noir for the first time, said it reminded her of nothing so much as the now-forgotten art house theaters of her youth, like the Upper West Side's old Thalia, which closed in 1987.

Whether Film Noir is an emanation from the past or an alternate dimension unto itself, it strikes most who enter it as noble and somewhat inexplicable.

''I'd be like, 'Do you have 'Hiroshima, Mon Amour'?'' Jess Magee, a filmmaker and onetime habitual renter, recalled in a phone interview. ''He'd be like, 'Come back tomorrow, 2 o'clock.'''

No matter the obscurity of the request, Ms. Magee would return to find Mr. Malitek with a DVD, a case and photocopied-looking DVD cover.

How did he do it?

''I didn't ask too many questions,'' Ms. Magee said.

The cinema's programming seems designed to bewilder the public. Events include ''Fear Noir,'' which the schedule identifies only as ''a collection of short animated films to create a total Fear Noir in your mind'' and ''Cult Cinema,'' or ''a night of sheer cinematic madness dedicated to the most obscure films ever made.''

Alongside a few new indie films like the haunting ''We're All Going to the World's Fair,'' movies recently on Film Noir's calendar include ''Tomato,'' ''Paradise'' and ''D.E.'' -- all listed without explanation of the plot or any identification of the director, the actors and the year of release.

Mr. Malitek does not care if a movie is likable; he wants it to shock, and therefore to be remembered, and he thinks that response can be heightened by shrouding the movie in mystery.

His taste mirrors his style. Contemporary mass-market American films are ''propaganda,'' he said; the internet ''destroyed art.'' But in underground, old and foreign cinema, Mr. Malitek finds the authenticity that he associates with the macabre.

He likes Japanese films best. ''They don't have those ridiculous happy ends,'' he said. ''They speak to the life.''

Mr. Malitek gives his own theater an enigmatic motto: ''Here at Film Noir Cinema, we bring darkness to light, not light to darkness.''

He strikes patrons as a little shadowy himself.

Mitch Horowitz, a historian of alternative spirituality, has spent three years visiting Film Noir, which he calls ''a little jewel box of the occult and the dark side.'' The theater shows, he said, ''certain horror classics or martial arts classics that you just don't see anywhere else, including things you don't find on streaming services.''

Mr. Horowitz has become close enough with Mr. Malitek that last month, he began hosting his own festival at Film Noir called ''Chamber of HORRORwitz.''

Yet in a phone interview, Mr. Horowitz was startled to realize that he did not know Mr. Malitek's last name. They communicate mainly through impromptu visits and handshake agreements.

Jason Grisell, an actor, artist and Film Noir regular, said he treasures the personal qualities of Mr. Malitek that make such half-intimate, half-distant relationships possible.

''In a culture that's founded on overexposure, it's a vanishing commodity,'' Mr. Grisell said. ''Mystique.''

'It's just this guy'

Mr. Malitek was born in the port city of Gdansk in 1966. ''There was nothing in the stores except vinegar,'' Mr. Malitek said. He found another world on Channel 2 of Polish TV, which showed American movies like ''The Maltese Falcon'' and ''Touch of Evil.''

Mr. Malitek formed two boyhood dreams: To open his own cinema and to move to the United States.

He saved up for a bribe needed to obtain a passport. When he got one, at the age of 23, Mr. Malitek was gone within 48 hours. He used East Berlin as a jumping off point for the other side of the Iron Curtain and soon made his way to New York.

Learning about movies had also taken an enterprising and rule-breaking spirit. In Gdansk, Mr. Malitek would visit a flea market where dealers hid censored VHS tapes in backpacks and underneath tables. If you saw the secret police, you were supposed to tip off everyone else by whistling. During raids, whistles filled the market.

Today, Mr. Malitek sometimes responds to questions about himself like he is being interrogated by one of those undercover agents.

Before he opened the initial rentals-only version of Film Noir (also located in Greenpoint), Mr. Malitek's first job in the industry was at a place in the Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan. ''From obscure, sick, perverted porn to Hollywood titles -- everything was there,'' he said. Yet Mr. Malitek, in spite of working at this store for five years, claims he does not remember its name.

Mr. Malitek answers general questions about Film Noir -- much of its income comes from events hosted in the cinema, for example -- but at a certain point he tends to reply, ''I don't want to talk about money.''

Kier-La Janisse, the founder of the Miskatonic Institute of Horror Studies, a film scholarship group that uses Film Noir as its venue in New York, described the theater as noirishly well suited for discussions of horror. Two open bulbs dimly illuminate lecturers, leaving darkness around them, like they are telling a ghost story. And, Ms. Janisse points out, the building used to house a funeral home.

An average screening at Film Noir draws a crowd of just a handful of people, all of them generally first-time visitors seeking an unusual night out.

The evening of May 5 was characteristic: Five young newcomers from Brooklyn showing up on a night advertised only as ''film club'' during which Mr. Malitek played the baroque Japanese noir ''I, the Executioner'' (1968).

It depicts not just rape and murder, but a serial campaign of rapes and murders by a man against a group of women in retaliation for their having raped a young boy (who also, naturally, kills himself).

The group generally agreed the surprise screening had jarringly offended the enlightenments and sensitivities of 21st century liberal progressivism.

Could they imagine returning to Film Noir?

''Honestly,'' said Molly Walls, a 27-year-old book editor, ''yes.''

Mr. Malitek prefers bending the minds of the few to entertaining the many.

Here lies the real mystery of Film Noir: that a place presenting itself as a business catering to the public is actually the fantasy world of its owner.

Mr. Malitek designed the theater himself. Thanks to the income from private events, his whims dictate the programming. He avoids checking the marquees of New York's other independent cinemas, not wanting to be influenced by outside forces.

He appears at Film Noir when he wants. He answers his phone and email infrequently -- you trek to Greenpoint if you really need to talk to him. He rewards the Film Noir faithful with the fruits of his learnedness.

''I don't like to recommend films to people I don't know,'' Mr. Malitek said. ''You have to know the taste of a person.''

All of this makes Film Noir underground even by the standards of New York's underground film scene.

Sean Price Williams is a cinematographer and director who worked at the flagship location of Kim's Video rental store on St. Marks Place, New York's erstwhile headquarters of underground film, and who now hosts his own unofficial movie screenings at Kraine Theater and Roxy Cinema in Manhattan. Yet Mr. Williams said that, though he has visited Film Noir, he had never seen a movie there.

''The smaller his audience, the cooler and more pure it makes him,'' Mr. Williams said. ''It's just this guy -- it's his personal collection, it's his personal taste.''

Guide to the obscure

Mr. Malitek established that taste during 25 years of watching at least one movie almost every day. He has read hundreds of books about film and studied encyclopedias as esoteric as ''The Definitive Guide to Italian Sex and Horror Movies.'' As the last rental clerk, he may be the most expert suggester of movies in New York who is also accessible to any member of the public.

If you tell him you're interested in the 1982 horror movie ''Manhattan Baby'' by the Italian director Lucio Fulci, he will beseech you to see Mr. Fulci's 1979 ''Zombi 2.'' If you happen to mention that you loved ''Le Samouraï,'' the 1967 noir thriller by the French director Jean-Pierre Melville, he will have another French film of the same style handy when you next visit. If you enjoyed the 2010 Jason Statham and 50 Cent vehicle ''13,'' Mr. Malitek can give you ''13 Tzameti,'' the mid-2000s Georgian-French film on which it was based.

Mr. Grisell, the Film Noir regular, once chatted with Mr. Malitek about ''The Denial of Death,'' a 1973 book that investigates cultural attitudes toward mortality. Mr. Malitek suggested Mr. Grisell watch a series of Eastern European films, Mr. Grisell said, and in them he discovered a view of death -- one with ''rawness and aggressiveness but also spiritual qualities'' -- that seemed new to him.

Mr. Grisell felt hesitant to speak to a journalist about Film Noir for fear that it would become ''too popular,'' he said. ''It would be at the risk of losing its freedom and the ability to express enthusiasm, because I think commerce at a certain point suppresses that.''

To be on the receiving end of Mr. Malitek's special brand of enthusiasm might indeed be an honor, but he would hate for it to feel too pleasant.

A customer returned a movie on a sunny afternoon in May. ''Not many laughs in that one,'' he commented.

''It's Czech,'' Mr. Malitek replied.

What was the movie -- some bloody but profound lesser classic?

The erudite recommender became the cryptic film noir character. Mr. Malitek was not naming names.

The movie was just ''something weird,'' he said. ''That's exactly what this place is all about.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/21/style/new-york-film-noir-cinema.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/21/style/new-york-film-noir-cinema.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Will Malitek in his film den. ''I am trying to keep it as old school as possible,'' he said. (ST1)

Top, Film Noir opened in 2005 as a closet of DVD rentals and expanded in 2017 to include a 54-seat cinema. Center, the collection is eclectic and selected by the owner, Will Malitek. He also designed the theater, above. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ISAIAH WINTERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST4)

**Load-Date:** July 24, 2022

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[***The Best Movies and TV Shows Coming to HBO, Hulu, Apple TV+ and More in July***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65TX-GGJ1-JBG3-652Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 1, 2022 Friday 20:10 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1756 words

**Byline:** Noel Murray

**Highlight:** Every month, streaming services add movies and TV shows to their libraries. Here are our picks for some of July’s most promising new titles.

**Body**

Every month, streaming services add movies and TV shows to their libraries. Here are our picks for some of July’s most promising new titles.

(Note: Streaming services occasionally change schedules without giving notice. For more recommendations on what to stream, sign up for our [*Watching newsletter here*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/watching).)

New to Amazon Prime

‘The Terminal List’ Season 1

Starts streaming: July 1

Chris Pratt is the lead actor and an executive producer of “The Terminal List,” a military mystery based on a series of novels by Jack Carr. Pratt plays James Reece, a Navy SEAL whose team is wiped out on a mission under circumstances that look much more suspicious once Reece is back home and able to investigate — a task complicated by a brain injury that makes it hard for the soldier keep his memories straight. This star-studded drama also has Taylor Kitsch playing one of Reece’s buddies, Riley Keough as Reece’s wife, Jeanne Tripplehorn as a top-level bureaucrat and Constance Wu as a reporter who helps the hero understand that the people he had answered to might not have had his best interests at heart.

‘Paper Girls’ Season 1

Starts streaming: July 29

In 1988, four adolescent girls are delivering newspapers in suburban Ohio when they inadvertently travel through time, and in the process get caught up in a long-running battle between bands of adventurers who disagree about who should be allowed to use the time-hopping technology.

That is the premise of the writer Brian K. Vaughn and the artist Cliff Chiang’s Eisner-winning comic book series “Paper Girls” as well as its new television adaptation, which is filled with enough metaphysical mysteries, ’80s nostalgia and ray-gun blasts to keep most “Stranger Things” fans satisfied. The show is also a coming-of-age drama, concerned with the past, present and future of its young heroines, who during their journeys get a chance to confront the women they will become, and to think about whether their fates can — or should — be changed.

Also arriving:

July 8

“Warriors on the Field”

July 15

“Don’t Make Me Go”

“Forever Summer: Hamptons” Season 1

“Love Accidentally” Season 1

July 22

“Anything’s Possible”

New to AMC+

‘Moonhaven’ Season 1

Starts streaming: July 7

Set 100 years in the future, this quirky science-fiction series takes viewers to a lunar colony where scientists and idealists have spent decades testing out ways to make an increasingly fragile Earth more habitable. Emma McDonald plays Bella, a skeptical pilot and part-time criminal who gets stuck in this weird utopia when she becomes a suspect in a murder. As Bella works alongside one of the colony’s law enforcement officers (Dominic Monaghan) to clear her name, she become embroiled in the political intrigue that is threatening to wreck this grand social experiment.

Created by Peter Ocko (a veteran TV writer and producer who has worked on cult favorite shows like “Lodge 49” and “Pushing Daisies”), “Moonhaven” is the kind of drama meant to keep audiences wondering what will happen next and pondering the deeper theme of social interconnectedness.

‘Better Call Saul’ Season 6, Part 2

Starts streaming: July 11

The final six episodes of this acclaimed “Breaking Bad” prequel has a lot of ground to cover, as the creators Peter Gould and Vince Gilligan connect all the pieces of the Jimmy McGill/Saul Goodman story: from how he cemented his place as Albuquerque’s go-to attorney for drug kingpins to what became of him years later after he changed identities again and moved to Nebraska.

The fates of some of the “Better Call Saul” characters are already sealed because of what happened on “Breaking Bad,” but the show’s fans have been nervous about others — and especially about what night happen to Jimmy’s good-hearted, keen-minded wife, Kim Wexler (Rhea Seehorn). Regardless of how the plot plays out, these last few chapters will offer another chance to savor one of the most artfully directed, sharply written crime dramas on TV.

Also arriving:

July 1

“Barbarians”

July 8

“Last Looks”

July 12

“Cow”

July 15

“Paris, 13th District”

July 22

“Happening”

New to Apple TV+

‘Black Bird’

Starts streaming: July 8

Based on a memoir, “Black Bird” stars Taron Egerton as James Keene, a seemingly untouchable golden boy — a former high school football hero and policeman’s son — who gets busted for drug-dealing and weapons possession, and is sentenced to 10 years in prison. Then James gets offered a deal: transfer to a rougher facility, where he can cozy up to the suspected serial killer Larry Hall (Paul Walter Hauser), and get the man to confess to where he buried the bodies, earning himself an early release.

Produced and written by the crime novelist Dennis Lehane, this mini-series features an accomplished cast (including Greg Kinnear as a dogged detective and Ray Liotta in one of his final roles as James’s dad), telling a story about the unsettling mysteries at the heart of some criminal cases, including when the truth is in conflict with the evidence.

Also arriving:

July 8

“Duck &amp; Goose”

July 22

“Best Foot Forward”

“Trying” Season 3

July 29

“Amber Brown”

“Surface”

New to Disney+

‘The Wonderful Summer of Mickey Mouse’

Starts streaming: July 8

The arrival of a new season brings another of Disney’s quarterly Mickey Mouse anthologies — the third this year, after “The Wonderful Winter of Mickey Mouse” and “The Wonderful Spring of Mickey Mouse.” This new special alters the format a bit, telling five “Rashomon”-like interconnected stories, with Mickey and his pals each explaining how and why they left a trail of destruction while recklessly speeding toward a lakeside vacation resort. As with most of the recent Mickey Mouse cartoons, the emphasis here is on colorful visual design and inventive slapstick, delivered at a frenetic pace.

Also arriving:

July 1

“Marvel Studios Assembled: The Making of Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness”

July 4

“America the Beautiful”

July 15

“Zombies 3”

July 20

“Siempre Fui Yo”

“Tudo Igual… Só Que Não”

July 27

“High School Musical: The Musical: The Series” Season 3

“Light &amp; Magic”

New to HBO Max

‘The Rehearsal’

Starts streaming: July 15

Fans of the deadpan comedian Nathan Fielder’s offbeat reality series “Nathan for You” should quickly catch onto the vibe of his new show “The Rehearsal.” The premise is similar: Fielder helps ordinary people with their ordinary problems by going to absurd lengths. In this case, he prepares his clients for potentially stressful or uncomfortable interactions with their friends and families by hiring actors and constructing detailed sets, so that these men and women can practice what they want to say. Because this is a Fielder project, there are a few twists along the way, all intended to jolt the viewer into noticing how awkward and artificial even the simplest human behavior can be.

‘Rap Sh!t’ Season 1

Starts streaming: July 21

Issa Rae follows up her HBO dramedy “Insecure” with the more experimental “Rap Sh!t,” for which she is the head writer and creator, but not the star. Aida Osman plays Shawna, an aspiring rapper who makes ends meet by working at the front desk of a Miami hotel and doing favors — sometimes legal, sometimes not — for her friends.

Much of the show is framed through the cellphones the characters use to text each other, to post on social media, to make snarky comments about their rivals and to communicate with the not-always-reliable men in their lives. Like “Insecure,” this new series is about how relationships and careers have changed in the modern era. But the women in ‘Rap Sh!t” are more desperate, feeling anxious to make something exciting happen in their lives before they get stuck in a ***working-class*** rut.

Also arriving:

July 1

“Last Night in Soho”

July 10

“The Anarchists”

July 11

“Tuca &amp; Bertie” Season 3

July 12

“The Bob’s Burgers Movie”

“Edge of the Earth”

July 14

“FBoy Island” Season 2

July 21

“The Last Movie Stars”

July 26

“Bugs Bunny Builders” Season 1

July 27

“We Met in Virtual Reality”

July 28

“Harley Quinn” Season 3

“Pretty Little Liars: Original Sin” Season 1

New to Hulu

‘What We Do in the Shadows’ Season 4

Starts streaming: July 13

In its brilliant third season, this hilarious mockumentary about a Staten Island vampire colony took some unexpected narrative turns, becoming more about the existential ennui and centuries-old regrets that threaten to tear these immortal bloodsuckers apart. Season 4 will resolve last year’s surprising cliffhangers, which saw the moody Nandor (Kayvan Novak) set to return to his Middle Eastern homeland, the debauched Laszlo (Matt Berry) staying in New York to look after the newly reincarnated form of his annoying colleague Colin Robinson (Mark Proksch) and the bossy Nadja (Natasia Demetriou) heading to London to join the Supreme Vampiric Council. Much of the humor in this show is derived from the way these very different characters play off each other, so it shouldn’t be long before their paths cross again.

Also arriving:

July 1

“Feud” Season 1

“The Princess”

July 2

“Asking for It”

July 6

“Maggie” Season 1

July 7

“Rehearsals” Season 1

“Ultrasound”

July 8

“Minamata”

July 9

“Gold”

July 10

“Killing Eve” Season 4

July 12

“The Bob’s Burgers Movie”

July 13

“Solar Opposites” Season 3

July 14

“Victoria’s Secret: Angels and Demons”

July 18

“The Cursed”

July 19

“Aftershock”

July 21

“American Horror Stories” Season 2

“You Are Not My Mother”

July 22

“All My Friends Hate Me”

July 26

“Santa Evita”

July 29

“Hatching”

“Not Okay”

July 31

“A Day to Die”

New to Peacock

‘The Resort’ Season 1

Starts streaming: July 28

Fans of “The White Lotus” and “Only Murders in the Building” who are looking for another twisty, character-driven mystery in an upscale locale should check out this stylish dramedy, produced by Sam Esmail (“Mr. Robot”) and created by Andy Siara (the co-writer of the movie “Palm Springs”).

Set at an all-inclusive Mexican beach resort, “The Resort” has Cristin Milioti and William Jackson Harper playing a married couple on the brink of breaking up who stumble upon evidence of an old crime. The series jumps between the events 15 years earlier, filling the viewers in on the details of what might have happened, and the present day, showing the bickering heroes rediscover what they love and loathe about each other while they work together to crack the case.

Also arriving:

July 1

“The Bad Guys”

July 5

“Dateline: The Last Day” Season 1

July 7

“The Real Housewives: Ultimate Girls Trip” Season 2

July 8

“Trigger Point” Season 1

July 11

“Days of Our Lives: Beyond Salem” Season 2

July 14

“Hart to Heart” Season 2

July 19

“Love Island” Season 4

PHOTO: Chris Pratt as James Reece in “Terminal List.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY Amazon Prime FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 1, 2022

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[***What to Do With Our Covid Rage***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:639V-GSD1-JBG3-649H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 7, 2021 Saturday 14:30 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; sunday

**Length:** 1959 words

**Byline:** Sarah Smarsh

**Highlight:** We can start by being honest about our anger and where it comes from.

**Body**

In the spring, I received my Covid-19 vaccination shots from county health workers in an old building on the main street of a tiny Kansas town. My first dose came from a quiet nurse wearing a plastic visor over his N95 mask and a leather cowboy belt with ornate metal inlays. My second dose came from a smiling older woman who, when I reported with vague concern that I had experienced strong side effects from the first shot, patted me on the shoulder and said, “It’s better than a tube down your throat, hon.”

Fellow county residents waited their turn in muddy boots and faded work jackets while the April wind stirred their fields of early wheat. There was corn to plant, but they had found time to make long drives to what was then the only vaccination site in 500 square miles. Our ages, politics and backgrounds varied, but we were mostly white, rural people who wanted to live.

Today, the wheat has been harvested and the corn is high, but still roughly [*one in three*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations) people approved for the vaccine across the country has not yet received — in many cases, has willfully refused — a single dose.

Abetted by that slow rollout, Covid-19 has resurged. Following a short, beautiful moment of relaxed precautions while cases were down at the start of summer, we again don masks, change plans and worry about how to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe. Vaccination rates are on the rise as the hesitant become less so, but the coronavirus will likely be with us indefinitely. How does one process this brutal reality?

Many vaccinated Americans are tired, disgusted and eager to assign blame. Public health experts and government officials, [*including some Republicans*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations), have shifted from sensitive prodding to firm condemnation of those forgoing vaccination. Private conversations among the inoculated take an even less diplomatic turn: “We were so close, and these stupid, unvaccinated jerks ruined it for the rest of us.”

Fatigue and outrage are appropriate emotions, considering all that has been lost to Covid-19: lives, jobs, experiences, money, physical and mental health. But those feelings, if not properly channeled, can themselves take a heavy toll. What do we do with our anger?

\*

I am a progressive woman who resides in a conservative state. I am [*on record*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations) in this fractured political era as a proponent of maintaining connection across gulfs of understanding, with the caveat that this civic burden falls to people whose social privileges allow them to engage safely with the other side. But seeking to understand dangerous behaviors and beliefs is quite different from permitting them. By many accounts an amiable person, I once yelled at a truck stop full of unmasked people to read the sign on the goddamn door.

Fury — collective, generational, political, cultural, individual — is utterly familiar to me, more so than the happy serenity of my current life. I was a child in poverty during the 1980s [*“farm crisis,”*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations) when federal policies favoring big corporations devastated rural communities. Everywhere I turned, something was dying: the local grocery store, the family farm, the cancer victims whose water supply contained agricultural runoff. There was joy in my family, but there was also addiction, abuse and neglect that drew from a deep well of justifiable rage and sorrow.

Anger is a contagious energy that jumps quickly from one person to the next. It will seize your mind and body as its host. If allowed to explode, it will hurt others. If allowed to implode, it will hurt you. I had to learn early how to transmute it for the sake of my own survival. I found that it can be the source of a powerful alchemy. If we are up to the task, it could help us create something good together.

That alchemy begins with awareness. Are we justified in our indignation? Do we have the facts? If we do not understand the problem, our feelings are untethered from reality. Untethered anger tends to be unproductive and selfish, delighting our egos rather than directing us toward necessary action.

So when you are ready — and if you are never ready, whether because you mourn a loved one’s death or your altered future, I won’t judge — let us hold our rage in our hands and look closely to see what it contains.

\*

Our national conversation has reached the point where many Americans are done with any and all excuses offered by the unvaccinated. Some of the inoculated are not just self-righteous but downright venomous, arguing on social media that hospitals should refuse to admit unvaccinated Covid-19 patients, calling them trash and wishing them a painful death. Residents of blue America have pronounced this a red-America problem. “Our state did a great job fighting the pandemic,” one person tweeted. “Our reward? The mouth-breathing knuckle-draggers in adjacent red states flooded their hospitals and spilled over into ours.”

Old political resentments have found a new outlet in the fraught vaccine debate. “I’ve been pissed off since Reagan was elected,” another Twitter user quipped in a thread parsing the emotions of the vaccinated. Exhausted, despairing minds find comfort in turning complex realities into simple, opposing categories. The noble, upstanding vaccinated American and the selfish, stupid, unvaccinated one. The good liberal citizen and the far-right anti-vaxxer.

Available images reinforce these notions. A vocal contingent of conservatives appears at meetings holding hypocritical signs about liberty, on the Internet sharing memes about liberal sheep, on the nightly news spitting on public health officials. They command attention, and their share of the unvaccinated will increase as more persuadable people get their shots. But they are not yet the [*overwhelming majority*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations) of the vaccine reluctant. A [*study*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations) of survey results from March showed that 16 percent of eligible Americans refused the vaccine because of skepticism about the pandemic, marked by a belief in at least one conspiracy theory. The same study found that a higher number, some 22 percent, hadn’t gotten vaccinated because of concerns about cost, safety or systems that previously did them wrong. Millions more, of course, are children under 12 and those disqualified by underlying health conditions.

My white, ***working-class*** family contains liberal women and men who have been vaccinated; liberal men who have not for fear of losing a day of work to side effects; conservative men who refuse under the influence of disinformation; liberal women and men who have delayed for fear of the for-profit health care industry; and conservative women who are considering getting their first dose. My grandmother — a former Bernie Sanders voter, a childhood polio survivor and a strong compulsory vaccination proponent — was the first among us to get a shot.

I cringe when I see the rampant stereotypes on social media painting the unvaccinated as rural white folks, by now a frequent scapegoat for our country’s ills. “Spreadnecks,” I’ve seen them newly termed (as in, “rednecks” spreading the virus). Never mind that, per the C.D.C., the daily case rates in urban and nonmetropolitan areas [*closely track one another*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations).

This archetypal bumpkin villain of post-Trump America has long received too much credit in a country where Trumpism thrives in affluent, white urban communities bursting with college degrees. In handling the pandemic, such misdirection of attention keeps us from what we should be doing: trying to reach the vast group of people who might choose vaccination if barriers to access and knowledge were removed.

\*

One overlooked barrier, as ever in this country, is socioeconomic class. Polls conducted by the Kaiser Family Foundation earlier this year found that ***working-class*** people — white, Black, Hispanic, Democrat, Republican — were less likely to be vaccinated. Vaccination rates for Black and white college graduates, meanwhile, were almost identical. The so-called “uneducated” of all races and backgrounds are hampered not by a lack of good sense but by a lack of money and power. Their education status keeps their income low, and income predicts insurance status. When the highly contagious Delta variant was taking hold, uninsured Americans had the lowest vaccination rate of 22 subgroups examined by[*Kaiser*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations).

Having gone without health insurance for much of my life, I can attest that the experience does not promote trust in the health care system, better known to the uninsured as a crippling source of debt than a helpful provider of cures. The Center for Economic and Policy Research found that states with higher rates of insured people generally [*have higher vaccination rates*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations). People of color are disproportionately uninsured, as conditions of class — poverty and lack of education — intersect with systemic racism. Nonetheless, myriad news stories investigating the vaccination divide fail to mention the words class, education or income once.

The longer we spend furious at the bad actors among us, the further we move from the truth: That many unvaccinated people are scared just like us, and that with the right help and information, they would sit down next to nurses and pull up their sleeves. We must instead turn our anger into actions that help our cause.

We can demand public-health mandates, political blowback be damned. We can communicate with the cost-anxious and wait-and-see people who remain open-minded despite skepticism wrought by a lifetime of disadvantage. We can do good deeds to negate harmful ones, like donating money to a nonprofit health clinic when we see anti-science protesters on the sidewalk or in the news. We can also, in my opinion, occasionally tell those protesters to screw off, if it gets us to our next moment of grace. (I didn’t say I was enlightened.)

Most importantly, we can direct our rage not at lost individuals but at systems of power that made our grim national death count the only plausible outcome. Is it so shocking that a caste-based society that exalts individualism and prioritizes profit above wellness — one of the only industrialized nations without universal health care — would fail to rise to the challenges of a collective health crisis?

Despite our failings of national character, Americans were the fortunate few at the front of an eight-billion-person line, saved by stockpiles of quickly developed vaccines that poor countries around the world have struggled to access. We were among the first of our entire species invited to receive a tremendous feat of modern science into our blood — a choice that hundreds of thousands of Covid-19 victims, who died before vaccines were available to them, did not live to make. Those of us who get the vaccines, current data tells us, will almost certainly survive this pandemic and even a lifetime of seasonal, endemic Covid-19 outbreaks.

Maintaining that perspective can be hard when staying healthy requires keeping track of case counts, changing guidelines, the science of booster shots and the safety rankings of face masks. So when all else fails, if your anger at “the unvaccinated” feels unbearable, focus less on those whose actions are beyond your control. Remember how you felt last spring, at a city stadium or a suburban pharmacy or a rural community building, when you got a shot. How will you remember its blessing? What will you do with the life that it saved?

Sarah Smarsh is the author of “Heartland: A Memoir of Working Hard and Being Broke in the Richest Country on Earth.”

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations).

Follow The New York Times Opinion section on [*Facebook*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations), [*Twitter (@NYTopinion)*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations) and [*Instagram*](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations).

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joan Wong FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 9, 2021

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[***Artistic Flourishes Define A Big House in Rotterdam***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65M7-8GC1-DXY4-X0KR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 5, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 2; INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

**Length:** 1656 words

**Byline:** By Michael Kaminer

**Body**

A confluence of soaring demand, shrinking supply and low interest rates has pushed prices across the Netherlands to record heights.

A six-bedroom, five-bath house that is a ''work of art you can live in.''

$4.15 MILLION (3.95 MILLION EUROS)

Designed by the Dutch architect Erick van Egeraat, whose projects include museums, government buildings and residential towers around the world, this six-bedroom, five-bath house is just east of central Rotterdam, the Netherlands' second-largest city.

''The house is a work of art you can live in,'' said Leslie D.T. de Ruiter, managing partner of R365|Christie's International Real Estate in Rotterdam, the listing agent. ''It's very unusual for an architect this famous to build a private home. It's like hiring a three-star Michelin chef to prepare a meal.''

Known for surreal flourishes, Mr. van Egeraat topped the 5,306-square-foot home with an undulating, thatched roof whose supporting beams protrude ''like eyelashes coming from the house,'' Mr. de Ruiter said. He also designed the rooms with different ceiling heights and window shapes, prompting the owner to have furniture custom-made to suit the dimensions. While the sale doesn't include those furnishings, ''the owner could discuss it,'' Mr. de Ruiter said.

A light-filled entrance hall flows into an airy living/dining area with sloping 20-foot ceilings, curved windows and angled walls. A wood sliding door separates the dining room and the Gaggenau-equipped kitchen, where the center island has a sink and range built in. ''The kitchen would make a professional chef jealous,'' Mr. de Ruiter said. ''The owners did not consider cost when it was designed.''

The main level also features a room the owner used as an office and library, and a second space that became his wife's painting studio. Both rooms echo the curved lines and oversized windows of the great room.

Upstairs, three en suite bedrooms have dramatically inclined ceilings, angled built-ins and distinctive windows. Two have balconies. The principal suite's bathroom includes a large soaking tub and a long, slablike sink below cabinets concealed behind sliding doors.

The home's lower level has a family room, en suite bedroom and kitchen. Along with a media room, this floor includes a ''professional spa, with a sauna and steam bath,'' and a terraced back patio, Mr. de Ruiter said. A geothermal pump heats the home, he added, ''so heating costs are low.''

Rotterdam, with about 655,000 residents in the South Holland province of the Netherlands, is home to Europe's busiest port, along with offices for corporations including Shell and Unilever. ''It's the only city in the Netherlands that actually has a skyline,'' said Remko Schrijver, owner of the RE/MAX real estate agency in Rotterdam.

This house sits about five miles outside the city center in an affluent area known as the Golden Mile, once a bucolic landscape of small homes on large lots. ''Those homes have been replaced by big ones, and there's almost no more land to build on today,'' Mr. de Ruiter said. Rotterdam-The Hague Airport is about 10 miles northwest.

Market Overview

Through the pandemic, a confluence of soaring demand, shrinking inventory and low interest rates has pushed real estate prices across the Netherlands to record heights, according to Carola de Groot, senior economist for the housing market at Dutch financial-services group Rabobank. ''People could borrow more and buy more,'' she said. As a result, ''about 80 percent of homes sold above their asking price last year.''

Now, as interest rates soar and the war in Ukraine strains the Dutch economy, the market has begun to cool -- a bit. ''In January 2022, house price growth was 21.1 percent year over year. In March, it declined to 19.5 percent. So it's a bit less overheated, but still far from normal,'' Ms. de Groot said.

In central Rotterdam, where apartments make up more than 90 percent of the housing stock, ''you would see 70 or 80 people lined up to see basic apartments listed for 300,000 euros,'' said Ploni F. Bouman-de Wolf, owner of the Bouman Makelaardij agency in Rotterdam. ''There are simply too many buyers for too few homes.''

Rising bank rates have not tamped demand, she added: ''Buyers are just changing their searches, so more of them are competing for lower-priced homes.''

Rotterdam is bisected by the Maas river. Neighborhoods north of the river, including Kralingen, Hillegersberg and Schiebroek, are typically more prosperous. But the housing shortage has spurred significant development on the south side, ''which has been known as a ***working-class*** district,'' Ms. Bouman-de Wolf said. Along with conversions of terraced homes to multifamily dwellings, ''modern buildings are going up,'' she said, promising further transformation of the area's character.

According to Ms. De Groot, increases in Rotterdam ''follow the national pattern of accelerating price growth.'' In the first quarter of 2022, prices in Rotterdam rose 19 percent year over year, to an average of 420,000 euros ($481,000), Rabobank reported.

Ms. Bouman-de Wolf estimated average prices at about 3,000 to 5,000 euros a square meter ($300 to $500 a square foot) for apartments, ''depending on location,'' and 5,000 to 12,000 euros a square meter ($500 to $1,200 a square foot) for detached homes, depending on lot size and proximity to one of the area's lakes. Mr. Schrijver of RE/MAX added that detached homes go for up to 7,500 euros a square meter ($750 a square foot), ''and more for a waterfront property.''

Mr. De Ruiter of Christie's, who specializes in luxury properties, said his end of the market has soared, with the number of Rotterdam homes that sold for over a million euros doubling over the past five years. In May, the DutchNews website reported that the Netherlands now has 143,000 homes valued at more than one million euros -- nearly 10 times more than reported in 2013.

Nederlandse Vereniging van Makelaars, the Dutch the real estate association, reported that the national median price for an apartment rose to 4,497 euros a square meter ($450 a square foot) in the first quarter of 2022, with the median price for a detached home soaring to 3,817 euros a square meter ($380 a square foot).

''Rotterdam has gone up, but prices in Amsterdam can be double,'' according to Nathalie de Widt, owner of the Rotterdam Apartments real estate firm.

Who Buys in Rotterdam

Although immigrants make up more than half the population of this port city, ''the buyer pool in Rotterdam is 90 percent Dutch,'' said Sebastiaan van der Velden, managing partner at Kolpa van der Hoek | Sotheby's International Realty in Rotterdam. ''Foreigners who come mostly rent.'' Some corporate transfers may look to buy after renting for a year or two ''and seeing how expensive it is,'' he said.

''The fact is that the high earners in Rotterdam are Dutch by language,'' said Mr. Schrijver of RE/MAX. The foreign buyers he has seen recently have come from Ukraine, Moldova and Poland. ''We don't see too many Asian buyers,'' he said.

The growing presence of multinational corporations in Rotterdam has also attracted ''high-skilled workers from India,'' Ms. de Widt said. American buyers are less common, she said. ''When they do come, they're with families, looking for very big houses, in areas with good schools.''

Buying Basics

There are no restrictions on foreign buyers in the Netherlands, said Ingomar Souren, an attorney specializing in real estate at the Kneppelhout law firm in Rotterdam.

Notaries oversee property transactions. After agreeing on a price, the buyer and seller sign a sale agreement which the buyer can terminate within three days, after which the purchase is binding, Mr. Souren said. Once the contract is finalized, a notary does due diligence on the property, executes the sales agreement, and registers the deed on the new owner's behalf. Notary costs can total about 1,500 euros ($1,605), he said.

Foreign buyers have easy access to mortgages through Dutch lenders, said Peter Klaassen, senior manager for tax advice at the Rotterdam office of global accounting firm BDO. ''It's up to you and the bank,'' he said.

Because of the housing shortage, Rotterdam's city council has passed laws discouraging foreigners from buying rental properties in the city, with higher transfer taxes and capital-gains levies.

Websites

Rotterdam Tourism: rotterdam.info

City of Rotterdam: rotterdam.nl

Dutch government: government.nl

Languages and Currency

Dutch; euro (1 euro = $1.05)

Taxes and Fees

Buyers in the Netherlands pay a 2 percent transfer tax and no value-added tax, ''provided you're going to live in the property you're buying,'' Mr. Klaassen said. ''If you're buying to let, assuming you get permission from the local council, your transfer tax increases to 8 percent.'' That figure will rise to 10.1 percent in 2023, he said.

In 2021, to help first-time home buyers, the government exempted home buyers under the age of 35 from the 2 percent transfer tax on purchases up to 400,000 euros (that amount will increase to 440,000 euros in 2023). The exemption applies to foreign buyers as well, ''as long as you can attest in writing that the home is your main residence,'' Mr. Klaassen said.

And while buyers in the Netherlands pay no capital-gains taxes on resales, that's expected to change. The Dutch government has proposed capital-gains tax reforms for 2025 intended to ''lower the demand from private investors,'' according to a report from Dutch bank ING.

Real estate commissions in the Netherlands average 1 to 2 percent of the purchase price, said Mr. de Ruiter, adding that the annual property taxes on this home come to about 2,768 euros ($2,960).

Contact

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For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, sign up here. Follow us on Twitter: @nytrealestate.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/realestate/rotterdam-netherlands-house-hunting.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/realestate/rotterdam-netherlands-house-hunting.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: the six-bedroom, five-bathroom house near central Rotterdam features an undulating thatched roof with protruding beams

the living room ceiling rises to 20 feet at its peak

and a space on the ground level has been used as a library and office. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY R365|CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE)

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2022

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[***Can Democrats Find A Winning Message?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TG-6YV1-JBG3-62XW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 10, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 4; EZRA KLEIN

**Length:** 5748 words

**Byline:** By Ezra Klein

**Body**

President Biden's agenda is in peril. Democrats hold a bare 50 seats in the Senate, which gives any member of their caucus the power to block anything he or she chooses, at least in the absence of Republican support. And Senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema are wielding that leverage ruthlessly.

But here's the truly frightening thought for frustrated Democrats: This might be the high-water mark of power they'll have for the next decade.

Democrats are on the precipice of an era without any hope of a governing majority. The coming year, while they still control the House, the Senate and the White House, is their last, best chance to alter course. To pass a package of democracy reforms that makes voting fairer and easier. To offer statehood to Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. To overhaul how the party talks and acts and thinks to win back the ***working-class*** voters -- white and nonwhite -- who have left them behind the electoral eight ball. If they fail, they will not get another chance. Not anytime soon.

[Get more from Ezra Klein by listening to his Opinion podcast, ''The Ezra Klein Show.'']

That, at least, is what David Shor thinks. Shor started modeling elections in 2008, when he was a 16-year-old blogger, and he proved good at it. By 2012, he was deep inside President Barack Obama's re-election campaign, putting together the fabled ''Golden Report,'' which modeled the election daily. The forecast proved spookily accurate: It ultimately predicted every swing state but Ohio within a percentage point and called the national popular vote within one-tenth of a percentage point. Math-geek data analysts became a hot item for Democratic Party campaigns, and Shor was one of the field's young stars, pioneering ways to survey huge numbers of Americans and experimentally test their reactions to messages and ads.

But it was a tweet that changed his career. During the protests after the killing of George Floyd, Shor, who had few followers at the time, tweeted, ''Post-MLK-assassination race riots reduced Democratic vote share in surrounding counties by 2 percent, which was enough to tip the 1968 election to Nixon.'' Nonviolent protests, he noted, tended to help Democrats electorally. The numbers came from Omar Wasow, a political scientist who now teaches at Pomona College. But online activists responded with fury to Shor's interjection of electoral strategy into a moment of grief and rage, and he was summarily fired by his employer, Civis Analytics, a progressive data science firm.

For Shor, cancellation, traumatic though it was, turned him into a star. His personal story became proof of his political theory: The Democratic Party was trapped in an echo chamber of Twitter activists and woke staff members. It had lost touch with the ***working-class*** voters of all races that it needs to win elections, and even progressive institutions dedicated to data analysis were refusing to face the hard facts of public opinion and electoral geography.

Freed from a job that didn't let him speak his mind, Shor was resurrected as the Democratic data guru who refused to soften an analysis the left often didn't want to hear. He became ubiquitous on podcasts and Twitter, where Obama posts his analyses and pundits half-jokingly refer to themselves as being ''Shor-pilled.'' Politico reported that Shor has ''an audience in the White House and is one of the most in-demand data analysts in the country,'' calling his following ''the cult of Shor.'' Now he is a co-founder of and the head of data science at Blue Rose Research, a progressive data science operation. ''Obviously, in retrospect,'' he told me, ''it was positive for my career.''

At the heart of Shor's frenzied work is the fear that Democrats are sleepwalking into catastrophe. Since 2019, he's been building something he calls ''the power simulator.'' It's a model that predicts every House and Senate and presidential race between now and 2032 to try to map out the likeliest future for American politics. He's been obsessively running and refining these simulations over the past two years. And they keep telling him the same thing.

We're screwed in the Senate, he said. Only he didn't say ''screwed.''

In 2022, if Senate Democrats buck history and beat Republicans by four percentage points in the midterms, which would be a startling performance, they have about a 50-50 chance of holding the majority. If they win only 51 percent of the vote, they'll likely lose a seat -- and the Senate.

But it's 2024 when Shor's projected Senate Götterdämmerung really strikes. To see how bad the map is for Democrats, think back to 2018, when anti-Trump fury drove record turnout and handed the House gavel back to Nancy Pelosi. Senate Democrats saw the same huge surge of voters. Nationally, they won about 18 million more votes than Senate Republicans -- and they still lost two seats. If 2024 is simply a normal year, in which Democrats win 51 percent of the two-party vote, Shor's model projects a seven-seat loss, compared with where they are now.

Sit with that. Senate Democrats could win 51 percent of the two-party vote in the next two elections and end up with only 43 seats in the Senate. You can see Shor's work below. We've built a version of his model, in which you can change the assumptions and see how they affect Democrats' projected Senate chances in 2022 and 2024.

The ''Physics'' of Elections

Projection is an uncertain exercise, but that doesn't make it useless. There is, as Shor puts it, a certain ''physics'' to elections. How a state votes in presidential elections is largely how it votes in midterm elections. Partisanship and demographics are uncomfortably revealing and don't change much from year to year. None of this is inevitable or unalterable in the face of campaigns or catastrophe. But it's somewhat predictable, and attempting a prediction can force a confrontation with reality that would otherwise go ignored until it's too late.

This is the confrontation Shor is trying to force. The Senate's design has long disadvantaged Democrats. That's in part because the Senate overweights rural states and Democrats are a disproportionately urban coalition and in part because Republicans, in a bid for political advantage, added a flurry of states in 1889 and 1890 -- North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Idaho and Wyoming -- many of which largely vote Republican to this day. But that's been true for decades, and Democrats have held their own in the Senate. What's changed the equation, Shor believes, are several interlocking forces.

First, educational polarization has risen sharply in recent years, particularly among white voters. Democrats are winning more college-educated white voters and fewer non-college white voters, as pollster shorthand puts it, and Donald Trump supercharged this trend. There was a time when Democrats told themselves that this was a byproduct of becoming a more diverse party, as non-college white voters tend to be more racially reactionary. Then, in 2020, Democrats lost ground among Black and Latino voters, with the sharpest drops coming among non-college voters.

I want to stop here and say I believe, as does Shor, that educational polarization is serving here as a crude measure of class polarization. We tend to think of class as driven by income, but in terms of how it's formed and practiced in America right now, education tracks facets that paychecks miss. A high school dropout who owns a successful pest extermination company in the Houston exurbs might have an income that looks a lot like a software engineer's at Google, while an adjunct professor's will look more like an apprentice plumber's. But in terms of class experience -- who they know, what they believe, where they've lived, what they watch, who they marry and how they vote, act and protest -- the software engineer is more like the adjunct professor.

Either way, the sorting that educational polarization is picking up, inexact as the term may be, puts Democrats at a particular disadvantage in the Senate, as college-educated voters cluster in and around cities while non-college voters are heavily rural. This is why Shor believes Trump was good for the Republican Party, despite its losing the popular vote in 2016, the House in 2018 and the Senate and the presidency in 2020. ''Sure, maybe he underperforms the generic Republican by whatever,'' Shor said. ''But he's engineered a real and perhaps persistent bias in the Electoral College, and then when you get to the Senate, it's so much worse.'' As he put it, ''Donald Trump enabled Republicans to win with a minority of the vote.''

The second problem Democrats face is the sharp decline in ticket splitting -- a byproduct of the nationalization of politics. As recently as 2008, the correlation between how a state voted for president and how it voted in Senate elections was about 71 percent. Close, but plenty of room for candidates to outperform their party. In 2020, it was 95.6 percent.

The days when, say, North Dakota's Republicans would cheerfully vote for a Democrat for the Senate are long past. Just ask Heidi Heitkamp, the defeated North Dakota Democrat who's now lobbying her former colleagues to protect the rich from paying higher taxes on inheritances. There remain exceptions to this rule -- Joe Manchin being the most prominent -- but they loom so large in politics because they are now so rare. From 1960 to 1990, about half of senators represented a state that voted for the other party's nominee for president, the political scientist Lee Drutman noted. Today, there are six.

Put it all together, and the problem Democrats face is this: Educational polarization has made the Senate even more biased against Democrats than it was, and the decline in ticket splitting has made it harder for individual Democratic candidates to run ahead of their party.

Atop this analysis, Shor has built an increasingly influential theory of what the Democrats must do to avoid congressional calamity. The chain of logic is this: Democrats are on the edge of an electoral abyss. To avoid it, they need to win states that lean Republican. To do that, they need to internalize that they are not like and do not understand the voters they need to win over. Swing voters in these states are not liberals, are not woke and do not see the world in the way that the people who staff and donate to Democratic campaigns do.

All this comes down to a simple prescription: Democrats should do a lot of polling to figure out which of their views are popular and which are not popular, and then they should talk about the popular stuff and shut up about the unpopular stuff. ''Traditional diversity and inclusion is super important, but polling is one of the only tools we have to step outside of ourselves and see what the median voter actually thinks,'' Shor said. This theory is often short-handed as ''popularism.'' It doesn't sound as if it would be particularly controversial.

It is.

Popularism, Explained and Questioned

Shor's theory of popularism, at its heart, is a critique of the professional staffers, consultants and organizers who shape the Democratic Party's message, image and strategic choices.

''I think the core problem with the Democratic Party is that the people who run and staff the Democratic Party are much more educated and ideologically liberal and they live in cities, and ultimately our candidate pool reflects that,'' he said.

Nor is Shor's ire aimed only at the liberal wing of the party. Popularism isn't mere moderation. One of the highest-polling policies in Shor's research is letting Medicare negotiate prescription drug prices, but it's so-called moderates, like Sinema, who are trying to strike that from the reconciliation bill. To Shor, this is lunacy.

Shor believes the party has become too unrepresentative at its elite levels to continue being representative at the mass level. ''I don't think it's a coincidence that the people we've lost are likely to be low-socioeconomic-status people,'' he said. ''If you look inside the Democratic Party, there are three times more moderate or conservative nonwhite people than very liberal white people, but very liberal white people are infinitely more represented. That's morally bad, but it also means eventually they'll leave.'' The only way out of this, he said, is to ''care more and cater to the preference of our low-socioeconomic-status supporters.''

The Democratic strategists and analysts who Shor said are causing the party's problems seethe at his criticism and the influence he has commanded over the past few years. Among them, a few counterarguments dominate.

The first is that Shor doesn't really show his work. There's no comprehensive paper or experiment in which he has constructed and footnoted a full theory, in which his data can be rerun and his footnotes picked through. He sometimes refers to polling he conducted but doesn't release the underlying numbers and cross-tabs. To be fair, that's often because he can't: He conducts much of his polling on behalf of clients, and they own the results. But it frustrates those trying to assess the arguments he makes publicly.

''In the data world, if you take Shor on, you face intense backlash now,'' said Michael Podhorzer, the longtime political director of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., who's something of a godfather in Democratic data circles. ''You're seen as less rigorous or pleading a woke case. I'm in an unusual space: I'm an older white man with access to a lot of the data, so I can say it. I feel like he's found this weird sweet spot with the media where he never actually shows anyone the evidence for his claims. He just does interviews with reporters.''

This is somewhat unfair. Shor's tweets and even his comments are thick with citations to political science papers and regression tables. Compared to most pundits, he is amply footnoted. But it's true that compared to other data analysts, he's not. Speaking mainly through tweets and interviews lets him sidestep some of the standards that others in his profession are held to. In their view, Shor has cloaked himself in the aesthetics of data, but he's not doing the rigorous, reviewable work demanded of others in the field. Some of his most influential theories are plausible, but he has never fully laid out the evidence needed to prove them.

''In the summer, following the emergence of 'defund the police' as a nationally salient issue, support for Biden among Hispanic voters declined,'' Shor said in a March interview with New York magazine. ''So I think you can tell this microstory: We raised the salience of an ideologically charged issue that millions of nonwhite voters disagreed with us on. And then, as a result, these conservative Hispanic voters who'd been voting for us despite their ideological inclinations started voting more like conservative whites.''

It's a striking argument, and it fits Shor's broader theory of the case: Liberal Democrats were either backing or cowering before a politically toxic slogan that had taken over Twitter but was alienating them from their ***working-class*** supporters. And even though Biden publicly and repeatedly repudiated the idea, it hurt him anyway, because voters don't distinguish between different Democrats anymore.

In the same interview, Shor said he based this theory on ''extensive postelection surveys of 2020 voters'' he conducted with partner organizations. He told me he couldn't release the underlying numbers because they belonged to another group, but he sent me a table that showed the relationships between various issue positions and whether Latinos shifted their vote between 2016 and 2020, and it indicated that views on defunding the police were the strongest driver.

Other analysts, however, came to very different conclusions using more visible data sets. Robert Griffin, a research director at Democracy Fund, and Natalie Jackson, the research director of the Public Religion Research Institute, both tweeted that their polling data didn't show Latino voters moving to Trump as a result of the Floyd protests. But it's possible, as Shor noted in the same thread, that those polls could have had the same flaws that biased other polls toward Biden.

More work was done after the election to try to sort this out. EquisLabs produced a huge study of Latinos in the 2020 elections, conducting over 40,000 interviews with voters across 12 states. It found that Democratic policies did alienate ***working-class*** voters but that it wasn't ''defund the police'' that did it. ''For many who had jobs, there was a calculation to not rock the boat, a fear Biden would come in and shut down the economy,'' Carlos Odio, EquisLabs' senior vice president, told me. ''That's the baseline shift.''

EquisLabs' research found support for other theories, too, including that some Latino voters worried that Democrats would be too soft on border security and that others feared socialism. Odio also believes that because neither campaign emphasized immigration in 2020, conservative Latinos who were repelled by Trump's xenophobic rhetoric in 2016 felt able to vote for him in 2020. ''What doesn't come through is 'defund the police,''' he said. ''That feels like part of the elite discourse criticizing another part of the elite discourse. That was not part of the conversation happening at kitchen tables, when it mattered.''

There are other data points supporting Shor's views. He pointed to a regression analysis by Alexander Agadjanian, a political science Ph.D. student, that used public data to show that pro-police views were unusually potent in increasing the probability that a voter would switch to Trump, though somewhat less so for Latinos than for white voters. The problem with all of this regression data, though, is that voters who switched to Trump in 2020 might have adopted his views on policing rather than switched because of his views on policing.

Having spent a lot of time trying to untangle this debate, I'd say it left me sympathetic to those who wish Shor would release more of his data and make these arguments in thicker formats. ''I agree with David that 'defund the police' is an unfortunate slogan in a number of ways,'' said Sean McElwee, a co-founder of Data for Progress and a frequent collaborator of Shor's. ''I'm a little skeptical that it was particularly devastating.'' Again, the argument isn't that Shor is wrong that ''defund the police'' hurt Democrats but that he hasn't done the work to prove that he's right. ''There was never a comprehensive David Shor putting out a report showing that 'defund the police' cost us,'' McElwee told me.

The second level of disagreement is more fundamental: Many in the Democratic data world simply disagree that policy communication holds the power Shor believes it does or that the popularity of a message is as important as he thinks it is.

''There's no argument that saying unpopular things is better than saying popular things. My argument is it's not close to being an important enough factor to warrant attention,'' Podhorzer told me. ''If the object is for Democrats to win, that's a tertiary, at best, factor.''

The suspicion here is that Shor has come up with a class-polarized way of responding to class polarization. He's a smart, wonky nerd who thinks about politics in terms of polling and policy, and maybe he's projecting that onto the electorate, too. According to this line of thinking, even as he's trying to escape his ideological biases about what voters believe, he's replicating his biases as to how they think and act.

''It's almost laughable to me the notion that what people think about Democrats is made out of what Democrats say,'' said Anat Shenker-Osorio, the founder of the progressive firm ASO Communications and a principal on the Race-Class Narrative Project. ''I wish we lived in that world. I'd probably be on vacation. But that's not our world.''

Our world, Shenker-Osorio argued, is one in which the voters Democrats most need to reach are the ones paying the least attention. What they hear comes at the end of a long game of telephone, and they're only half-listening even then, as their kids are yelling and the bill collectors keep calling. If you start with that model of the electorate, you end up with different recommendations. ''A message is like a baton. It needs to be handed from person to person to person,'' she said. ''If it gets dropped, it's not persuasive. Unless you're testing for what the base -- what I think of as the choir -- is willing to sing, then you're going to be hard-pressed to get the middle to hear that song, to get the congregation to hear that song.''

Shor's critics argue that he's too focused on the popularity of what Democrats say, rather than the enthusiasm it can unleash. When pressed, Podhorzer called this theory ''viralism'' and pointed to Trump as an example of what it can see that popularism cannot. ''A lot of things Trump did were grossly unpopular but got him enormous turnout and support from the evangelical community,'' Podhorzer said. ''Polling is blind to that. Politics isn't just saying a thing at people who're evaluating it rationally. It's about creating energy. Policy positions don't create energy.''

Podhorzer also pointed to Biden: ''He's done much more than I thought he'd be able to do. All the things he's doing are popular. And yet he's underwater.''

What does create energy, Podhorzer thinks, is fear of the other side. His view is that Democrats' best chance, even now, is to mobilize their base against Trump and everything he represents. ''The challenge in 2022 is to convince people that they're again voting on whether or not the country is going in a Trumpist direction,'' he said.

This is an argument Shor is happy to have. ''I think the conventional wisdom has swung too far toward believing policy isn't important,'' he said. He agrees that enthusiasm matters, but it has to be enthusiasm for a message that doesn't alienate the undecided. ''A lot of politics is about what you talk about,'' he told me. You should sort your ideas, he said, by popularity. ''Start at the top, and work your way down to find something that excites people. But I think that what actually happens is people sort by excitement first. And the problem is the things that are most exciting to activists and journalists are politically toxic.''

Shor showed me, as an example, a set of environmental talking points he'd tested, in which the ones that mentioned climate change performed worst. ''Very liberal white people care way more about climate change than anyone else,'' he said. ''So when you talk about climate change, you sound like a weird, very liberal white person. This is why policy issues matter more than people realize. It's not that voters have these very specific policy preferences. It's that the policies you choose to talk about paints a picture of what kind of person you are.''

I should say that the polling differences here struck me as modest: The best environmental message on Shor's list increased Biden's approval rating by 1.7 percentage points, while the worst-performing message cut it by 0.4 points. On the other hand, a percentage point here, a percentage point there can be the difference between winning the White House and losing it.

Shor's example speaks to the hardest questions raised by popularism. ''Talk about your most popular, most energizing ideas'' isn't controversial advice. The real disagreements come on the ideas that don't poll so well. There are a lot of issues that Democrats want to talk about that Shor thinks they'd be better off not talking about.

Hillary Clinton ''lost because she raised the salience of immigration, when lots of voters in the Midwest disagreed with us on immigration,'' Shor said. This is where popularism poses its most bitter choices: He and those who agree with him argue that Democrats need to try to avoid talking about race and immigration. He often brandishes a table showing that among voters who supported universal health care but opposed amnesty for unauthorized immigrants, 60 percent voted for Obama in 2012 but 41 percent voted for Clinton in 2016. That difference, he noted, was more than enough to cost her the election.

This can read as an affront to those who want to use politics to change Americans' positions on those issues. ''The job of a good message isn't to say what's popular but to make popular what needs to be said,'' Shenker-Osorio told me.

Shor's rejoinder to this is that the best way to make progress on race and immigration policy is for Democrats to win elections. Obama's twin victories loom large in his thinking here, since he watched Obama's brain trust carefully decide what to avoid and the result was the election and re-election of the country's first Black president, to say nothing of all the policies he passed.

Shor is right about how the Obama campaign understood the electorate. David Simas, the director of opinion research on Obama's 2012 campaign, recalled a focus group of non-college, undecided white women on immigration. It was a 90-minute discussion, and the Obama campaign made all its best arguments. Then they went around the table. Just hearing about the issue pushed the women toward Mitt Romney. The same process then played out in reverse with shipping jobs overseas. Even when all of Romney's best arguments were made, the issue itself pushed the women toward Obama. The lesson the Obama team took from that was simple: Don't talk about immigration.

''You don't have the luxury of just sending one mobilization message that isn't going to be heard by a whole bunch of persuadable voters,'' Simas told me. ''So if we make immigration the central part of a message in Wisconsin, what's that going to do to the massive amount of non-college whites who're much more concerned about bread-and-butter economic issues?''

This is the kind of thinking Shor thinks Democrats have largely lost. ''Obama and his messaging team were very calculated and measured about that,'' he said. ''That's the piece we dropped. I think it's great to push the envelope and be ahead of history. But you want to be five years ahead of history, not 15 years.''

But one difference between 2016 and 2012 is that Romney was complicit in making economics the center of the campaign. Like Obama, he preferred to argue over tax policy and spending cuts and was plainly uncomfortable talking about immigration or race. He ran, self-consciously, as a former management consultant who would govern on behalf of America's makers rather than its takers. Trump descended a golden escalator to call Mexican immigrants criminals and rapists. What was Clinton supposed to do?

The implication of popularism is that Clinton shouldn't have heavily engaged Trump on immigration and race, no matter the provocations. Instead, she should have stuck to a higher-polling economic message. Shor's critics think that theory is, to put it gently, impractical. The media focuses on the points of controversy between the candidates, and Trump relentlessly weaponized the energy contained in America's deepest divisions. Clinton talked far more about jobs and the economy than about anything else on the campaign trail, but the comments that generated the most media attention and popular energy were the ones that engaged Trump's attacks.

But even if Clinton could have sustained Shor-level message discipline, would it have worked, or would the perception that Clinton wasn't standing up for her voters or their ideals have left large swaths of the Democrats' base demoralized?

''Look, he's right about a class and cultural divide,'' Odio said. ''He's right about a liberal establishment that's out of touch with ***working-class*** voters. He's right that Latino and Black voters used to be insulated from polarization and now aren't. But where he falls short is in investigating why that is. He's really missing a race and ethnicity lens. If you fail to incorporate group identity into the analysis, you really miss why Black voters have been voting at astronomically high levels for Democrats. Why have Latinos, who are more moderate and even conservative in his analysis, been voting for Democrats? There's a group threat that factors into their analysis. If you only talk to Latinos about immigration, you lose voters on the table. If you only talk to them about economics, you'll arguably leave more votes on the table.''

But if there's a narrowness to Shor's focus, there can be a dissonance in the arguments of his critics. On the one hand, they frame this moment in politics as existential, an era in which democracy itself is teetering on the edge of calamity. And in the next breath, they treat message discipline, of any sort, as an impossible and perhaps even useless ask to make of the Democratic Party. At times, their arguments carry an air of resignation.

''I don't think there's a short-term solution to the predicament we're in,'' Podhorzer said. ''There's not a set of things Democrats can say that will make them popular to the extent they can start winning the Senate. I don't think it exists.''

In a way, this is where Shor and his critics converge: They are both deeply pessimistic about the near-term chances for Democrats and thus for democracy.

What Democrats Need to Understand

Models can mislead. The demographic triumphalism that Democrats felt a decade ago has vanished, as reality proved more complicated than regressions. The same may be true here, too. McElwee, for one, thinks these disasters are being projected ''with more certainty than is warranted.'' He noted that the Democrats' new coalition may put them at a disadvantage in the Senate but college-educated voters are more likely to turn out in 2022. ''Educational polarization could be a stabilizing force for Democrats in midterms,'' he said. ''I think there's reason to believe, looking at Georgia and Nevada and California, that we now have a coalition that's much more robust in midterms.''

Trump may also prove unique in his ability to polarize the electorate along class lines. If he doesn't run again in 2024, will a Ron DeSantis or a Mike Pence really be able to generate the fury and fervor that Trump did in 2016 and 2020? His successors might polarize the electorate somewhat differently, just as Romney and John McCain did before him.

But no matter who Republicans nominate for president, Democrats face a terribly uphill battle in the Senate, and they don't seem to have a plan for what to do about it. If the stakes are as dire as they appear to be and Republicans are as dangerous as Democrats say, Shor is right that they need one. Now. And any such plan will require compromises and discipline that many Democrats will loathe.

''When I first started working on the Obama campaign in 2012, I hated all the last remnants of the Clinton era,'' Shor said. ''When I go back now and think about the fights between the analytics team and the consultants, about 80 percent of the time, they were right. There was an old conventional wisdom to politics in the '90s and 2000s that we all forget. We collectively unlearned those lessons over the past 12 years. We've told ourselves very ideologically convenient stories about how those lessons weren't relevant -- that tax phobia isn't real or we didn't need to worry about what conservative white people thought. And it turned out that wasn't true. I see what I'm doing as rediscovering the ancient political wisdom of the past.''

Sometimes, when I report on a debate, I emerge with a strong view on who's wrong. In this case, I think both sides are right. Democrats are often trapped in an echo chamber of their own making -- a problem Twitter has made immeasurably worse -- and they are too quick to dismiss evidence that their ideas and messages are alienating voters. The political system is stacked against them, and unless they are going to change it by adding states and reforming election laws, they need to campaign with the constant recognition that the pivotal voter is well to their right and skeptical of everything they say. On all of that, Shor is offering a warning Democrats should heed.

At the same time, I think he overstates the power of policy communication and the control Democrats have over the debates that will dominate politics. There is little Biden can do to stop Sinema from making a hash of his agenda and muddling his message, and Democrats can't, in reality, avoid talking about race and immigration and climate change, for reasons both practical and moral. Politics is also about changing what's possible tomorrow.

I think Shor overreads the experience he had on the Obama campaign: It's precisely because Obama was a thrilling, historic figure that he could tailor his message so carefully. Unless Democrats can conjure up a generational political talent for every election, they'll often have to mobilize their base in ways that might unnerve the uncertain or fight on ground that the other side has chosen. But that's precisely when a bit more of a Shor-esque obsession with polls and skeptical voters might help them most.

To a debate full of inelegant coinages -- ''popularism,'' ''viralism'' -- let me, with apologies, add one more: partyism. The core problem Democrats face is that almost all politics is now national. They are one party facing electoral disaster, and they will rise or fall together. Democrats cannot escape one another, no matter how they might try.

This, to me, is the most important part of Shor's argument: He is right to insist that the Democratic Party is an institution that is composed, at the top, of a narrow group of people and that is afflicted by many of their blind spots. Whether he is right about what those blind spots are or his critics are right that he is adding some of his own is a secondary concern. For the Democratic Party to chart any course out of the peril it faces, it must first accept that in the minds of most Americans, it is a party, a singular entity. And before that party can shape what voters think, it must find a way to see itself clearly and act collectively.

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The New York Times

June 22, 2021 Tuesday 15:31 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1889 words

**Byline:** Dana Goldstein

**Highlight:** The economist Emily Oster offers loads of data-driven advice about children and Covid-19. Many parents live by her words. Others say she’s dangerous.

**Body**

Emily Oster, an economist at Brown University, has a lot to say.

In July 2020, in the middle of the raging coronavirus pandemic, she wrote an [*opinion essay*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) suggesting that schools and child care centers might be able to reopen safely, noting that working parents “can’t wait around forever.” In her popular parenting books, she tossed away longstanding medical guidelines, arguing that an occasional sushi roll and glass of wine are safe during pregnancy and that breastfeeding is overrated. More recently, she has [*cast doubt*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) on whether students need to [*wear masks*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) or remain [*physically distanced*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) at school.

This steady stream of counterintuitive advice has made Dr. Oster a lodestar for a certain set of parents, generally college-educated, liberal and affluent. Many had first latched onto her data-driven child-rearing books. Her popularity grew during the pandemic, as she collected case counts of Covid-19 in schools and advanced her own strongly held views on the importance of returning to in-person learning.

Some parents [*said*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/), half-seriously, “Emily Oster is my C.D.C.”

But others — teachers, epidemiologists and labor activists — criticized her, pointing out that she was not an infectious disease expert, nor did she have any deep personal or professional experience with public education. (Her two children attend private school, as did she.) On social media, the reaction could be brutal, with people calling her a “charlatan” and “monster” pushing “morally reprehensible” positions that “endangered many lives needlessly.”

And those were some of the more polite critiques.

None of the pushback has deterred Dr. Oster. She is launching an [*ambitious*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) project to collect data on how schools operated during the crisis. She also has a new book, “The Family Firm,” that will be released in August, aimed at helping parents make decisions about schooling, nutrition, discipline and screen time.

“I am always out of my lane,” she said, jokingly, in an interview.

Dr. Oster emerged as a central figure in the vociferous debate about school reopenings. While not an educational or medical expert, she used her skills as an economist to make a case for in-person learning, using data and logic. And at a time when traditional guidance was confusing and contradictory — masks on or off? — many parents were drawn to her clear and consistent opinions. But data sets, as Dr. Oster learned, can’t completely capture the complicated calculations families and educators make about education during a pandemic.

Whitney Robinson, an epidemiologist at the University of North Carolina, has been critical of some of Dr. Oster’s writing. But she credits the economist with helping a relatively privileged set of parents, including herself, make practical decisions during the pandemic.

“That really is her gift,” she said. “Synthesizing quantitative studies and spitting out rough guidelines or ways of thinking that can guide choices for upper-middle class, urban, suburban, sort of coastal people.”

Speaking over Skype, Dr. Oster was very much the picture of pandemic motherhood. She sat in the basement of her home in Providence, R.I., wearing a casual black T-shirt, an old treadmill nearby. The room was far from stage managed, but it did buffer her from her two young children.

Dr. Oster said she doesn’t relish the heated debate about her. “I am, like, a tremendously sensitive person,” she said. “I feel bad about all of it, all of the time.”

Still, she has never shied away from contentious subjects, and her new career trajectory is a continuation of her boundary-crossing work. She has always enjoyed interpreting academic research on health for a broad audience, and has long been frustrated by what she perceives as impractical parenting advice, which offers blanket rules — “Don’t sleep next to your baby” — instead of research findings that individuals can use to make personal choices.

The same was true during the pandemic, Dr. Oster noted. “I’d get questions like, is it better to have my in-laws watch my kid or send them to day care?” she said. “We’ve been told to do neither, but that isn’t a choice” for working parents.

Indeed, the lack of great choices is one reason the school reopening debate has often been toxic, pitting parents and teachers against each other and one another. White and college-educated parents were more likely to want in-person schooling than ***working-class*** parents of color whose families were more likely to contract the virus or die from it, and who had more distrust of schools. Some teachers were eager to stay safe at home, teaching remotely, while others desperately wanted to return to their classrooms.

Amid all this, Dr. Oster stepped in to collect national data on Covid-19 cases in schools because, she said, the federal government had failed to do so. By last fall, the database she set up, seeded with information voluntarily submitted by school administrators, suggested that with simple precautions, schools could be operated without significant on-site transmission.

Her data work was discounted by some teachers’ union activists because it was funded, in part, by philanthropies that support nonunion charter schools. And it didn’t adhere to traditional research norms; the data collection wasn’t randomized, and initially it skewed toward private and suburban schools. But eventually, the database grew to include schools serving more than 12 million of the nation’s 56 million K-12 students, including all of the public schools in New York, Florida, Texas and Massachusetts. And despite its limitations, Dr. Oster’s conclusions were eventually echoed by research from [*the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/), [*the European Union*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) and many [*independent scholars*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/).

With a growing stash of evidence under her belt, Dr. Oster acknowledged that she became “more extreme” in her conviction that schools should be open, and wrote ever more prescriptively on the subject.

Through her free Substack newsletter and a series of opinion essays, she repeatedly summarized new research, reiterated that children were generally not at high risk to either catch or transmit Covid-19, and offered struggling parents the permission so many of them craved: to go forth carefully with summer camp, day care, in-person school and vacations.

But the question of how to behave during a pandemic is fundamentally different from the question of whether to breastfeed. In an environment of viral transmission, your choice potentially affects many others outside of your own family.

“That was the hardest to write about,” Dr. Oster admitted.

It turned out that many educators would not accept a coolly intellectual framework for balancing risk and reward, especially not one advanced from the environs of Brown University. Public schoolteachers had experienced sealed-shut classroom windows and bathrooms without soap. Backed by their unions, they wanted to work safely at home during the pandemic, just as many of their students’ parents were.

They had also observed that ***working-class*** parents of color were the least likely to want to rush back into classrooms during the pandemic. When urban schools did reopen, many teachers found themselves standing in front of near-empty classrooms.

Dr. Oster had envisioned parents and teachers logging onto school district dashboards, reassured by charts and graphs demonstrating low case rates in schools. But she discovered that data alone would not determine pandemic education policy, nor shape many parents’ choices, at least not in the country’s decentralized, yet highly bureaucratic public school system, rife with labor tensions and stratified by every disparity — race, class, region, politics — that defines American life.

“I had maybe somewhat of a naïve approach,” she said.

The fact that Dr. Oster wasn’t an infectious disease expert was, at times, a strength, noted Dr. Robinson, the epidemiologist. Dr. Oster did not assume incorrectly that Covid-19 would behave similarly in children to the flu, which initially led many experts to overstate the risks of opening schools.

Still, Dr. Robinson said, Dr. Oster’s advice is not equally relevant to all parents, given uneven rates of vaccination by region, race and income. Some parents, even this fall, may opt out of in-person learning.

In some of Dr. Oster’s recent writing, “There was a tone of, ‘It’s safe, it’s done,’” Dr. Robinson said. “But we can’t predict what is going to happen. Covid is definitely not over.”

Dr. Oster has repeatedly acknowledged that while children of all races appear to be equally unlikely to contract Covid-19 within school buildings, overall risks do differ by demographics. Nor is she cavalier about the pandemic’s progression. A recent [*newsletter on emerging variants*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) concluded, “we need to continue to be vigilant,” while returning to “some normalcy.”

Despite these caveats, Dr. Oster’s prominence has been galling to some educators.

Maya Chavez, a high school social studies teacher in Providence, worked in-person the majority of this school year. Rhode Island was [*one of the few liberal states*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) to push schools to reopen last fall, in part because of the influence of Dr. Oster and other Brown University experts; Dr. Oster spoke regularly to state officials.

“There is a serious disconnect between her idea of what school looks like and the reality,” Ms. Chavez said. At least 30 students learning in-person at her predominantly low-income school tested positive for Covid-19, among more than 8,000 such student cases statewide. That does not mean students caught the virus in school or spread it there, but it does illustrate the reality that people came into close contact with the virus within classrooms. Several of her students, many of whom live in intergenerational homes, had family members who were hospitalized or died.

“There is enormous emotional trauma,” Ms. Chavez said.

There have been moments of pullback for Dr. Oster. In March, she apologized after [*writing*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) in The Atlantic that unvaccinated children could be considered as protected against the virus this summer as vaccinated grandparents. “I didn’t stress that the situation is different for higher risk children, or emphasize the importance of equitable vaccine distribution,” [*she wrote*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) in response to heavy [*criticism*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/).

But on the whole, she sticks by her writing. There is also [*some*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) [*uncertainty*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/parents-need-facts-kids-covid-19/613744/) about whether opening schools increased virus rates in their communities as parents returned to work. But even if it did in some cases, Dr. Oster said she questions whether that justifies a policy that led to academic, social and emotional hardship for so many families.

Perhaps in-school contact tracing and testing could have been better. But “it wasn’t a mistake to open schools,” she said definitively, and more of them should have opened faster. She is sure of it. After all, she has looked at the data.

PHOTOS: “Emily Oster is my C.D.C.,” some parents said, even as others said her opinions put lives in danger. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JILLIAN FREYER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Clockwise from top: Social distancing in a Wausau, Wis., classroom last December; a rally to reopen schools in Jersey City, N.J., in April; a teachers’ protest in Summit, N.J., in August against returning to school while Covid-19 was still spreading at high rates. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JENN ACKERMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***New York’s Last Movie Clerk Knows More Than You Do***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6601-D8V1-JBG3-61R5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 21, 2022 Thursday 17:07 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1914 words

**Byline:** Alex Traub

**Highlight:** Will Malitek owns and operates Film Noir Cinema. If you’ve never heard of it, fine with him.

**Body**

Will Malitek owns and operates Film Noir Cinema. If you’ve never heard of it, fine with him.

As the founder and sole employee of Film Noir Cinema, Will Malitek appears to be the final movie rental clerk left in New York City.

While his industry collapsed, Mr. Malitek flourished. Film Noir began in 2005 as a walk-in closet of recondite DVDs angled into a Brooklyn commercial drag. In 2017, it became a spacious den of films and film memorabilia attached to a 54-seat cinema.

Mr. Malitek, 55, who has worked in New York movie rentals for more than 20 years, perpetuates a way of life that faded with the closure of rental and record shops. He is the storefront scholar, the ***working-class*** aesthete, the connoisseur whose respect must be earned but also the enthusiast whose recommendations might change your life.

A [*review*](https://gothamist.com/arts-entertainment/greenpoint-loses-one-of-the-last-dvd-rental-outlets-on-earth) [*of*](https://observer.com/2014/08/still-a-contender-some-video-stores-are-thriving-in-new-york-city/) [*five*](https://gothamist.com/arts-entertainment/the-battle-for-new-york-citys-video-store-culture) [*lists*](https://www.timeout.com/newyork/shopping/every-remaining-video-store-in-nyc) [*published*](https://www.nightmarishconjurings.com/2018/10/08/event-recap-joe-coleman-stealing-fire-the-mastery-of-the-outsider/) between 2014 and 2018 of New York City’s remaining movie rental places indicates that all except Film Noir have closed. The Lower Manhattan outlet of Alamo Drafthouse, a small chain of theaters, [*now does rentals*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/movies/alamo-drafthouse-kims-video.html), but it does not employ a movie rental clerk.

On a recent afternoon at Film Noir, which is located in the traditionally Polish section of Greenpoint, Brooklyn, Mr. Malitek nursed a plastic container of borscht and considered the shrine-like quality of his store: no furniture, no digital gizmos, just niche film posters (such as one for the 1984 superhero black comedy “The Toxic Avenger”) and wooden shelves with DVDs.

“I am trying to keep it as old school as possible,” he said, “so when people are here they feel like they’re in a different world.”

Catherine Curtin, an actress who grew up in New York and recently visited Film Noir for the first time, said it reminded her of nothing so much as the now-forgotten art house theaters of her youth, like the Upper West Side’s old Thalia, [*which closed in 1987*](https://www.nytimes.com/1987/05/11/nyregion/the-thalia-offbeat-home-of-classic-movies-is-closed.html).

Whether Film Noir is an emanation from the past or an alternate dimension unto itself, it strikes most who enter it as noble and somewhat inexplicable.

“I’d be like, ‘Do you have ‘Hiroshima, Mon Amour’?” Jess Magee, a filmmaker and onetime habitual renter, recalled in a phone interview. “He’d be like, ‘Come back tomorrow, 2 o’clock.’”

No matter the obscurity of the request, Ms. Magee would return to find Mr. Malitek with a DVD, a case and photocopied-looking DVD cover.

How did he do it?

“I didn’t ask too many questions,” Ms. Magee said.

The cinema’s programming seems designed to bewilder the public. Events include “Fear Noir,” which the [*schedule*](https://www.filmnoircinema.com/#calendar-section) identifies only as “a collection of short animated films to create a total Fear Noir in your mind” and “Cult Cinema,” or “a night of sheer cinematic madness dedicated to the most obscure films ever made.”

Alongside a few new indie films like the haunting [*“We’re All Going to the World’s Fair,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/movies/were-all-going-to-the-worlds-fair-review.html) movies recently on Film Noir’s calendar include “Tomato,” “Paradise” and “D.E.” — all listed without explanation of the plot or any identification of the director, the actors and the year of release.

Mr. Malitek does not care if a movie is likable; he wants it to shock, and therefore to be remembered, and he thinks that response can be heightened by shrouding the movie in mystery.

His taste mirrors his style. Contemporary mass-market American films are “propaganda,” he said; the internet “destroyed art.” But in underground, old and foreign cinema, Mr. Malitek finds the authenticity that he associates with the macabre.

He likes Japanese films best. “They don’t have those ridiculous happy ends,” he said. “They speak to the life.”

Mr. Malitek gives his own theater an enigmatic motto: “Here at Film Noir Cinema, we bring darkness to light, not light to darkness.”

He strikes patrons as a little shadowy himself.

Mitch Horowitz, a historian of alternative spirituality, has spent three years visiting Film Noir, which he calls “a little jewel box of the occult and the dark side.” The theater shows, he said, “certain horror classics or martial arts classics that you just don’t see anywhere else, including things you don’t find on streaming services.”

Mr. Horowitz has become close enough with Mr. Malitek that last month, he began hosting his own festival at Film Noir called “Chamber of HORRORwitz.”

Yet in a phone interview, Mr. Horowitz was startled to realize that he did not know Mr. Malitek’s last name. They communicate mainly through impromptu visits and handshake agreements.

Jason Grisell, an actor, artist and Film Noir regular, said he treasures the personal qualities of Mr. Malitek that make such half-intimate, half-distant relationships possible.

“In a culture that’s founded on overexposure, it’s a vanishing commodity,” Mr. Grisell said. “Mystique.”

‘It’s just this guy’

Mr. Malitek was born in the port city of Gdansk in 1966. “There was nothing in the stores except vinegar,” Mr. Malitek said. He found another world on Channel 2 of Polish TV, which showed American movies like “The Maltese Falcon” and “Touch of Evil.”

Mr. Malitek formed two boyhood dreams: To open his own cinema and to move to the United States.

He saved up for a bribe needed to obtain a passport. When he got one, at the age of 23, Mr. Malitek was gone within 48 hours. He used East Berlin as a jumping off point for the other side of the Iron Curtain and soon made his way to New York.

Learning about movies had also taken an enterprising and rule-breaking spirit. In Gdansk, Mr. Malitek would visit a flea market where dealers hid censored VHS tapes in backpacks and underneath tables. If you saw the secret police, you were supposed to tip off everyone else by whistling. During raids, whistles filled the market.

Today, Mr. Malitek sometimes responds to questions about himself like he is being interrogated by one of those undercover agents.

Before he opened the initial rentals-only version of Film Noir (also located in Greenpoint), Mr. Malitek’s first job in the industry was at a place in the Chelsea neighborhood of Manhattan. “From obscure, sick, perverted porn to Hollywood titles — everything was there,” he said. Yet Mr. Malitek, in spite of working at this store for five years, claims he does not remember its name.

Mr. Malitek answers general questions about Film Noir — much of its income comes from events hosted in the cinema, for example — but at a certain point he tends to reply, “I don’t want to talk about money.”

Kier-La Janisse, the founder of [*the Miskatonic Institute of Horror Studies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/11/arts/horror-film-school-miskatonic-institute.html), a film scholarship group that uses Film Noir as its venue in New York, described the theater as noirishly well suited for discussions of horror. Two open bulbs dimly illuminate lecturers, leaving darkness around them, like they are telling a ghost story. And, Ms. Janisse points out, the building used to house a funeral home.

An average screening at Film Noir draws a crowd of just a handful of people, all of them generally first-time visitors seeking an unusual night out.

The evening of May 5 was characteristic: Five young newcomers from Brooklyn showing up on a night advertised only as “film club” during which Mr. Malitek played the baroque Japanese noir “I, the Executioner” (1968).

It depicts not just rape and murder, but a serial campaign of rapes and murders by a man against a group of women in retaliation for their having raped a young boy (who also, naturally, kills himself).

The group generally agreed the surprise screening had jarringly offended the enlightenments and sensitivities of 21st century liberal progressivism.

Could they imagine returning to Film Noir?

“Honestly,” said Molly Walls, a 27-year-old book editor, “yes.”

Mr. Malitek prefers bending the minds of the few to entertaining the many.

Here lies the real mystery of Film Noir: that a place presenting itself as a business catering to the public is actually the fantasy world of its owner.

Mr. Malitek designed the theater himself. Thanks to the income from private events, his whims dictate the programming. He avoids checking the marquees of New York’s other independent cinemas, not wanting to be influenced by outside forces.

He appears at Film Noir when he wants. He answers his phone and email infrequently — you trek to Greenpoint if you really need to talk to him. He rewards the Film Noir faithful with the fruits of his learnedness.

“I don’t like to recommend films to people I don’t know,” Mr. Malitek said. “You have to know the taste of a person.”

All of this makes Film Noir underground even by the standards of New York’s underground film scene.

Sean Price Williams is a cinematographer and director who worked at the flagship location of [*Kim’s Video*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/07/27/movies/kims-video-closes-and-a-village-sensibility-dies.html) rental store on St. Marks Place, New York’s erstwhile headquarters of underground film, and who now hosts his own unofficial movie screenings at Kraine Theater and Roxy Cinema in Manhattan. Yet Mr. Williams said that, though he has visited Film Noir, he had never seen a movie there.

“The smaller his audience, the cooler and more pure it makes him,” Mr. Williams said. “It’s just this guy — it’s his personal collection, it’s his personal taste.”

Guide to the obscure

Mr. Malitek established that taste during 25 years of watching at least one movie almost every day. He has read hundreds of books about film and studied encyclopedias as esoteric as “The Definitive Guide to Italian Sex and Horror Movies.” As the last rental clerk, he may be the most expert suggester of movies in New York who is also accessible to any member of the public.

If you tell him you’re interested in the 1982 horror movie “Manhattan Baby” by the Italian director Lucio Fulci, he will beseech you to see Mr. Fulci’s 1979 “Zombi 2.” If you happen to mention that you loved “Le Samouraï,” the 1967 noir thriller by the French director Jean-Pierre Melville, he will have another French film of the same style handy when you next visit. If you enjoyed the 2010 Jason Statham and 50 Cent vehicle “13,” Mr. Malitek can give you “13 Tzameti,” the mid-2000s Georgian-French film on which it was based.

Mr. Grisell, the Film Noir regular, once chatted with Mr. Malitek about “The Denial of Death,” a 1973 book that investigates cultural attitudes toward mortality. Mr. Malitek suggested Mr. Grisell watch a series of Eastern European films, Mr. Grisell said, and in them he discovered a view of death — one with “rawness and aggressiveness but also spiritual qualities” — that seemed new to him.

Mr. Grisell felt hesitant to speak to a journalist about Film Noir for fear that it would become “too popular,” he said. “It would be at the risk of losing its freedom and the ability to express enthusiasm, because I think commerce at a certain point suppresses that.”

To be on the receiving end of Mr. Malitek’s special brand of enthusiasm might indeed be an honor, but he would hate for it to feel too pleasant.

A customer returned a movie on a sunny afternoon in May. “Not many laughs in that one,” he commented.

“It’s Czech,” Mr. Malitek replied.

What was the movie — some bloody but profound lesser classic?

The erudite recommender became the cryptic film noir character. Mr. Malitek was not naming names.

The movie was just “something weird,” he said. “That’s exactly what this place is all about.”

PHOTOS: Will Malitek in his film den. “I am trying to keep it as old school as possible,” he said. (ST1); Top, Film Noir opened in 2005 as a closet of DVD rentals and expanded in 2017 to include a 54-seat cinema. Center, the collection is eclectic and selected by the owner, Will Malitek. He also designed the theater, above. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ISAIAH WINTERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST4)

**Load-Date:** July 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[***How Adams's Struggle With Dyslexia Shapes His Policies as Mayor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KJ-FPT1-JBG3-619S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 2, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1631 words

**Byline:** By Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Body**

Mr. Adams was not diagnosed with a learning disability until college. Now, he is making dyslexia screenings a central policy issue.

When Mayor Eric Adams was a student at Public School 140 in Queens, his classmates teased him for struggling in class, he recalled. They once put a sign with the word ''Dummy'' on his desk, and he still remembers his fear of being asked to read aloud.

''You would just hope, 'Please don't call on me,''' Mr. Adams said in an interview.

It was not until college, after overhearing a documentary about learning disabilities being played in the library, that Mr. Adams discovered he had dyslexia. His academic challenges suddenly made sense.

When he later became a police officer and ran for public office, he never forgot or forgave how the school system had failed him and his mother, Dorothy, a house cleaner who raised six children in poverty.

''Mom had no idea where to get help from and navigating the challenges in the bureaucracy of the Department of Education,'' Mr. Adams said. ''We thought you just have to try harder.''

Now as mayor, he is reshaping New York City's entire approach to reading to try to make sure children like him do not fall behind.

Mr. Adams recently announced a sweeping plan to screen nearly all public school students for dyslexia and to pivot the nation's largest school district to more phonics-based literacy instruction. It could be his most significant policy achievement in his first term beyond his focus on crime.

Other elected officials have recently opened up about their disabilities: Gov. Gavin Newsom of California shared his experience with dyslexia; President Biden talked about his stutter during the 2020 race.

Mr. Adams's struggle with dyslexia was one of three formative experiences -- along with being beaten by the police as a teenager and overcoming diabetes in his 50s -- that are key to understanding him, according to Evan Thies, a longtime adviser.

Mr. Adams, the city's second Black mayor, often talks about policy solutions for those issues: police reform, promotion of a plant-based diet and dyslexia screenings.

The mayor recalled in the interview how he was reluctant to talk openly about his learning disability earlier in his career, because it affected his self-confidence. But he decided to embrace the issue during the mayoral campaign to show ***working-class*** New Yorkers that he understood their challenges because of his own experiences.

Now he wants children with disabilities to see that they can be successful.

''People need to see while I'm on this high-profile stage -- those children with learning disabilities, with different issues they're trying to overcome -- they need to see that they're going to be all right,'' Mr. Adams said.

The education plan will not be easy to implement, and it is unclear how much it will cost. It calls for testing hundreds of thousands of students, creating special programs for dyslexic students at schools in every borough and retraining teachers who teach children how to read.

By embracing phonics instruction, Mr. Adams is staking a clear position in the long-simmering ''reading wars'' between those who favor explicit instruction in the connection between letters and sounds, and those who support ''balanced literacy,'' a method that devotes less time to phonics and places more emphasis on allowing children to gravitate to books of their choice. That approach took hold in New York City under former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg.

For years, education advocates have pushed for major changes to address New York City's dismal reading scores. Less than half of students in third through eighth grade were proficient in reading in 2019, according to state test scores.

Experts fear that the pandemic has exacerbated those problems.

The mayor's plan has several pieces: Students will be screened for literacy three times per year; those who are identified for being at risk will receive additional testing; children with dyslexia will receive support at their current schools or can enroll at one of the two specialized programs at schools in Harlem and the South Bronx.

Teachers in kindergarten through second grade will be required to use a phonics-based curriculum, which teaches the 44 unique sounds in the English language known as phonemes. By next spring, teachers at all grade levels will participate in a two-hour introductory training on dyslexia.

Reading experts have praised the plan, but said that the details of the implementation would be key. Mark Seidenberg, a cognitive neuroscientist and reading expert at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said that all students could benefit from better reading instruction.

''The research is very conclusive about the importance of teaching children how to make the connections between print and spoken language, which is what we call phonics,'' he said. ''It has been overlooked in American schools for a long time.''

Carolyne Quintana, the city's deputy schools chancellor for teaching and learning, confirmed that the city is moving away from the balanced literary reading approach favored by Lucy Calkins, a professor at Teachers College at Columbia University, which was embraced by Mr. Bloomberg in 2003 and by Carmen Fariña, Bill de Blasio's first schools chancellor.

''That approach is a wonderful approach for students who already have those foundational skills,'' she said. ''But the reality is that in grades K-2, regardless of the homes they're coming from, we want to make sure they have really strong foundational mechanical reading skills.''

Professor Calkins is revising her reading curriculum to include structured phonics, and the Department of Education has said it will review her new materials to determine if they meet its standards.

As Mr. Adams and his schools chancellor, David C. Banks, talked to literacy experts, they said they came to the conclusion that the research backed phonics.

''Once we started digging into it, it was clear we were on the wrong pathway,'' the mayor said.

Some states like Mississippi and Tennessee have already moved to require phonics instruction. New York City's decision could prompt more school districts to follow suit.

Mr. Adams said that screening all children was the first step, and then the city would have to provide the services that children need to catch up. Experts believe that as many as 20 percent of students are dyslexic.

''That's the real secret of not diagnosing,'' he said. ''We don't want to give the services. Now you're going to have to give the services, and it's too expensive. We've got to get the services to children with special needs.''

The screenings fit with his broader criminal justice plans to reach young people before they get pulled into crime. He often cites the statistic that more than a third of prison inmates are dyslexic.

Early in his campaign for mayor, Mr. Adams was encouraged by an adviser to focus on his life story and the challenges he overcame.

Suddenly, he was talking about dyslexia at debates and campaign events.

''It was a change in me and my thoughts that all of those little handicaps that I thought of -- being arrested, a learning disability, working as a dishwasher -- all of that stuff came out in the campaign,'' he said. ''Those things that I thought were harmful turned out to be helpful for me to win the primary.''

Mr. Adams recalled having trouble learning to read. He had difficulty connecting letters on the page with sounds.

''I was called the D student, the dumb student,'' he said, remembering how he dreaded making the half-mile walk from his home in South Jamaica, Queens, to elementary school many mornings. ''You almost become sort of an introvert.''

Mr. Adams later attended Middle School 8 and then Bayside High School, a predominantly white school, more than a half-hour away by bus.

There were no individualized education plans for students with disabilities when Mr. Adams was in grade school in the 1960s and '70s.

Mr. Adams said he blamed himself for continuing to get poor grades. He joined the Seven Crowns gang, and still bears a large scar on the back of his head from a fight where he said he was hit by a bat with a nail in it.

He has said that he graduated in 1978, but according to his high school transcript, he actually graduated a semester late in January 1979. He said he took night classes to make up several credits, including an English course.

Then at 19, when he was a student at Queensborough Community College, he overheard the documentary about learning disabilities.

''I became curious, and when they finished, I checked out the documentary and listened to it,'' he said. ''It was like a light bulb went off in my head.''

Mr. Adams, now 61, adapted to learn in his own way. He attended John Jay College of Criminal Justice, rose within the Police Department to become a captain and received a master's degree in public administration from Marist College in 2006.

''When I studied for my promotional exams, I had the entire patrol guide -- thousands of pages -- on cassette tapes,'' he said of the police training manual. ''I'd listen all the time to it. That's how I retained information.''

The mayor's younger brother, Bernard Adams, who is now working for the mayor on his security team, recalled how Mr. Adams did his best to conceal his academic struggles, studying hard to overcome them.

''He put in the time and the effort,'' the mayor's brother said. ''I didn't know it was because he had to.''

As mayor, Mr. Adams has a different way of processing information, avoiding thick policy documents in favor of PowerPoint presentations. He has staffers review topics with him verbally.

''I am an oral guy,'' he said. ''My team laughs because Audible books are like gold for me.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/nyregion/eric-adams-dyslexia.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/nyregion/eric-adams-dyslexia.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, far right, with his family in 1974. Unaware that he had dyslexia, Mr. Adams struggled in school until he overheard a documentary on the subject while in college. ''We thought you just have to try harder,'' he said of dealing with his learning difficulties. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA OFFICE OF THE NEW YORK CITY MAYOR)

Mr. Adams's plans would create special programs for dyslexic students at schools in every borough. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA WATTS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Of Royal Weekends, Breeding and Class***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619Y-DH71-JBG3-654J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 18, 2020 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1698 words

**Byline:** By Anna Leszkiewicz

**Body**

In the new season, Diana Spencer's aristocratic breeding triumphs and Margaret Thatcher's middle-class tendencies horrify the royals. Here's a guide to the rigid world of the British class system.

This article contains spoilers for Season 4 of ''The Crown.''

LONDON -- Imagine you are invited to a black-tie dinner with the queen of England and the extended royal family at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, and it's extremely important that you make a good impression. You're asked to meet for drinks at 6 p.m. Do you arrive as the clock strikes in elegant evening wear, or do you wander in whenever, in an unbuttoned shirt, woolly sweater and muddy shoes?

If you answered with the former, then you have already failed the test, and the royal family are aghast. The queen might be smiling graciously, and brightly insisting that dinner (always at 8:15 p.m.) can be moved forward by over an hour, but the damage is done. At least you won't be alone: this is Margaret Thatcher's experience in an excruciating scene in the new season of ''The Crown.''

In the fourth season of Netflix's lavish show about the royal family, two significant new characters -- Thatcher (Gillian Anderson) and Diana Spencer (Emma Corrin) -- form very different relationships with Queen Elizabeth II (Olivia Colman) as a result of the extent to which they understand the bizarre, contrived intricacies of British upper-class etiquette and royal protocol.

Thatcher is first introduced to ''The Crown'' through the lens of the British class system. As the queen watches the news of her election, Prince Philip (Tobias Menzies) describes Thatcher in a sneering tone as ''the shopkeeper's daughter,'' to which Elizabeth replies, ''an alderman's shopkeeper's daughter, who worked hard and gained a scholarship to Oxford.'' The distinction -- in Britain -- is an important one.

Thatcher's father, Alfred Roberts, was a self-made and prosperous owner of two shops. He was alderman (an extinct local government position reserved for men of a certain self-importance, who also enjoy dressing up in robes) and mayor of the town of Grantham in the north of England, where the Thatcher family lived in an apartment above his shop.

Though Thatcher would later emphasize how much she lacked as a child -- including hot running water and an inside toilet -- her deprived home life was a result of her father's financial meanness, not poverty. As Hugo Young puts it in his book ''One of Us,'' the young Thatcher ''belonged to the rising petty bourgeoisie, not the beleaguered ***working class***.'' The mid-1930s was a time when 75 percent of British families were officially defined as ***working class***, but Thatcher's family belonged to the 20 percent that could be considered middle class.

All of this is complicated by the fact that Thatcher had elocution lessons to eliminate her regional accent, studied at Oxford University alongside Britain's privileged elite and climbed the social ranks when she married the affluent, upper-middle class Denis Thatcher. In November 1970, when Thatcher was the education secretary, The Sun newspaper asked resentfully, ''How did the grocer's daughter from Grantham become a Tory lady with a taste for large hats, a posh home, a wealthy husband and children at public school?''

''I think the queen was very puzzled by Margaret Thatcher, because she jumped class,'' Dean Palmer, the author of ''The Queen and Mrs. Thatcher: An Inconvenient Relationship,'' said in a telephone interview. Jumping into the upper class bracket is notoriously difficult in Britain, since, generally, the main way to get titles, land and ''good breeding'' -- the traditional cornerstones of the aristocracy -- is to inherit them. Mere money rarely cuts it. (Before Prince William married Kate Middleton, sources close to the royal family were quoted in newspapers bemoaning her wealthy -- but not aristocratic -- mother, whose faux pas included social climbing, chewing gum in public and an earlier career as a flight attendant.)

By the time she became prime minister in 1979, Thatcher looked and sounded posh, but she had very little in common with royalty. Still, a stickler for the rules and an ardent monarchist, Thatcher famously arrived early to her meetings with the queen and gave incredibly low, reverential curtsies. She admitted in her autobiography, ''The Downing Street Years,'' published in 1993, ''I was anxious about getting the details of procedure and protocol right.''

But biographers have observed that Thatcher's anxious disposition, pretentious accent and grandiose manner simply irritated the queen. Before Thatcher became prime minister, she was invited to Buckingham Palace as leader of the Conservative Party. ''On at least two occasions,'' Palmer said, ''she got dizzy and fainted, and the queen had to say 'Someone catch that woman -- again!'''

In the second episode, ''The Balmoral Test,'' the relationship between the queen and Thatcher sours during trips to the queen's private residence in Scotland. Once called ''the sweetheart of suburbia'' by The Newcastle Evening Chronicle, Thatcher had no interest in the country pursuits of shooting and fishing and did not bring the correct attire of tweeds, sweaters and wellington boots. A workaholic with little time for leisure, she shocks the royal family by working instead.

''If you're not interested in shooting or horses or dogs, what do you do?'' Palmer said. ''That Balmoral world is a very strange, backward world that doesn't exist outside of 'Downton Abbey' these days.'' In the show, Thatcher leaves the visit early, infuriated by the lifestyle of a family she increasingly saw as the idle rich.

If Thatcher failed ''the Balmoral test,'' ''The Crown'' shows Diana passing with flying colors. We first hear about the Spencer family when the queen is told that Charles is dating Sarah Spencer, Diana's older sister. ''Johnnie's girl?'' she responds. ''Oh, I rather like that idea!''

''Johnnie'' is John Spencer, the eighth Earl Spencer: an Eton-educated nobleman and member of the House of Lords who had served as an equerry (a kind of attendant) to both King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II. The connection to royalty is an old one: Diana's maternal grandmother was a friend of Elizabeth's mother, and Diana was named after an ancestor intended to be another Princess of Wales. The two families quite literally could not have been closer: Diana was raised on the estate of one of the queen's private residences: Sandringham, in Norfolk. Essentially, the queen was the family's landlord, until they inherited their own palatial estate when Diana was 14.

As the author bell hooks has noted, that Diana ''was from an upper-class background was obscured, and hers became a rags-to-riches story.'' The writer Hilary Mantel observed in a recent essay collection, ''Mantel Pieces,'' that, in some ways, the Spencers were more embedded in the British aristocracy than the royals: ''Though she was not born royal, her ancestors were ancient power-brokers, dug more deeply into these islands than the Windsors,'' she wrote.

By the time Charles had begun dating Diana, both the royals and the press were delighted by the suitability of the match. ''Her pedigree is perfect,'' one news reporter cooed. ''At that time it seemed imperative that the Prince of Wales should marry an aristocrat,'' Penny Junor, who has written biographies of both Elizabeth and Diana, said in an email. ''Diana seemed perfect in every way.''

Having experienced an aristocratic rural upbringing similar to Prince Charles's, Diana understood life at Balmoral. ''Diana had no difficulty fitting in with the royals,'' Junor said. ''She knew how to hold her knife and fork, and was used to servants. She seemed to fit in perfectly, and appeared to enjoy all the outdoor activities.'' A private secretary to the Queen praised Diana's ''wonderful instincts.''

But this was, to an extent, a performance. ''In reality she didn't enjoy yomping across the heather in the pouring rain,'' Junor said. Diana made this abundantly clear when, after their wedding, Charles took her back to ''Bloody Balmoral'' (as she would later call it) for the last leg of their honeymoon. Tina Brown, in her biography of the princess, called this the moment when the ''happy, gosh-I'm-all-muddy'' Diana disappeared.

Diana was so bored and overwhelmed by the numerous formal dinners with strange guests that the family, Brown observed, ''began to get the alarming realization that for a girl of her pedigree she was somehow a social novice.'' Though her childhood was aristocratic, it was solitary, and Diana found the constant social pressures of royal life exhausting.

Later episodes of ''The Crown'' also show Diana struggling with the intricacies of royal life, like whom she had to curtsy to first, even at the family's own private gatherings. In his biography, Andrew Morton wrote that Diana was ''deeply disenchanted with the protocol, the flummery and the artifice'' of the family, and ''the brittle formality'' of royal life. As she persisted with a more casual, less stuffy approach to her own relationships and duties, she was celebrated by the public but resented by the royals, becoming increasingly alienated from them.

Of course, the most important story of class in 1980s Britain is not one of upper-class etiquette. Thatcher's 11 years in power was a period of dramatic economic and racial inequality, and a worsening quality of life for the average Briton. As her policies shrunk the welfare state, opposed labor unions and sold off social housing, unemployment and child poverty rates doubled.

''The Crown'' only nods to this wider context in the story of Michael Fagan, the man who the show depicts breaking into the queen's bedroom in 1982 as an act of class protest. Colman's queen lets him voice his troubles, saying unemployment ''bothers'' her ''greatly'' and seems to have real sympathy for the plight of the working classes under Thatcher. In reality, the queen ''ran out of the room'' upon discovering him, Fagan told The Independent in 2012.

''A lot of people want to present the queen as a lefty at heart,'' Palmer said. ''I don't buy that at all.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/16/arts/television/the-crown-margaret-thatcher.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/16/arts/television/the-crown-margaret-thatcher.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Margaret Thatcher (Gillian Anderson, foreground) arrives in inappropriate dress for a day of outdoor pursuits at the Balmoral estate in Scotland in a scene from ''The Crown." (PHOTOGRAPH BY NETFLIX) (C1)

Above, the real royals Diana and Charles spent part of their honeymoon at the Balmoral estate in Scotland in 1981. Right, on ''The Crown,'' Gillian Anderson and Stephen Boxer play Margaret and Denis Thatcher, dressed to impress for dinner with the royal family but missing the mark. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB THOMAS/POPPERFOTO, VIA GETTY IMAGES

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**Load-Date:** November 18, 2020

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[***This Is Why We Need to Spend $4 Trillion; David Brooks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63RD-7D11-DXY4-X4RS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 30, 2021 Thursday 14:15 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 903 words

**Byline:** David Brooks

**Highlight:** When you’re facing a social crisis, it’s time to go big.

**Body**

I’ve spent the past few weeks in a controlled fury — and I’m not normally a fury kind of guy. Joe Biden, Nancy Pelosi and others are trying to pass arguably the most consequential legislative package in a generation, and what did I sense in my recent travels across five states? The same thing I sense in my social media feed and on the various media most-viewed lists.

Indifference.

Have we given up on the idea that policy can change history? Have we lost faith in our ability to reverse, or even be alarmed by, national decline? More and more I hear people accepting the idea that America is not as energetic and youthful as it used to be.

I can practically hear the spirits of our ancestors crying out — the ones who had a core faith that this would forever be the greatest nation on the planet, the New Jerusalem, the last best hope of earth.

My ancestors were aspiring immigrants and understood where the beating heart of the nation resided: with the ***working class*** and the middle class, the ones depicted by Willa Cather, James Agee and Ralph Ellison or in “The Honeymooners,” “The Best Years of Our Lives” and “On the Waterfront.” There was a time when the phrase “the common man” was a source of pride and a high compliment.

Over the past few decades there has been a redistribution of dignity — upward. From Reagan through Romney, the Republicans valorized entrepreneurs, C.E.O.s and Wall Street. The Democratic Party became dominated by people in the creative class, who attended competitive colleges, moved to affluent metro areas, married each other and ladled advantages onto their kids so they could leap even farther ahead.

There was a bipartisan embrace of a culture of individualism, which opens up a lot of space for people with resources and social support but means loneliness and abandonment for people without. Four years of college became the definition of the good life, which left roughly two-thirds of the country out.

And so came the crisis that Biden was elected to address — the poisonous combination of elite insularity and vicious populist resentment.

Read again Robert Kagan’s foreboding Washington Post [*essay*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/09/23/robert-kagan-constitutional-crisis/) on how close we are to a democratic disaster. He’s talking about a group of people so enraged by a lack of respect that they are willing to risk death by Covid if they get to stick a middle finger in the air against those who they think look down on them. They are willing to torch our institutions because they are so resentful against the people who run them.

The Democratic spending bills are economic packages that serve moral and cultural purposes. They should be measured by their cultural impact, not merely by some wonky analysis. In real, tangible ways, they would redistribute dignity back downward. They would support hundreds of thousands of jobs for home health care workers, child care workers, construction workers, metal workers, supply chain workers. They would ease the indignity millions of parents face having to raise their children in poverty.

Look at the list of states that, according to a recent analysis of White House estimates by CNBC, could be among those getting [*the most money per capita*](https://www.cnbc.com/2021/08/31/infrastructure-bill-map-which-states-get-the-most-money.html) from the infrastructure bill. A lot of them are places where Trumpian resentment is burning hot: Alaska, Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota.

Biden had it exactly right when he told a La Crosse, Wis., audience, “The jobs that are going to be created here — largely, it’s going to be those for blue-collar workers, the majority of whom will not have to have a college degree to have those jobs.”

In normal times I’d argue that many of the programs in these packages may be ineffective. I’m a lot more worried about debt than progressives seem to be. But we’re a nation enduring a national rupture, and the most violent parts of it may still be yet to come.

These packages say to the struggling parents and the warehouse workers: I see you. Your work has dignity. You are paving your way. You are at the center of our national vision.

This is how you fortify a compelling moral identity, which is what all of us need if we’re going to be able to look in the mirror with self-respect. This is the cultural transformation that good policy can sometimes achieve. Statecraft is soulcraft.

These measures would not solve our problems, obviously. In many large Western nations, there are vast tectonic forces concentrating wealth in the affluent metro areas and leaving vast swaths of the countryside behind. We don’t yet know how to do the sort of regional development that reverses this trend.

But we can make it clear that we value people’s choices. For years, there was almost an officially approved life: Get a B.A., move to those places where capital and jobs are congregating, even if it means leaving your community, roots and extended family.

Those were not desired or realistic options for millions of people. These packages, on the other hand, say: We support the choices you have made, in the places where you have chosen to live.

That fundamental respect is the key scarcity in America right now.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 1, 2021

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[***Zeldin, Fueled by Reinvention, Tries for an Upset in New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66SD-0C61-JBG3-62R5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 3, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2599 words

**Byline:** By Nicholas Fandos

**Body**

SHIRLEY, N.Y. -- As a young U.S. Army lawyer of unmistakable ambition, Lee Zeldin could almost see his future unfurling before him. It was his first stint in Iraq, and he was already imagining the kind of distinguished career in uniform that would have laid the groundwork for one in politics.

Then a Red Cross message arrived on the base where Mr. Zeldin was embedded as a captain with the 82nd Airborne Division. His girlfriend had gone into dangerously premature labor with twin girls. Doctors were not optimistic about the babies' survival. His commanding officer sent him home to mourn.

''This I vividly remember the emotion of,'' Mr. Zeldin, now a conservative congressman, recalled in a recent interview. ''My priorities became all about my daughters.''

The girls survived after months in the hospital. But rather than returning to Iraq, Mr. Zeldin took a desk job back at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, got married and then was discharged. At just 27, he found that the life he had imagined had veered off course.

It was not the first time, nor the last. As a high school senior here on the South Shore of Long Island, Mr. Zeldin sought a prestigious appointment to West Point, only to fall short. After leaving the Army in 2007, he almost immediately entered a race for Congress, hoping to jump-start his political career. He lost in a blowout.

But in every case, Mr. Zeldin has shown aptitude for finding a quick path to reinvention that has helped fuel his political ascent. Now, at age 42, it has put him closer than any Republican since George E. Pataki two decades ago to one of the nation's most influential political posts, the governorship of New York.

Though Gov. Kathy Hochul, the Democratic incumbent, remains the front-runner, Mr. Zeldin's late surge in the polls has shocked even political strategists and sent Democrats scrambling to prop up their candidate. With Ms. Hochul's huge war chest and a vast Democratic registration advantage, few expected Mr. Zeldin to come close to winning, and perhaps with good reason: He does not easily fit the profile of a New York power player.

In a state shaped by wealthy business interests and often governed by larger-than-life personalities and family dynasties, Mr. Zeldin is an outlier. He grew up in law enforcement households of modest means. He can be introverted and awkward with voters. And in a state dominated by the political left, he is probably the most conservative serious contender for the governorship in modern memory -- even voting to overturn the 2020 election on Jan. 6, 2021.

Yet a careful review of his public and private life, including two dozen interviews with family, friends, colleagues and critics, shows that Mr. Zeldin's emergence as a political force stems from decades of meticulous planning, comfort with taking risks, well-timed alliances with more powerful Republicans and, above all, a knack honed from a young age for what allies call adaptation but his critics view as a more cynical political shape-shifting.

Those qualities have been on full display in this fall's campaign, as Mr. Zeldin moved swiftly to tap into two powerful currents of discontent that Democrats appear to have misjudged and that threaten to scramble the state's usual political order: painful inflation eroding New Yorkers' sense of financial well-being and fears about rising crime.

''He's grabbed the right issues and hasn't let go,'' said Rob Astorino, who lost to Mr. Zeldin in this year's Republican primary.

But his instincts have also been evident as he tries to execute another on-the-fly transformation, playing down hard-line positions that served him well while he climbed the Republican ranks in Albany and Washington but are now politically inconvenient, while offering scant details on some of his latest policy proposals.

Among them are fights to limit abortion rights and gun control, and votes against legalizing same-sex marriage and in favor of eliminating the Affordable Care Act -- all in conflict with most New Yorkers' views. And though most days Mr. Zeldin avoids public mentions of former President Donald J. Trump, he was until recently one of Mr. Trump's most vocal defenders, a fact that Democrats have driven home in millions of dollars of ads.

''He comes across as your mildly opinionated next-door neighbor,'' said Tim Bishop, a former Democratic congressman who defeated Mr. Zeldin in 2008 but lost to him six years later. ''But debate him -- be on the receiving end of some poison-pen-type emails and postings -- and that's not who he is.''

'Nobody had already made it'

For many New Yorkers, the South Shore of Long Island evokes images of sand, summer and the superrich. That has almost nothing to do with Shirley, the ***working-class*** hamlet where Lee Michael Zeldin grew up and that left a clear imprint on his social and political worldview.

It was a predominantly white town of cops, small-business owners and nurses trying to make it on the outskirts of New York City's suburban sprawl -- the kind of voters Mr. Zeldin channels in his campaign.

''Nobody was wealthy. Nobody had already made it,'' Mr. Zeldin said. ''Every single person, whatever they were going to achieve in life, they were going to have to earn.''

His own family, which was Jewish, was no exception. After his parents' early divorce, Mr. Zeldin's home life was cleaved in two. His mother, a teacher, remarried a state trooper. His father was a fraud investigator and private detective who graduated from the New York Military Academy, Mr. Trump's alma mater, and later married a Nassau County probation officer.

At William Floyd High School, Mr. Zeldin stood apart and sometimes alone. When other students got high or in fights, former classmates said, he was busy taking college-level courses and playing varsity tennis and running track.

''Lee was driven in a direction to where he is now, he stayed out of trouble,'' said Frank Kazanecki, a classmate. ''There was plenty of trouble if you wanted it. I'm not going to say it's a rough school, because there are rougher out there, but in terms of the Island, the area doesn't have a great reputation.''

In 10th grade, Mr. Zeldin joined Youth and Government, recalling in the interview that his motivation was ''to pick up girls.'' He got hooked on politics instead. He was voted best debater by the statewide group and later served as lieutenant governor on an annual trip to mock legislate on the floor of the State Capitol.

''There was no doubt,'' said Spencer Gaines, an uncle. ''He had ambitions.''

After the appointment to West Point fell through, he returned to Albany to attend college at the state university in August 1998 and wasted little time setting a course that might get him back to the Capitol for real. He signed up for R.O.T.C., began working in the office of a Republican state senator, Kenneth LaValle, and was elected president of the campus Republicans.

Mr. Zeldin began law school, at the Army's expense, just days before two planes flew into the World Trade Center, and passed the bar at 23, making him the state's youngest lawyer at the time. By 2005, with two wars underway in the Middle East, he was stationed at Fort Bragg.

'Lee had a plan'

Since his first campaign, Mr. Zeldin has put his military service at the center of his pre-politics biography. He stresses that he served on ''the front lines'' in Iraq with fellow paratroopers, leveraging the reputation of the Army's famed 82nd Airborne Division.

The job was far from glamorous. Though Mr. Zeldin says he did parachute from a plane 18 times in training, as part of the Judge Advocate General's Corps, he spent much of his early military career in law offices working on tax returns, family disputes and courts-martial. ''Used car sales scams, near-usurious interest rate deals and threatening bill collectors became his passion,'' one superior wrote in a 2005 performance evaluation.

His stint overseas was not quite two months in the summer of 2006.

In the interview, Mr. Zeldin described it as a ''CSI: Miami-type mission'' in which he provided legal advice to a detainee operations mission during a brutal stretch of the conflict. Given the mission's secretive nature, it was difficult to independently corroborate details.

''My commander operated under the belief that everyone in the battalion should be participating in every mission, so I was in full gear kicking out doors and on foot patrols,'' he said.

In September, when his girlfriend went into labor at just 22 weeks, Mr. Zeldin raced back to Washington. He married her the following January in North Carolina, and the couple decided he would have to move to the Army Reserves.

''It was a drastic, sudden shift,'' Mr. Zeldin said.

But even before then, he had a political future in mind.

''Lee had a plan,'' said Cory Simpson, who lived with him near Fort Bragg. ''He was always going to do politics. That was very, very clear.''

Mr. Simpson recalled that at their shared house, Mr. Zeldin became a poker maven and learned to count cards in blackjack. He played video games and the piano, and delighted in pushing boundaries with his humor.

Mr. Zeldin said in the interview that he closed the door on politics after college for a career in uniform. But Mr. Simpson, who later ran for Congress himself, remembered that at home at night, serving in elected office never seemed far from his roommate's mind.

''He was thinking about and iterating on opportunities and races and numbers and what percent win and that stuff,'' Mr. Simpson said.

Indeed, almost a year to the day after his daughters' birth, Mr. Zeldin filed paperwork to run for Congress back home in Shirley, where he had returned to live with his wife, Diana Zeldin, who is Mormon and now works at a law firm.

'Ahead of his time'

In a state where power is often built around the political clubhouse and oversize personalities, Mr. Zeldin has always operated as an aloof -- if opinionated -- outsider.

''He was not a socializer, not a cocktail circle guy,'' said Chapin Fay, a former aide. ''Every time I was with him in Albany, he would go back to the hotel after session, he'd get a binder from staff filled with news clips, issues research, legislation, and he'd study.''

After Mr. Zeldin lost by 16 points to Mr. Bishop in 2008, Republicans -- including Kevin McCarthy, the future House Republican leader -- advised him to lower his sights and build up more methodically. He poured himself into a small law practice, and two years later, with the midterm tide moving in Republicans' favor, Mr. Zeldin flipped a State Senate seat, harnessing outrage over a Metropolitan Transportation Authority payroll tax in a way that would foreshadow his intense focus on crime in the present race.

In Albany, he allied himself with Dean Skelos, a fellow Long Islander and more moderate Republican who led the Senate. The proximity to power helped him deliver on promises to curtail the transit authority tax and fund a landmark program for veterans dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder and brain injuries.

In private, he was already discussing the possibility of a statewide run, and in public, he poked fun at his own ambition. During the Legislative Correspondents' Association's 2013 roast, he parodied Billy Joel's ''Piano Man'': ''Sing me a song, I'm a senator. Sing me a song tonight. Cause someday I might be a congressman, if I get enough votes from the right.''

''He was a perfectly pleasant, polite young man,'' said State Senator Liz Krueger, a liberal Democrat, who described Mr. Zeldin as a backbencher. ''He seems to have drank the MAGA Kool-Aid after he left us and just become more and more of a zealous right-winger.''

His conservative views were already evident, though. In 2011, he voted against legalizing same-sex marriage and in 2013, in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, opposed a new law expanding the state's assault weapons ban.

Those views spilled over into a 2014 rematch with Mr. Bishop in a district that had been steadily shifting rightward during the Obama years. This time, Mr. Zeldin vowed to repeal Obamacare and warned that illegal immigration was threatening the nation's safety. In another midterm rout year for Republicans, he gave up a safe Senate seat and won.

In Congress, Mr. Zeldin worked across the aisle on veterans' issues and parochial legislative priorities. He even opposed Mr. Trump's signature tax cut because it disproportionately punished high-tax states like New York.

But the League of Conservation Voters consistently gave him among the lowest environmental records, and abortion-rights groups labeled him an enemy. He also showed a willingness to meet with far-right groups, including the Long Island chapter of the Oath Keepers.

After Mr. Trump was elected, an alliance blossomed and helped rapidly build Mr. Zeldin's national profile. He signed up for Mr. Trump's first impeachment defense team, amplified doubts about the 2020 election and ultimately voted on Jan. 6, after the Capitol was sieged, to overturn election results.

Mr. Trump has since endorsed Mr. Zeldin for governor and helped him raise money. Some Republican allies have privately expressed misgivings.

''Frankly, I think it's pretty clear I would certainly have certified the election if I was there, but I can't put myself in his shoes,'' said Jack Martins, another Long Island Republican. ''Only he can explain why he felt the need to vote the way he did.''

By then, Mr. Zeldin was already eyeing his next step up: a run for New York's highest office. Everything in his experience suggested the timing -- the midterms after Democrats swept into power -- would make for the ideal conditions.

Even as he has softened some of his positions, like those on abortion, some of Mr. Zeldin's proposals around crime have already attracted legal and racial scrutiny. He has, for example, pledged to fire the district attorney in Manhattan, the first Black man elected to the office, on his first day as governor. And after criticizing Ms. Hochul for maintaining a state of emergency during the coronavirus pandemic, Mr. Zeldin has said he would declare a crime emergency to allow him to suspend the state's bail law. Democrats say the pledges are demagogy and argue that Mr. Zeldin has no serious plan on inflation, either.

But in a state where even Republicans have so internalized their own low chances of winning that the party often fails to field top-tier candidates for major offices, the very fact of Mr. Zeldin's competitiveness has also triggered unfamiliar enthusiasm.

To many of his supporters, including some moderate Democrats, the specific policies are less important than the message that Mr. Zeldin will stop at nothing to fight crime -- a message that has at times become unexpectedly personal.

In recent months, Mr. Zeldin became a regular presence at scenes of brutal crimes. Subway slashings. Shootings. Acts of hate against Orthodox Jews and Asians.

Then, in mid-October, one found him. While he was marching in a Columbus Day parade in the Bronx, gunshots erupted near his home, a freakish coincidence that sent his twin daughters into hiding.

Flanked by his family back home that night, Mr. Zeldin did not miss a beat when addressing reporters.

''We cannot surrender any street anywhere in the state of New York to criminals,'' he said. ''I'm standing in front of crime-scene tape in front of my own house. You can't get me more outraged than right now.''

Kirsten Noyes contributed research.Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/02/nyregion/ny-lee-zeldin-profile-governor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/02/nyregion/ny-lee-zeldin-profile-governor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Lee Zeldin in the William Floyd High yearbook.

Mr. Zeldin, a candidate for governor, grew up in Shirley, N.Y., in Suffolk County, and moved back as an adult. (PHOTOGRAPH BY OHNNY MILANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

In the Army, he served with the Judge Advocate General's Corps and spent two months in Iraq. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA LEE ZELDIN CAMPAIGN)

Mr. Zeldin in 2015 with his wife, Diana, second from left, and twin daughters as he was sworn in as a House member. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SUSAN WALSH/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

Representative Lee Zeldin's emergence reflects decades of preparation, strategic alliances with powerful Republicans and an embrace of Donald J. Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN CLEETON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Mr. Zeldin was one of the first congressmen to take Mr. Trump's presidential run seriously, and they quickly forged an alliance after he became president. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A17) This article appeared in print on page A1, A17.

**Load-Date:** November 3, 2022

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[***Savala Nolan Takes a Hard Look at the White Gaze and Its Blind Spots; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6348-8F31-JBG3-61TK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 12, 2021 Monday 01:37 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 806 words

**Byline:** Tressie McMillan Cottom

**Highlight:** The essays in “Don’t Let It Get You Down” explore the in-betweenness of race, class and the size of a woman’s body.

**Body**

DON’T LET IT GET YOU DOWN

Essays on Race, Gender, and the Body

By Savala Nolan

In “The Art of the Black Essay,” the scholar Cheryl Blanche Butler declared that “the writer does not choose the essayistic form, the essay unfolds out of her.” The essays in Savala Nolan’s first collection, “Don’t Let It Get You Down,” unfold out of her complex relationship with being a big-bodied, mixed-race Black woman.

Nolan is a law professor at Berkeley who clerked in the Obama administration’s office of White House counsel; but these 12 essays are concerned less with her legal career than with her origin story and personal development, born as she was “in between” racial categories and their corresponding expectations. “I’m a mixed Black woman and what folks have sometimes called ‘a whole lot of yellow wasted,’” Nolan writes, “meaning I have light (yellow) skin ‘wasted’ by Black features.” Her father is not just Black and Mexican; he is also poor, “so poor we went to the bathroom in buckets under a ceiling hole repaired with tarp.” He was raised 20 miles from the Mexican border in California, and spent 20 years of his adolescence and early adulthood in and out of prison, condemned to stay poor. On the white, maternal side of her family, Nolan is a “Daughter of the American Revolution,” with a graduate education just like her mom has and trust-fund friends. Because of these mixed-status origins, the forces of social class hang over the entirety of this standout collection.

Nolan is writing into a long tradition, and its contemporary renaissance. From Du Bois’s “The Souls of Black Folk” to slave narratives, the Black essay is rich with stories of otherness and duality. Writers like Clint Smith, Emily Bernard, Nishta J. Mehra, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Claudia Rankine, Mychal Denzel Smith and Robert Jones Jr. (among many others) bring the modern essay form to bear as much on how the experiences of Blackness differ as they do on how they cohere. This embrace of the heterogeneity of Black womanhood is part of this book’s charm.

Another part is the author’s voice — vulnerable, but rarely veering into self-indulgence. Nolan is so hard on herself that at times one wishes she’d indulge herself more, with some grace, some forgiveness, perhaps a little humor. In “On Dating White Guys While Me,” she explores her naked desire for white male attention, a dynamic more commonly admitted by Black gay writers than by straight Black women. “I’d long sensed that the most succinct, irrefutable way to move up in the world was to be loved by a prototypical white man,” she writes of her relationship with an ex. “I.e., someone at the top.” It is a brutal, beautifully rendered narrative of the perceived “cultural magic in their approval”; Nolan’s holy grail, her passport to belonging. It is a gothic desire, to be objectified so totally that all of your Blackness and bigness disappears. But Nolan’s writing, her stark honesty, conveys how entirely rational this is, as a response to the ways racism, colorism and the patriarchy apportion power to women based on their attractiveness to white men.

That white patriarchal gaze echoes across the collection, with sometimes devastating consequences. In “White Doll,” Nolan recounts the end of her pregnancy and birth of her daughter, Gemma, when her prenatal pain, irregular heartbeat and vomiting went unheeded by her white doctors, despite several trips to the E.R. “We know Black women are more likely to die in childbirth regardless of socioeconomic status,” she writes. “I want credit for surviving a racialized pregnancy.”

“Don’t Let It Get You Down” dances in the spaces between binaries of Black womanhood. When Nolan met her future husband, a white, ***working-class*** high school dropout, she realized her earlier mistake in seeking white partners to improve her station in life: “I’d always wanted to be the empress; I was becoming more interested in the gladiator.” From her mother, “thin and frail, like a glass of skim milk,” she’s inherited white diet culture (“I grew up with my WASPy family, with ceaseless diet-and-binge cycles and forced trampoline jumping before dinner”); but from her father she’s inherited a body resistant to such punitive pressure to conform to white beauty standards. Taken together, these essays give the sense that Nolan has not yet solved herself for herself. But they also show how the pieces of our lives do not have to fit neatly in a frame in order to make a portrait worthy of attention.

Tressie McMillan Cottom, a MacArthur fellow, is an associate professor at the U.N.C. School of Information and Library Science and the author of “Thick.” DON’T LET IT GET YOU DOWN Essays on Race, Gender, and the Body By Savala Nolan 195 pp. Simon & Schuster. $26.

PHOTO: Savala Nolan (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDRIA LO)

**Related Articles**

* [*Five Essay Collections by Women of Color*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/12/books/review/thick-tressie-mcmillan-cottom.html)

**Load-Date:** August 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Mayor Is Urged to Expand Program That Helps New York's Poorest Ride the Subway***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64T5-P001-DXY4-X4XR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 17, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1295 words

**Byline:** By Ana Ley

**Body**

A city program gives 260,000 low-income New Yorkers half-price transit rides. Advocates and transit leaders are calling on the mayor to expand his investment.

Derek Jiminez relies on the New York City subway to get to a maintenance job that pays about $1,000 a month. The fare adds up fast, but since he got a half-priced MetroCard two years ago, his checks have stretched a little further.

With the extra money, he can afford things he couldn't before, like a pair of guitars he got on sale. But mostly, he said, he saves what he can.

''I hold onto it for now, for rainy days,'' said Mr. Jiminez, 56, who lives in East Harlem. ''The economy is really hurting.''

Mr. Jiminez is among 260,000 riders enrolled in the city's Fair Fares program, which subsidizes public transit fares for New Yorkers whose income falls below the federal poverty line -- about $28,000 a year for a family of four. Since the program started in April 2019, enrollment has grown nearly sevenfold.

Many elected officials, advocates and the leader of the transit agency that operates the subway have been pressing the new mayor, Eric Adams, to provide more financing for the program and expand eligibility for it, arguing that many more riders could benefit.

New York, where it generally costs $2.75 to ride the subway, operates one of the most expensive major public transit systems in the country, and despite popularity of the reduced fare program, it only reaches the poorest riders. Many ***working-class*** commuters, who rely on public transit every day, do not qualify and must dig deep to be able to ride.

Of the American cities that offer discounted fares, New York has among the strictest income eligibility rules for its program, requiring applicants to be at or below the federal poverty level.

Roughly 900,000 adult New Yorkers live in poverty, according to census data.

''It is imperative that public transportation be accessible, affordable, and equitable for all New Yorkers,'' Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker, said in a statement on Sunday, as she called on the mayor to double the program's funding, from $53 million to $106 million. The city promised that amount when the program began, but it was halved when the pandemic triggered a financial crisis.

Mr. Adams agreed on Monday to raise the funding, but only to $75 million. ''Since its inception, Fair Fares has proven to be a transformative program for so many New Yorkers struggling to get by,'' Mr. Adams said in a joint statement with the speaker.

Though Ms. Adams said that she was pleased with the additional funds, she added that the Council would continue to push for more money.

Discounted MetroCards, which can be used on the subway and on buses, can be a financial lifeline in New York, where for many residents public transit is a basic necessity.

''People are literally choosing between having a meal and paying for a MetroCard,'' said Danny Pearlstein, a spokesman for the Riders Alliance, an advocacy group.

Felix Cepeda, 41, makes a modest living, in part by doing community outreach for an immigrant advocacy group. He sleeps at his girlfriend's apartment in East Harlem or at a sister's home in the Bronx. He said he used to jump turnstiles before enrolling in Fair Fares last fall.

''It's very hard to be putting money that I don't have to spend on the card,'' Mr. Cepeda said. ''That is money I can use for food.''

Janno Lieber, the M.T.A.'s chairman and chief executive, said expanding the subsidized MetroCard program could help the transit system lure riders back as it struggles to emerge from the pandemic.

City leaders have ''talked about all these different priorities of addressing poverty and equity,'' Mr. Lieber said. ''They already made a commitment to this. They just need to fund it at a level that makes it real.''

The agency's finances, which have been battered by the pandemic-era loss of ridership, have been stabilized by infusions of federal aid, as well as millions in state money allocated by Gov. Kathy Hochul to help delay planned fare hikes. But the M.T.A. still faces a $1.4 billion deficit in 2025.

Mr. Adams's first proposed budget is due Wednesday and transit advocates say the city can afford to spend more money on the subsidized fare program. The city's current spending plan is $102.8 billion.

''For a relatively small percentage of the city's budget, it can make a very big difference,'' Mr. Pearlstein said.

A survey released on Monday by the Community Service Society, an antipoverty nonprofit, found that many low-income New Yorkers were not aware that the Fair Fares program even existed. The report also found that many poorer people, especially those who identify as Latino or Black, struggled to pay for subway or bus fares.

Beyond spending more money on the program, the group is urging officials to raise the income threshold for applicants and to promote Fair Fares more aggressively. Today, some of that outreach takes place through advertisements in subways, buses and some shops.

''We're using a poverty rate that applies to Mississippi and to Manhattan, which is crazy,'' said David Jones, president and chief executive of the Community Service Society and a member of the M.T.A. board. ''What may seem like a bonanza in Mississippi can barely pay the rent in the city of New York.''

Among larger American cities, New York's transit system is the third least affordable by percentage of income spent on fares, behind only Los Angeles and Miami, according to a recent assessment by ValuePenguin, a consumer research website.

At least 15 cities in the United States offer reduced-fare programs for low-income transit riders, according to a study published last summer in Transportation Research Record, an academic journal.

Low-income riders on the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority system can receive $6 off the cost of $12.50 weekly passes and $24 off the cost of $50 monthly passes through the Low-Income Fare is Easy program. Boston offers a more limited program for low-income riders who are 18 to 25 years old.

In New York, the Fair Fares discount can be applied to weekly and monthly unlimited ride cards, reducing the price of a weekly pass from $33 to $16.50 and a monthly card from $127 to $63.50.

The 50 percent discount is also available for the Access-A-Ride program, which offers door-to-door transportation within the city to people who can't use public transit because of a physical or mental disability.

Early on in the pandemic, some transit systems, including the M.T.A., temporarily stopped charging bus fare to limit contact between riders and drivers. In Boston, officials have decided to make at least three bus routes free through February 2024, in hopes of making the system more equitable.

The Fair Fares program was created after years of aggressive lobbying from transit advocates and anti-poverty groups, who argued that it would help the city address inequality.

Mr. Adams's predecessor, Bill de Blasio, was initially cool to the idea because he did not want to provide more money to the M.T.A. than the city already did.

He finally relented under pressure from the City Council, but the program's rollout was disorganized: it failed to start on time, people were confused about how to apply and it was not always clear who could qualify or what types of MetroCards would be offered at half price.

''A huge share of the population is low income, providing service jobs and ensuring, essentially, that our communities continue to be able to function. And they continue to ride transit in much higher numbers,'' said Yonah Freemark, a senior research associate at the Urban Institute. ''I think we have to see transit as this essential provision for people of lower incomes.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/nyregion/nyc-mta-discount-fare.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/nyregion/nyc-mta-discount-fare.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Derek Jiminez said his discounted MetroCard has enabled him to stretch his modest income and save more. ''I hold onto it now, for rainy days,'' he said. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Desiree Rios for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 17, 2022

**End of Document**



[***House Hunting in the Netherlands: A Villa With Eyelashes in Rotterdam; International real estate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KC-9SB1-DXY4-X129-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 1, 2022 Wednesday 12:35 EST

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1683 words

**Byline:** Michael Kaminer

**Highlight:** A confluence of soaring demand, shrinking supply and low interest rates has pushed prices across the Netherlands to record heights.

**Body**

A confluence of soaring demand, shrinking supply and low interest rates has pushed prices across the Netherlands to record heights.

A six-bedroom, five-bath house that is a “work of art you can live in.”

$4.15 MILLION (3.95 MILLION EUROS)

Designed by the Dutch architect [*Erick van Egeraat*](https://erickvanegeraat.com/), whose projects include museums, government buildings and residential towers around the world, this six-bedroom, five-bath [*house*](https://www.r365.nl/nl/woning/rotterdam/ringvaartweg-193/628785aef306ec030eac27f1) is just east of central Rotterdam, the Netherlands’ second-largest city.

“The house is a work of art you can live in,” said Leslie D.T. de Ruiter, managing partner of R365|Christie’s International Real Estate in Rotterdam, the listing agent. “It’s very unusual for an architect this famous to build a private home. It’s like hiring a three-star Michelin chef to prepare a meal.”

Known for surreal flourishes, Mr. van Egeraat topped the 5,306-square-foot home with an undulating, thatched roof whose supporting beams protrude “like eyelashes coming from the house,” Mr. de Ruiter said. He also designed the rooms with different ceiling heights and window shapes, prompting the owner to have furniture custom-made to suit the dimensions. While the sale doesn’t include those furnishings, “the owner could discuss it,” Mr. de Ruiter said.

A light-filled entrance hall flows into an airy living/dining area with sloping 20-foot ceilings, curved windows and angled walls. A wood sliding door separates the dining room and the Gaggenau-equipped kitchen, where the center island has a sink and range built in. “The kitchen would make a professional chef jealous,” Mr. de Ruiter said. “The owners did not consider cost when it was designed.”

The main level also features a room the owner used as an office and library, and a second space that became his wife’s painting studio. Both rooms echo the curved lines and oversized windows of the great room.

Upstairs, three en suite bedrooms have dramatically inclined ceilings, angled built-ins and distinctive windows. Two have balconies. The principal suite’s bathroom includes a large soaking tub and a long, slablike sink below cabinets concealed behind sliding doors.

The home’s lower level has a family room, en suite bedroom and kitchen. Along with a media room, this floor includes a “professional spa, with a sauna and steam bath,” and a terraced back patio, Mr. de Ruiter said. A geothermal pump heats the home, he added, “so heating costs are low.”

Rotterdam, with about 655,000 residents in the South Holland province of the Netherlands, is home to Europe’s busiest port, along with offices for corporations including Shell and Unilever. “It’s the only city in the Netherlands that actually has a skyline,” said Remko Schrijver, owner of the [*RE/MAX*](https://www.remax.nl/makelaar/remko-schrijver/) real estate agency in Rotterdam.

This house sits about five miles outside the city center in an affluent area known as the Golden Mile, once a bucolic landscape of small homes on large lots. “Those homes have been replaced by big ones, and there’s almost no more land to build on today,” Mr. de Ruiter said. Rotterdam-The Hague Airport is about 10 miles northwest.

Market Overview

Through the pandemic, a confluence of soaring demand, shrinking inventory and low interest rates has pushed real estate prices across the Netherlands to record heights, according to Carola de Groot, senior economist for the housing market at Dutch financial-services group [*Rabobank*](https://www.rabobank.com/en/home/index.html). “People could borrow more and buy more,” she said. As a result, “about 80 percent of homes sold above their asking price last year.”

Now, as interest rates soar and the war in Ukraine strains the Dutch economy, the market has begun to cool — a bit. “In January 2022, house price growth was 21.1 percent year over year. In March, it declined to 19.5 percent. So it’s a bit less overheated, but still far from normal,” Ms. de Groot said.

In central Rotterdam, where apartments make up more than 90 percent of the housing stock, “you would see 70 or 80 people lined up to see basic apartments listed for 300,000 euros,” said Ploni F. Bouman-de Wolf, owner of the [*Bouman Makelaardij*](https://www.boumanmakelaardij.nl/?lang=en) agency in Rotterdam. “There are simply too many buyers for too few homes.”

Rising bank rates have not tamped demand, she added: “Buyers are just changing their searches, so more of them are competing for lower-priced homes.”

Rotterdam is bisected by the Maas river. Neighborhoods north of the river, including Kralingen, Hillegersberg and Schiebroek, are typically more prosperous. But the housing shortage has spurred significant development on the south side, “which has been known as a ***working-class*** district,” Ms. Bouman-de Wolf said. Along with conversions of terraced homes to multifamily dwellings, “modern buildings are going up,” she said, promising further transformation of the area’s character.

According to Ms. De Groot, increases in Rotterdam “follow the national pattern of accelerating price growth.” In the first quarter of 2022, prices in Rotterdam rose 19 percent year over year, to an average of 420,000 euros ($481,000), Rabobank reported.

Ms. Bouman-de Wolf estimated average prices at about 3,000 to 5,000 euros a square meter ($300 to $500 a square foot) for apartments, “depending on location,” and 5,000 to 12,000 euros a square meter ($500 to $1,200 a square foot) for detached homes, depending on lot size and proximity to one of the area’s lakes. Mr. Schrijver of RE/MAX added that detached homes go for up to 7,500 euros a square meter ($750 a square foot), “and more for a waterfront property.”

Mr. De Ruiter of Christie’s, who specializes in luxury properties, said his end of the market has soared, with the number of Rotterdam homes that sold for over a million euros doubling over the past five years. In May, the [*DutchNews*](https://www.dutchnews.nl/news/2022/05/the-netherlands-has-143000-homes-that-would-cost-more-than-e1-million/) website reported that the Netherlands now has 143,000 homes valued at more than one million euros — nearly 10 times more than reported in 2013.

[*Nederlandse Vereniging van Makelaars*](https://www.nvm.nl/expat/), the Dutch the real estate association, reported that the national median price for an apartment rose to 4,497 euros a square meter ($450 a square foot) in the first quarter of 2022, with the median price for a detached home soaring to 3,817 euros a square meter ($380 a square foot).

“Rotterdam has gone up, but prices in Amsterdam can be double,” according to Nathalie de Widt, owner of the [*Rotterdam Apartments*](https://rotterdamapartments.com/en) real estate firm.

Who Buys in Rotterdam

Although immigrants make up more than [*half the population*](https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/TCM_Cities_Rotterdam.pdf) of this port city, “the buyer pool in Rotterdam is 90 percent Dutch,” said Sebastiaan van der Velden, managing partner at [*Kolpa van der Hoek | Sotheby’s International Realty*](https://www.kolpavanderhoek.com/) in Rotterdam. “Foreigners who come mostly rent.” Some corporate transfers may look to buy after renting for a year or two “and seeing how expensive it is,” he said.

“The fact is that the high earners in Rotterdam are Dutch by language,” said Mr. Schrijver of RE/MAX. The foreign buyers he has seen recently have come from Ukraine, Moldova and Poland. “We don’t see too many Asian buyers,” he said.

The growing [*presence*](https://www.glassdoor.com/Explore/top-companies-rotterdam_IL.14,23_IM1109.htm) of multinational corporations in Rotterdam has also attracted “high-skilled workers from India,” Ms. de Widt said. American buyers are less common, she said. “When they do come, they’re with families, looking for very big houses, in areas with good schools.”

Buying Basics

There are no restrictions on foreign buyers in the Netherlands, said Ingomar Souren, an attorney specializing in real estate at the [*Kneppelhout*](https://kneppelhout.com/) law firm in Rotterdam.

Notaries oversee property transactions. After agreeing on a price, the buyer and seller sign a sale agreement which the buyer can terminate within three days, after which the purchase is binding, Mr. Souren said. Once the contract is finalized, a notary does due diligence on the property, executes the sales agreement, and registers the deed on the new owner’s behalf. Notary costs can total about 1,500 euros ($1,605), he said.

Foreign buyers have easy access to mortgages through Dutch lenders, said Peter Klaassen, senior manager for tax advice at the Rotterdam office of global accounting firm [*BDO*](https://www.bdo.nl/en-gb/locations/bdo-rotterdam). “It’s up to you and the bank,” he said.

Because of the housing shortage, Rotterdam’s city council has passed laws discouraging foreigners from buying rental properties in the city, with higher transfer taxes and capital-gains levies.

Websites

* Rotterdam Tourism: rotterdam.info

1. City of Rotterdam: rotterdam.nl
2. Dutch government: government.nl

Languages and Currency

Dutch; euro (1 euro = $1.05)

Taxes and Fees

Buyers in the Netherlands pay a 2 percent transfer tax and no value-added tax, “provided you’re going to live in the property you’re buying,” Mr. Klaassen said. “If you’re buying to let, assuming you get permission from the local council, your transfer tax increases to 8 percent.” That figure will rise to 10.1 percent in 2023, he said.

In 2021, to help first-time home buyers, the government exempted home buyers under the age of 35 from the 2 percent transfer tax on purchases up to 400,000 euros (that amount will increase to 440,000 euros in 2023). The exemption applies to foreign buyers as well, “as long as you can attest in writing that the home is your main residence,” Mr. Klaassen said.

And while buyers in the Netherlands pay no capital-gains taxes on resales, that’s expected to change. The Dutch government has proposed capital-gains tax reforms for 2025 intended to “lower the demand from private investors,” according to a report from Dutch bank [*ING*](https://think.ing.com/articles/netherlands-house-price-to-rise-more-slowly-in-2022).

Real estate commissions in the Netherlands average 1 to 2 percent of the purchase price, said Mr. de Ruiter, adding that the annual property taxes on this home come to about 2,768 euros ($2,960).

Contact

Leslie D.T. de Ruiter, [*R365|Christie’s International Real Estate*](https://www.christiesrealestate.com/associate/170-a-78502-me281484/leslie-dt-de-ruiter), 011-31-10-22-508-22,

For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, [*sign up here*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/realestate/). Follow us on Twitter: [*@nytrealestate*](https://twitter.com/nytrealestate).

PHOTOS: From top: the six-bedroom, five-bathroom house near central Rotterdam features an undulating thatched roof with protruding beams; the living room ceiling rises to 20 feet at its peak; and a space on the ground level has been used as a library and office. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY R365|CHRISTIE’S INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE)

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2022

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[***Minimum-Wage Debate Exposes New Fissures in the Republican Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:623G-1W01-JBG3-64XR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 27, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1476 words

**Byline:** By Alan Rappeport and Jeanna Smialek

**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.

For years, Republicans have embraced the economic arguments that were laid out in a letter this month 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 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.

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 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.

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.

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 and local minimum wage increases.

Yet many Republicans have seized on the budget office's job loss figure.In a column titled ''How Many Jobs Will the 'Stimulus' Kill?'' 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 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 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 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.

**Graphic**

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)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2021

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[***David Shor Is Telling Democrats What They Don’t Want to Hear; Ezra Klein***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63T1-PK01-JBG3-610N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 8, 2021 Friday 10:57 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 5706 words

**Byline:** Ezra Klein

**Highlight:** His forecasting model shows a looming disaster for Senate Democrats. Are they going to do anything about it?

**Body**

President Biden’s agenda is in peril. Democrats hold a bare 50 seats in the Senate, which gives any member of their caucus the power to block anything he or she chooses, at least in the absence of Republican support. And Senators Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema are wielding that leverage ruthlessly.

But here’s the truly frightening thought for frustrated Democrats: This might be the high-water mark of power they’ll have for the next decade.

Democrats are on the precipice of an era without any hope of a governing majority. The coming year, while they still control the House, the Senate and the White House, is their last, best chance to alter course. To pass a package of democracy reforms that makes voting fairer and easier. To offer statehood to Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C. To overhaul how the party talks and acts and thinks to win back the ***working-class*** voters — white and nonwhite — who have left them behind the electoral eight ball. If they fail, they will not get another chance. Not anytime soon.

[Get more from Ezra Klein by listening to his [*Opinion podcast, “The Ezra Klein Show.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/ezra-klein-podcast)]

That, at least, is what David Shor thinks. Shor started modeling elections in 2008, when he was a 16-year-old blogger, and he proved good at it. By 2012, he was deep inside President Barack Obama’s re-election campaign, putting together the fabled “Golden Report,” which modeled the election daily. The forecast proved spookily accurate: It ultimately predicted every swing state but Ohio within a percentage point and called the national popular vote within one-tenth of a percentage point. Math-geek data analysts became a hot item for Democratic Party campaigns, and Shor was one of the field’s young stars, pioneering ways to survey huge numbers of Americans and experimentally test their reactions to messages and ads.

But it was a tweet that changed his career. During the protests after the killing of George Floyd, Shor, who had few followers at the time, tweeted, “Post-MLK-assassination race riots reduced Democratic vote share in surrounding counties by 2 percent, which was enough to tip the 1968 election to Nixon.” Nonviolent protests, he noted, tended to help Democrats electorally. The numbers came from Omar Wasow, a political scientist who now teaches at Pomona College. But online activists responded with fury to Shor’s interjection of electoral strategy into a moment of grief and rage, and he was summarily fired by his employer, Civis Analytics, a progressive data science firm.

For Shor, cancellation, traumatic though it was, turned him into a star. His personal story became proof of his political theory: The Democratic Party was trapped in an echo chamber of Twitter activists and woke staff members. It had lost touch with the ***working-class*** voters of all races that it needs to win elections, and even progressive institutions dedicated to data analysis were refusing to face the hard facts of public opinion and electoral geography.

Freed from a job that didn’t let him speak his mind, Shor was resurrected as the Democratic data guru who refused to soften an analysis the left often didn’t want to hear. He became ubiquitous on podcasts and Twitter, where Obama [*posts*](https://twitter.com/BarackObama/status/1367580795360133124?s=09) his analyses and pundits half-jokingly refer to themselves as being “Shor-pilled.” Politico [*reported*](https://www.politico.com/newsletters/west-wing-playbook/2021/05/24/the-cult-of-shor-492985) that Shor has “an audience in the White House and is one of the most in-demand data analysts in the country,” calling his following “the cult of Shor.” Now he is a co-founder of and the head of data science at Blue Rose Research, a progressive data science operation. “Obviously, in retrospect,” he told me, “it was positive for my career.”

At the heart of Shor’s frenzied work is the fear that Democrats are sleepwalking into catastrophe. Since 2019, he’s been building something he calls “the power simulator.” It’s a model that predicts every House and Senate and presidential race between now and 2032 to try to map out the likeliest future for American politics. He’s been obsessively running and refining these simulations over the past two years. And they keep telling him the same thing.

We’re screwed in the Senate, he said. Only he didn’t say “screwed.”

In 2022, if Senate Democrats buck history and beat Republicans by four percentage points in the midterms, which would be a startling performance, they have about a 50-50 chance of holding the majority. If they win only 51 percent of the vote, they’ll likely lose a seat — and the Senate.

But it’s 2024 when Shor’s projected Senate Götterdämmerung really strikes. To see how bad the map is for Democrats, think back to 2018, when anti-Trump fury drove record turnout and handed the House gavel back to Nancy Pelosi. Senate Democrats saw the same huge surge of voters. Nationally, they won about 18 million more votes than Senate Republicans — and they still lost two seats. If 2024 is simply a normal year, in which Democrats win 51 percent of the two-party vote, Shor’s model projects a seven-seat loss, compared with where they are now.

Sit with that. Senate Democrats could win 51 percent of the two-party vote in the next two elections and end up with only 43 seats in the Senate. You can see Shor’s work below. We’ve built a version of his model, in which you can change the assumptions and see how they affect Democrats’ projected Senate chances in 2022 and 2024.

The “Physics” of Elections

Projection is an uncertain exercise, but that doesn’t make it useless. There is, as Shor puts it, a certain “physics” to elections. How a state votes in presidential elections is largely how it votes in midterm elections. Partisanship and demographics are uncomfortably revealing and don’t change much from year to year. None of this is inevitable or unalterable in the face of campaigns or catastrophe. But it’s somewhat predictable, and attempting a prediction can force a confrontation with reality that would otherwise go ignored until it’s too late.

This is the confrontation Shor is trying to force. The Senate’s design has long disadvantaged Democrats. That’s in part because the Senate overweights rural states and Democrats are a disproportionately urban coalition and in part because Republicans, in a bid for political advantage, added a [*flurry of states*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2019/09/when-adding-new-states-helped-republicans/598243/) in 1889 and 1890 — North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Idaho and Wyoming — many of which largely vote Republican to this day. But that’s been true for decades, and Democrats have held their own in the Senate. What’s changed the equation, Shor believes, are several interlocking forces.

First, educational polarization has risen sharply in recent years, particularly among white voters. Democrats are winning more college-educated white voters and fewer non-college white voters, as pollster shorthand puts it, and Donald Trump supercharged this trend. There was a time when Democrats told themselves that this was a byproduct of becoming a more diverse party, as non-college white voters tend to be more racially reactionary. Then, in 2020, Democrats lost ground among Black and Latino voters, with the [*sharpest drops*](https://cookpolitical.com/analysis/national/national-politics/democrats-lost-ground-non-college-voters-color-2020) coming among non-college voters.

I want to stop here and say I believe, as does Shor, that educational polarization is serving here as a crude measure of class polarization. We tend to think of class as driven by income, but in terms of how it’s formed and practiced in America right now, education tracks facets that paychecks miss. A high school dropout who owns a successful pest extermination company in the Houston exurbs might have an income that looks a lot like a software engineer’s at Google, while an adjunct professor’s will look more like an apprentice plumber’s. But in terms of class experience — who they know, what they believe, where they’ve lived, what they watch, who they marry and how they vote, act and protest — the software engineer is more like the adjunct professor.

Either way, the sorting that educational polarization is picking up, inexact as the term may be, puts Democrats at a particular disadvantage in the Senate, as college-educated voters cluster in and around cities while non-college voters are heavily rural. This is why Shor believes Trump was good for the Republican Party, despite its losing the popular vote in 2016, the House in 2018 and the Senate and the presidency in 2020. “Sure, maybe he underperforms the generic Republican by whatever,” Shor said. “But he’s engineered a real and perhaps persistent bias in the Electoral College, and then when you get to the Senate, it’s so much worse.” As he put it, “Donald Trump enabled Republicans to win with a minority of the vote.”

The second problem Democrats face is the sharp decline in ticket splitting — a byproduct of the nationalization of politics. As recently as 2008, the correlation between how a state voted for president and how it voted in Senate elections was about 71 percent. Close, but plenty of room for candidates to outperform their party. In 2020, it was 95.6 percent.

The days when, say, North Dakota’s Republicans would cheerfully vote for a Democrat for the Senate are long past. Just ask Heidi Heitkamp, the defeated North Dakota Democrat who’s now [*lobbying*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/09/wealth-lobby-buying-up-democrats-to-kill-bidens-tax-reform.html) her former colleagues to protect the rich from paying higher taxes on inheritances. There remain exceptions to this rule — Joe Manchin being the most prominent — but they loom so large in politics because they are now so rare. From 1960 to 1990, about half of senators represented a state that voted for the other party’s nominee for president, the political scientist Lee Drutman [*noted*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-bipartisanship-in-the-senate-is-dying/). Today, there are six.

Put it all together, and the problem Democrats face is this: Educational polarization has made the Senate even more biased against Democrats than it was, and the decline in ticket splitting has made it harder for individual Democratic candidates to run ahead of their party.

Atop this analysis, Shor has built an increasingly influential theory of what the Democrats must do to avoid congressional calamity. The chain of logic is this: Democrats are on the edge of an electoral abyss. To avoid it, they need to win states that lean Republican. To do that, they need to internalize that they are not like and do not understand the voters they need to win over. Swing voters in these states are not liberals, are not woke and do not see the world in the way that the people who staff and donate to Democratic campaigns do.

All this comes down to a simple prescription: Democrats should do a lot of polling to figure out which of their views are popular and which are not popular, and then they should talk about the popular stuff and shut up about the unpopular stuff. “Traditional diversity and inclusion is super important, but polling is one of the only tools we have to step outside of ourselves and see what the median voter actually thinks,” Shor said. This theory is often short-handed as “popularism.” It doesn’t sound as if it would be particularly controversial.

It is.

Popularism, Explained and Questioned

Shor’s theory of popularism, at its heart, is a critique of the professional staffers, consultants and organizers who shape the Democratic Party’s message, image and strategic choices.

“I think the core problem with the Democratic Party is that the people who run and staff the Democratic Party are much more educated and ideologically liberal and they live in cities, and ultimately our candidate pool reflects that,” he said.

Nor is Shor’s ire aimed only at the liberal wing of the party. Popularism isn’t mere moderation. One of the highest-polling policies in Shor’s [*research*](https://twitter.com/davidshor/status/1438648961158496260) is letting Medicare negotiate prescription drug prices, but it’s so-called moderates, like Sinema, who are trying to strike that from the reconciliation bill. To Shor, this is lunacy.

Shor believes the party has become too unrepresentative at its elite levels to continue being representative at the mass level. “I don’t think it’s a coincidence that the people we’ve lost are likely to be low-socioeconomic-status people,” he said. “If you look inside the Democratic Party, there are three times more moderate or conservative nonwhite people than very liberal white people, but very liberal white people are infinitely more represented. That’s morally bad, but it also means eventually they’ll leave.” The only way out of this, he said, is to “care more and cater to the preference of our low-socioeconomic-status supporters.”

The Democratic strategists and analysts who Shor said are causing the party’s problems seethe at his criticism and the influence he has commanded over the past few years. Among them, a few counterarguments dominate.

The first is that Shor doesn’t really show his work. There’s no comprehensive paper or experiment in which he has constructed and footnoted a full theory, in which his data can be rerun and his footnotes picked through. He sometimes refers to polling he conducted but doesn’t release the underlying numbers and cross-tabs. To be fair, that’s often because he can’t: He conducts much of his polling on behalf of clients, and they own the results. But it frustrates those trying to assess the arguments he makes publicly.

“In the data world, if you take Shor on, you face intense backlash now,” said Michael Podhorzer, the longtime political director of the A.F.L.-C.I.O., who’s something of a godfather in Democratic data circles. “You’re seen as less rigorous or pleading a woke case. I’m in an unusual space: I’m an older white man with access to a lot of the data, so I can say it. I feel like he’s found this weird sweet spot with the media where he never actually shows anyone the evidence for his claims. He just does interviews with reporters.”

This is somewhat unfair. Shor’s tweets and even his comments are thick with citations to political science papers and regression tables. Compared to most pundits, he is amply footnoted. But it’s true that compared to other data analysts, he’s not. Speaking mainly through tweets and interviews lets him sidestep some of the standards that others in his profession are held to. In their view, Shor has cloaked himself in the aesthetics of data, but he’s not doing the rigorous, reviewable work demanded of others in the field. Some of his most influential theories are plausible, but he has never fully laid out the evidence needed to prove them.

“In the summer, following the emergence of ‘defund the police’ as a nationally salient issue, support for Biden among Hispanic voters declined,” Shor said in a [*March interview*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2021/03/david-shor-2020-democrats-autopsy-hispanic-vote-midterms-trump-gop.html) with New York magazine. “So I think you can tell this microstory: We raised the salience of an ideologically charged issue that millions of nonwhite voters disagreed with us on. And then, as a result, these conservative Hispanic voters who’d been voting for us despite their ideological inclinations started voting more like conservative whites.”

It’s a striking argument, and it fits Shor’s broader theory of the case: Liberal Democrats were either backing or cowering before a politically toxic slogan that had taken over Twitter but was alienating them from their ***working-class*** supporters. And even though Biden publicly and repeatedly repudiated the idea, it hurt him anyway, because voters don’t distinguish between different Democrats anymore.

In the same interview, Shor said he based this theory on “extensive postelection surveys of 2020 voters” he conducted with partner organizations. He told me he couldn’t release the underlying numbers because they belonged to another group, but he sent me a table that showed the relationships between various issue positions and whether Latinos shifted their vote between 2016 and 2020, and it indicated that views on defunding the police were the strongest driver.

Other analysts, however, came to very different conclusions using more visible data sets. Robert Griffin, a research director at Democracy Fund, and Natalie Jackson, the research director of the Public Religion Research Institute, [*both*](https://twitter.com/rp_griffin/status/1367950877634535424) [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/nataliemj10/status/1370055573169967121) that their polling data didn’t show Latino voters moving to Trump as a result of the Floyd protests. But it’s possible, as Shor noted in the same thread, that those polls could have had the same flaws that biased other polls toward Biden.

More work was done after the election to try to sort this out. EquisLabs [*produced*](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d30982b599bde00016db472/t/60668f2a28dee76b4ffebc73/1617334072783/Equis+Post-Mortem+Part+One+%28Public+Deck%29+%281%29.pdf) a huge study of Latinos in the 2020 elections, conducting over 40,000 interviews with voters across 12 states. It found that Democratic policies did alienate ***working-class*** voters but that it wasn’t “defund the police” that did it. “For many who had jobs, there was a calculation to not rock the boat, a fear Biden would come in and shut down the economy,” Carlos Odio, EquisLabs’ senior vice president, told me. “That’s the baseline shift.”

EquisLabs’ research found support for other theories, too, including that some Latino voters worried that Democrats would be too soft on border security and that others feared socialism. Odio also believes that because neither campaign emphasized immigration in 2020, conservative Latinos who were repelled by Trump’s xenophobic rhetoric in 2016 felt able to vote for him in 2020. “What doesn’t come through is ‘defund the police,’” he said. “That feels like part of the elite discourse criticizing another part of the elite discourse. That was not part of the conversation happening at kitchen tables, when it mattered.”

There are other data points supporting Shor’s views. He pointed to [*a regression analysis*](https://agadjanianpolitics.wordpress.com/2021/03/27/is-the-relationship-between-police-attitudes-and-hispanics-shifting-to-trump-in-2020-distinctively-strong/) by Alexander Agadjanian, a political science Ph.D. student, that used public data to show that pro-police views were unusually potent in increasing the probability that a voter would switch to Trump, though somewhat less so for Latinos than for white voters. The problem with all of this regression data, though, is that voters who switched to Trump in 2020 might have adopted his views on policing rather than switched because of his views on policing.

Having spent a lot of time trying to untangle this debate, I’d say it left me sympathetic to those who wish Shor would release more of his data and make these arguments in thicker formats. “I agree with David that ‘defund the police’ is an unfortunate slogan in a number of ways,” said Sean McElwee, a co-founder of Data for Progress and a frequent collaborator of Shor’s. “I’m a little skeptical that it was particularly devastating.” Again, the argument isn’t that Shor is wrong that “defund the police” hurt Democrats but that he hasn’t done the work to prove that he’s right. “There was never a comprehensive David Shor putting out a report showing that ‘defund the police’ cost us,” McElwee told me.

The second level of disagreement is more fundamental: Many in the Democratic data world simply disagree that policy communication holds the power Shor believes it does or that the popularity of a message is as important as he thinks it is.

“There’s no argument that saying unpopular things is better than saying popular things. My argument is it’s not close to being an important enough factor to warrant attention,” Podhorzer told me. “If the object is for Democrats to win, that’s a tertiary, at best, factor.”

The suspicion here is that Shor has come up with a class-polarized way of responding to class polarization. He’s a smart, wonky nerd who thinks about politics in terms of polling and policy, and maybe he’s projecting that onto the electorate, too. According to this line of thinking, even as he’s trying to escape his ideological biases about what voters believe, he’s replicating his biases as to how they think and act.

“It’s almost laughable to me the notion that what people think about Democrats is made out of what Democrats say,” said Anat Shenker-Osorio, the founder of the progressive firm ASO Communications and a principal on the Race-Class Narrative Project. “I wish we lived in that world. I’d probably be on vacation. But that’s not our world.”

Our world, Shenker-Osorio argued, is one in which the voters Democrats most need to reach are the ones paying the least attention. What they hear comes at the end of a long game of telephone, and they’re only half-listening even then, as their kids are yelling and the bill collectors keep calling. If you start with that model of the electorate, you end up with different recommendations. “A message is like a baton. It needs to be handed from person to person to person,” she said. “If it gets dropped, it’s not persuasive. Unless you’re testing for what the base — what I think of as the choir — is willing to sing, then you’re going to be hard-pressed to get the middle to hear that song, to get the congregation to hear that song.”

Shor’s critics argue that he’s too focused on the popularity of what Democrats say, rather than the enthusiasm it can unleash. When pressed, Podhorzer called this theory “viralism” and pointed to Trump as an example of what it can see that popularism cannot. “A lot of things Trump did were grossly unpopular but got him enormous turnout and support from the evangelical community,” Podhorzer said. “Polling is blind to that. Politics isn’t just saying a thing at people who’re evaluating it rationally. It’s about creating energy. Policy positions don’t create energy.”

Podhorzer also pointed to Biden: “He’s done much more than I thought he’d be able to do. All the things he’s doing are popular. And yet he’s underwater.”

What does create energy, Podhorzer thinks, is fear of the other side. His view is that Democrats’ best chance, even now, is to mobilize their base against Trump and everything he represents. “The challenge in 2022 is to convince people that they’re again voting on whether or not the country is going in a Trumpist direction,” he said.

This is an argument Shor is happy to have. “I think the conventional wisdom has swung too far toward believing policy isn’t important,” he said. He agrees that enthusiasm matters, but it has to be enthusiasm for a message that doesn’t alienate the undecided. “A lot of politics is about what you talk about,” he told me. You should sort your ideas, he said, by popularity. “Start at the top, and work your way down to find something that excites people. But I think that what actually happens is people sort by excitement first. And the problem is the things that are most exciting to activists and journalists are politically toxic.”

Shor showed me, as an example, a set of environmental talking points he’d tested, in which the ones that mentioned climate change performed worst. “Very liberal white people care way more about climate change than anyone else,” he said. “So when you talk about climate change, you sound like a weird, very liberal white person. This is why policy issues matter more than people realize. It’s not that voters have these very specific policy preferences. It’s that the policies you choose to talk about paints a picture of what kind of person you are.”

I should say that the polling differences here struck me as modest: The best environmental message on Shor’s list increased Biden’s approval rating by 1.7 percentage points, while the worst-performing message cut it by 0.4 points. On the other hand, a percentage point here, a percentage point there can be the difference between winning the White House and losing it.

Shor’s example speaks to the hardest questions raised by popularism. “Talk about your most popular, most energizing ideas” isn’t controversial advice. The real disagreements come on the ideas that don’t poll so well. There are a lot of issues that Democrats want to talk about that Shor thinks they’d be better off not talking about.

Hillary Clinton “lost because she raised the salience of immigration, when lots of voters in the Midwest disagreed with us on immigration,” Shor said. This is where popularism poses its most bitter choices: He and those who agree with him argue that Democrats need to try to avoid talking about race and immigration. He [*often brandishes*](https://twitter.com/davidshor/status/1186036410089922560?lang=en) a table showing that among voters who supported universal health care but opposed amnesty for unauthorized immigrants, 60 percent voted for Obama in 2012 but 41 percent voted for Clinton in 2016. That difference, he noted, was more than enough to cost her the election.

This can read as an affront to those who want to use politics to change Americans’ positions on those issues. “The job of a good message isn’t to say what’s popular but to make popular what needs to be said,” Shenker-Osorio told me.

Shor’s rejoinder to this is that the best way to make progress on race and immigration policy is for Democrats to win elections. Obama’s twin victories loom large in his thinking here, since he watched Obama’s brain trust carefully decide what to avoid and the result was the election and re-election of the country’s first Black president, to say nothing of all the policies he passed.

Shor is right about how the Obama campaign understood the electorate. David Simas, the director of opinion research on Obama’s 2012 campaign, recalled a focus group of non-college, undecided white women on immigration. It was a 90-minute discussion, and the Obama campaign made all its best arguments. Then they went around the table. Just hearing about the issue pushed the women toward Mitt Romney. The same process then played out in reverse with shipping jobs overseas. Even when all of Romney’s best arguments were made, the issue itself pushed the women toward Obama. The lesson the Obama team took from that was simple: Don’t talk about immigration.

“You don’t have the luxury of just sending one mobilization message that isn’t going to be heard by a whole bunch of persuadable voters,” Simas told me. “So if we make immigration the central part of a message in Wisconsin, what’s that going to do to the massive amount of non-college whites who’re much more concerned about bread-and-butter economic issues?”

This is the kind of thinking Shor thinks Democrats have largely lost. “Obama and his messaging team were very calculated and measured about that,” he said. “That’s the piece we dropped. I think it’s great to push the envelope and be ahead of history. But you want to be five years ahead of history, not 15 years.”

But one difference between 2016 and 2012 is that Romney was complicit in making economics the center of the campaign. Like Obama, he preferred to argue over tax policy and spending cuts and was plainly uncomfortable talking about immigration or race. He ran, self-consciously, as a former management consultant who would govern on behalf of America’s makers rather than its takers. Trump descended a golden escalator to call Mexican immigrants criminals and rapists. What was Clinton supposed to do?

The implication of popularism is that Clinton shouldn’t have heavily engaged Trump on immigration and race, no matter the provocations. Instead, she should have stuck to a higher-polling economic message. Shor’s critics think that theory is, to put it gently, impractical. The media focuses on the points of controversy between the candidates, and Trump relentlessly weaponized the energy contained in America’s deepest divisions. Clinton talked [*far more*](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2016/12/16/13972394/most-common-words-hillary-clinton-speech) about jobs and the economy than about anything else on the campaign trail, but the comments that generated the most media attention and popular energy were the ones that engaged Trump’s attacks.

But even if Clinton could have sustained Shor-level message discipline, would it have worked, or would the perception that Clinton wasn’t standing up for her voters or their ideals have left large swaths of the Democrats’ base demoralized?

“Look, he’s right about a class and cultural divide,” Odio said. “He’s right about a liberal establishment that’s out of touch with ***working-class*** voters. He’s right that Latino and Black voters used to be insulated from polarization and now aren’t. But where he falls short is in investigating why that is. He’s really missing a race and ethnicity lens. If you fail to incorporate group identity into the analysis, you really miss why Black voters have been voting at astronomically high levels for Democrats. Why have Latinos, who are more moderate and even conservative in his analysis, been voting for Democrats? There’s a group threat that factors into their analysis. If you only talk to Latinos about immigration, you lose voters on the table. If you only talk to them about economics, you’ll arguably leave more votes on the table.”

But if there’s a narrowness to Shor’s focus, there can be a dissonance in the arguments of his critics. On the one hand, they frame this moment in politics as existential, an era in which democracy itself is teetering on the edge of calamity. And in the next breath, they treat message discipline, of any sort, as an impossible and perhaps even useless ask to make of the Democratic Party. At times, their arguments carry an air of resignation.

“I don’t think there’s a short-term solution to the predicament we’re in,” Podhorzer said. “There’s not a set of things Democrats can say that will make them popular to the extent they can start winning the Senate. I don’t think it exists.”

In a way, this is where Shor and his critics converge: They are both deeply pessimistic about the near-term chances for Democrats and thus for democracy.

What Democrats Need to Understand

Models can mislead. The demographic triumphalism that Democrats felt a decade ago has vanished, as reality proved more complicated than regressions. The same may be true here, too. McElwee, for one, thinks these disasters are being projected “with more certainty than is warranted.” He noted that the Democrats’ new coalition may put them at a disadvantage in the Senate but college-educated voters are more likely to turn out in 2022. “Educational polarization could be a stabilizing force for Democrats in midterms,” he said. “I think there’s reason to believe, looking at Georgia and Nevada and California, that we now have a coalition that’s much more robust in midterms.”

Trump may also prove unique in his ability to polarize the electorate along class lines. If he doesn’t run again in 2024, will a Ron DeSantis or a Mike Pence really be able to generate the fury and fervor that Trump did in 2016 and 2020? His successors might polarize the electorate somewhat differently, just as Romney and John McCain did before him.

But no matter who Republicans nominate for president, Democrats face a terribly uphill battle in the Senate, and they don’t seem to have a plan for what to do about it. If the stakes are as dire as they appear to be and Republicans are as dangerous as Democrats say, Shor is right that they need one. Now. And any such plan will require compromises and discipline that many Democrats will loathe.

“When I first started working on the Obama campaign in 2012, I hated all the last remnants of the Clinton era,” Shor said. “When I go back now and think about the fights between the analytics team and the consultants, about 80 percent of the time, they were right. There was an old conventional wisdom to politics in the ’90s and 2000s that we all forget. We collectively unlearned those lessons over the past 12 years. We’ve told ourselves very ideologically convenient stories about how those lessons weren’t relevant — that tax phobia isn’t real or we didn’t need to worry about what conservative white people thought. And it turned out that wasn’t true. I see what I’m doing as rediscovering the ancient political wisdom of the past.”

Sometimes, when I report on a debate, I emerge with a strong view on who’s wrong. In this case, I think both sides are right. Democrats are often trapped in an echo chamber of their own making — a problem Twitter has made immeasurably worse — and they are too quick to dismiss evidence that their ideas and messages are alienating voters. The political system is stacked against them, and unless they are going to change it by adding states and reforming election laws, they need to campaign with the constant recognition that the pivotal voter is well to their right and skeptical of everything they say. On all of that, Shor is offering a warning Democrats should heed.

At the same time, I think he overstates the power of policy communication and the control Democrats have over the debates that will dominate politics. There is little Biden can do to stop Sinema from making a hash of his agenda and muddling his message, and Democrats can’t, in reality, avoid talking about race and immigration and climate change, for reasons both practical and moral. Politics is also about changing what’s possible tomorrow.

I think Shor overreads the experience he had on the Obama campaign: It’s precisely because Obama was a thrilling, historic figure that he could tailor his message so carefully. Unless Democrats can conjure up a generational political talent for every election, they’ll often have to mobilize their base in ways that might unnerve the uncertain or fight on ground that the other side has chosen. But that’s precisely when a bit more of a Shor-esque obsession with polls and skeptical voters might help them most.

To a debate full of inelegant coinages — “popularism,” “viralism” — let me, with apologies, add one more: partyism. The core problem Democrats face is that almost all politics is now national. They are one party facing electoral disaster, and they will rise or fall together. Democrats cannot escape one another, no matter how they might try.

This, to me, is the most important part of Shor’s argument: He is right to insist that the Democratic Party is an institution that is composed, at the top, of a narrow group of people and that is afflicted by many of their blind spots. Whether he is right about what those blind spots are or his critics are right that he is adding some of his own is a secondary concern. For the Democratic Party to chart any course out of the peril it faces, it must first accept that in the minds of most Americans, it is a party, a singular entity. And before that party can shape what voters think, it must find a way to see itself clearly and act collectively.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Cristina Daura FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 9, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How Eric Adams’s Struggle With Dyslexia Is Shaping His Mayoralty***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KB-TX61-DXY4-X118-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 1, 2022 Wednesday 11:10 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1685 words

**Byline:** Emma G. Fitzsimmons

**Highlight:** Mr. Adams was not diagnosed with a learning disability until college. Now, he is making dyslexia screenings a central policy issue.

**Body**

Mr. Adams was not diagnosed with a learning disability until college. Now, he is making dyslexia screenings a central policy issue.

When Mayor Eric Adams was a student at Public School 140 in Queens, his classmates teased him for struggling in class, he recalled. They once put a sign with the word “Dummy” on his desk, and he still remembers his fear of being asked to read aloud.

“You would just hope, ‘Please don’t call on me,’” Mr. Adams said in an interview.

It was not until college, after overhearing a documentary about learning disabilities being played in the library, that Mr. Adams discovered he had dyslexia. His academic challenges suddenly made sense.

When he later became a police officer and ran for public office, he never forgot or forgave how the school system had failed him and his mother, Dorothy, a house cleaner who raised six children in poverty.

“Mom had no idea where to get help from and navigating the challenges in the bureaucracy of the Department of Education,” Mr. Adams said. “We thought you just have to try harder.”

Now as mayor, he is reshaping New York City’s entire approach to reading to try to make sure children like him do not fall behind.

Mr. Adams [*recently announced a sweeping plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/12/nyregion/adams-dyslexia-nyc-schools.html) to screen nearly all public school students for dyslexia and to pivot the nation’s largest school district to more phonics-based literacy instruction. It could be his most significant policy achievement in his first term beyond his focus on crime.

Other elected officials have recently opened up about their disabilities: Gov. Gavin Newsom of California [*shared his experience with dyslexia*](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2021-12-18/gavin-newsom-childhood-struggle-to-read-shaped-his-life-and-career); President Biden [*talked about his stutter during the 2020 race*](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/01/joe-biden-stutter-profile/602401/).

Mr. Adams’s struggle with dyslexia was one of three formative experiences — along with being beaten by the police as a teenager and overcoming diabetes in his 50s — that are key to understanding him, according to Evan Thies, a longtime adviser.

Mr. Adams, the city’s second Black mayor, often talks about policy solutions for those issues: police reform, promotion of a plant-based diet and dyslexia screenings.

The mayor recalled in the interview how he was reluctant to talk openly about his learning disability earlier in his career, because it affected his self-confidence. But he decided to embrace the issue during the mayoral campaign to show ***working-class*** New Yorkers that he understood their challenges because of his own experiences.

Now he wants children with disabilities to see that they can be successful.

“People need to see while I’m on this high-profile stage — those children with learning disabilities, with different issues they’re trying to overcome — they need to see that they’re going to be all right,” Mr. Adams said.

The education plan will not be easy to implement, and it is unclear how much it will cost. It calls for testing hundreds of thousands of students, creating special programs for dyslexic students at schools in every borough and retraining teachers who teach children how to read.

By embracing phonics instruction, Mr. Adams is staking a clear position in the [*long-simmering “reading wars”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/15/us/reading-phonics.html) between those who favor explicit instruction in the connection between letters and sounds, and those who support “balanced literacy,” a method that devotes less time to phonics and places more emphasis on allowing children to gravitate to books of their choice. That approach took hold in New York City under former Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg.

For years, education advocates have pushed for major changes to address New York City’s dismal reading scores. Less than half of students in third through eighth grade were proficient in reading in 2019, [*according to state test scores*](https://www.advocatesforchildren.org/sites/default/files/library/reaching_every_reader.pdf?pt=1).

Experts fear that the pandemic has exacerbated those problems.

The mayor’s plan has several pieces: Students will be screened for literacy three times per year; those who are identified for being at risk will receive additional testing; children with dyslexia will receive support at their current schools or can enroll at one of the two specialized programs at schools in Harlem and the South Bronx.

Teachers in kindergarten through second grade will be required to use a phonics-based curriculum, which teaches the 44 unique sounds in the English language known as phonemes. By next spring, teachers at all grade levels will participate in a two-hour introductory training on dyslexia.

Reading experts have praised the plan, but said that the details of the implementation would be key. Mark Seidenberg, a cognitive neuroscientist and reading expert at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, said that all students could benefit from better reading instruction.

“The research is very conclusive about the importance of teaching children how to make the connections between print and spoken language, which is what we call phonics,” he said. “It has been overlooked in American schools for a long time.”

Carolyne Quintana, the city’s deputy schools chancellor for teaching and learning, confirmed that the city is moving away from the balanced literary [*reading approach favored by Lucy Calkins*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/us/reading-teaching-curriculum-phonics.html), a professor at Teachers College at Columbia University, which was [*embraced by Mr. Bloomberg in 2003*](https://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/03/education/new-york-s-new-approach.html) and by [*Carmen Fariña*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/06/27/nyregion/new-york-schools-chancellor-carmen-farina-advocates-more-balanced-literacy.html), Bill de Blasio’s first schools chancellor.

“That approach is a wonderful approach for students who already have those foundational skills,” she said. “But the reality is that in grades K-2, regardless of the homes they’re coming from, we want to make sure they have really strong foundational mechanical reading skills.”

Professor Calkins is revising her reading curriculum to include structured phonics, and the Department of Education has said it will review her new materials to determine if they meet its standards.

As Mr. Adams and his schools chancellor, David C. Banks, talked to literacy experts, they said they came to the conclusion that the research backed phonics.

“Once we started digging into it, it was clear we were on the wrong pathway,” the mayor said.

Some states like [*Mississippi*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/05/opinion/mississippi-schools-naep.html) and [*Tennessee*](https://www.tennessean.com/story/news/politics/2021/01/22/tennessee-education-lawmakers-gov-bill-lee-approve-learning-loss-literacy-bills/6656356002/) have already moved to require phonics instruction. New York City’s decision could prompt more school districts to follow suit.

Mr. Adams said that screening all children was the first step, and then the city would have to provide the services that children need to catch up. Experts believe that [*as many as 20 percent*](https://dyslexia.yale.edu/dyslexia/dyslexia-faq/) of students are dyslexic.

“That’s the real secret of not diagnosing,” he said. “We don’t want to give the services. Now you’re going to have to give the services, and it’s too expensive. We’ve got to get the services to children with special needs.”

The screenings fit with his broader criminal justice plans to reach young people before they get pulled into crime. He often cites the statistic that more than [*a third of prison inmates are dyslexic*](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/12443331_Prevalence_of_dyslexia_among_Texas_prison_inmates).

Early in his campaign for mayor, Mr. Adams was encouraged by an adviser to focus on his life story and the challenges he overcame.

Suddenly, he was talking about dyslexia at debates and campaign events.

“It was a change in me and my thoughts that all of those little handicaps that I thought of — being arrested, a learning disability, working as a dishwasher — all of that stuff came out in the campaign,” he said. “Those things that I thought were harmful turned out to be helpful for me to win the primary.”

Mr. Adams recalled having trouble learning to read. He had difficulty connecting letters on the page with sounds.

“I was called the D student, the dumb student,” he said, remembering how he dreaded making the half-mile walk from his home in South Jamaica, Queens, to elementary school many mornings. “You almost become sort of an introvert.”

Mr. Adams later attended Middle School 8 and then Bayside High School, a predominantly white school, more than a half-hour away by bus.

There were no individualized education plans for students with disabilities when Mr. Adams was in grade school in the 1960s and ’70s.

Mr. Adams said he blamed himself for continuing to get poor grades. He [*joined the Seven Crowns gang*](https://www.nytimes.com/1995/09/30/nyregion/officials-say-gang-broken-by-21-arrests.html), and still bears a large scar on the back of his head from a fight where he said he was hit by a bat with a nail in it.

He has said that he graduated in 1978, but according to his high school transcript, he actually graduated a semester late in January 1979. He said he took night classes to make up several credits, including an English course.

Then at 19, when he was a student at Queensborough Community College, he overheard the documentary about learning disabilities.

“I became curious, and when they finished, I checked out the documentary and listened to it,” he said. “It was like a light bulb went off in my head.”

Mr. Adams, now 61, adapted to learn in his own way. He attended John Jay College of Criminal Justice, rose within the Police Department to become a captain and received a master’s degree in public administration from Marist College in 2006.

“When I studied for my promotional exams, I had the entire patrol guide — thousands of pages — on cassette tapes,” he said of the police training manual. “I’d listen all the time to it. That’s how I retained information.”

The mayor’s younger brother, Bernard Adams, who is now working for the mayor on his security team, recalled how Mr. Adams did his best to conceal his academic struggles, studying hard to overcome them.

“He put in the time and the effort,” the mayor’s brother said. “I didn’t know it was because he had to.”

As mayor, Mr. Adams has a different way of processing information, avoiding thick policy documents in favor of PowerPoint presentations. He has staffers review topics with him verbally.

“I am an oral guy,” he said. “My team laughs because Audible books are like gold for me.”

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, far right, with his family in 1974. Unaware that he had dyslexia, Mr. Adams struggled in school until he overheard a documentary on the subject while in college. “We thought you just have to try harder,” he said of dealing with his learning difficulties. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA OFFICE OF THE NEW YORK CITY MAYOR); Mr. Adams’s plans would create special programs for dyslexic students at schools in every borough. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANNA WATTS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 2, 2022

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[***The Manhattan ‘Madam’ Who Hobnobbed With the City’s Elite; nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640C-06Y1-JBG3-6428-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2021 Tuesday 00:18 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1041 words

**Byline:** Paulina Bren

**Highlight:** A new biography by Debby Applegate recounts the story of Polly Adler, who arrived in America from Russia at 13 and became New York’s most successful brothel owner, befriending mobsters, policemen, politicians and writers.

**Body**

MADAM

The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age

By Debby Applegate

Pearl to Polly, shtetl child to savvy New Yorker, Brooklyn corset factory girl to Manhattan’s most notorious brothel owner: “Madam: The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age,” by the Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Debby Applegate, tells a fast-paced tale of radical, willful transformation.

Pearl Adler, gifted with neither height nor looks, grew up in the Russian Pale not far from Pinsk to a peripatetic tailor who considered himself a bit of a dandy. Years later, after Pearl’s birth records were lost to fire and war, her parents would guess that she had been born in 1900, making her, in her father’s words, a child of the 20th century. With pogroms mounting, he packed her off at 13 for the golden land of the United States, accompanied by a cousin already heading there. Mid-journey, the cousin begged off, but Pearl had the wherewithal to continue on alone.

Her father had arranged for her to live with a family in Massachusetts, but once acclimatized, she made her escape to relatives in Brownsville, N.Y. Already attracted to the seediness and pleasures of Coney Island, she was easily lured by the underworld, and by 1920 was living with a showgirl as her roommate on Manhattan’s Riverside Drive (“Allrightnik’s Row” in the city’s Yiddish slang, indicating you had made it). That same year Prohibition went into effect, and the party was on.

Within a few months, Pearl, now renamed Polly by her new friends, had opened her first brothel, conveniently located across from Columbia University. Speakeasies sprouted “like mushrooms”: “Manic, uninhibited revelry echoed everywhere, from the Bronx to Greenwich Village.” Predictably, everyone was trying to get a piece of the action, including the vice squad, which ran a shakedown business that had Polly’s bank account rising and falling like out-of-control blood pressure. (Although one might say her family, who would soon be arriving in America, did much the same; they were all too happy to take her money even as they barred her from their Seder.)

The more successful Polly became, the more hounded she was — by the police, by Tammany Hall, by the Broadway mob. Her brothel was distinguished by good hygiene and well-selected “girls.” (When the Depression hit, Polly was able to turn away up to 40 young women for every one she hired — an acceptance rate analogous to that of the Ivy League these days.) But as the business evolved, her brothel also offered less tangible services: It took on the appearance of a literary salon, with drink from the best bootleggers, food from her private cooks and good company from Polly. It became the after-hours place not only for gangsters, lowlifes and politicians, but also for the Algonquin Round Table and for writers at The New Yorker. (Dorothy Parker and Polly would chat while the men availed themselves of the services.) Here, an often unexplored exploitation haunts Applegate’s narrative: Polly, who has claimed the American dream and sits sipping drinks with the celebrated Parker, is also the one who procured these young, mostly ***working-class*** women.

Having famous friends also meant that Polly became the subject of gossip columns, jokes and banter, which added to her renown. But not everything was so peachy; her gangster friends were just as likely to fleece or beat her as they were to trade laughs and cook up schemes with her. Of course, misogyny was hardly the sole purview of the underworld; the gossip columnist Walter Winchell, who used Polly’s services extensively, balked when an up-and-coming bandleader fell in love with her. Winchell objected that the bandleader, who could have had any woman he desired, was dating a “broken-down old whore and an ugly one at that.”

Replete with accounts of Polly’s many court battles, newspaper headlines, mobster dealings and society gossip, “Madam” is a breathless tale told through extraordinary research. Indeed, the galloping pace of Applegate’s book sometimes makes the reader want to pull out a white flag and wave in surrender — begging for her to slow down. The mob violence, political corruption, social approbation and multitude of johns that Polly confronts at her ever-changing brothel locations are both impressive and unrelenting. And while Polly seems to be in the thick of the action, those who surround her often also outshine her. In the book’s last pages, Applegate makes a forthright case for why Polly is worthy of a biography by noting this injustice: It was not Polly but “her male criminal colleagues who became 20th-century cultural icons.” “Sex workers in general … are dealers in illusion,” she writes, and Americans do not like to see the curtain pulled back to reveal the mechanisms, let alone the banality, of their dreams.

Now, Applegate suggests, with the advent of social movements around sex and power, we might finally be ready. But elsewhere, she stakes Polly’s claim for fame on her proximity to men who made history (Franklin Delano Roosevelt), wittily narrated it (Robert Benchley), created its soundtrack (Duke Ellington) or violently upended it (Dutch Schultz and Legs Diamond). Yet the takeaway for this reader at least is that Polly deserves our attention because her life shows how women who wish to transcend their status must become expert practitioners of chameleonism. That is also what makes Polly on some level a frustrating subject for a biography. As Applegate concedes, Polly “hid far more of her story than she shared, even from herself.” In other words, the very trait that made Polly Adler survive and succeed is also what makes her defiantly elusive. Applegate, armed with formidable skills, may be the biographer who can come closest to revealing her.

Paulina Bren is a writer and historian who teaches at Vassar College. Her most recent book is “The Barbizon: The Hotel That Set Women Free.” MADAM The Biography of Polly Adler, Icon of the Jazz Age By Debby Applegate Illustrated. 553 pp. Doubleday. $32.50.

PHOTO: Polly Adler exiting a police van after being arrested in 1936. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM NY DAILY NEWS ARCHIVE VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Related Articles**

* [*Elizabeth Gilbert’s ‘City of Girls’ Delivers a Love- and Booze-Filled Romp Through 1940s New York*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/01/books/review/elizabeth-gilbert-city-of-girls.html)

**Load-Date:** December 2, 2021

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[***Why So Many Democracies Are Floundering; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64DH-G7D1-JBG3-62PV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 29, 2021 Wednesday 13:29 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1293 words

**Byline:** Richard H. Pildes

**Highlight:** The most pervasive and perhaps deepest challenge facing virtually all Western democracies is the political fragmentation of democratic politics.

**Body**

We pay too little attention to delivering effective government as a critical democratic value. We are familiar with the threats posed by democratic backsliding and the rise of illiberal forces in several democracies, including the United States. But the most pervasive and perhaps deepest challenge facing virtually all Western democracies today is the political fragmentation of democratic politics.

[*Political fragmentation*](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3935012) is the dispersion of political power into so many different hands and centers of power that it becomes difficult for democratic governments to function effectively.

President Biden has recognized this historic challenge, calling the defining mission of his presidency to be [*winning*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/03/25/remarks-by-president-biden-in-press-conference/) the “battle between the utility of democracies in the 21st century and autocracies.”

Yet even with unified control of government, the internal divisions of the Democratic Party postponed passage of his bipartisan infrastructure bill for several months and have made it uncertain which parts, if any, of the Build Back Better proposal will be enacted.

When democratic governments seem [*incapable*](https://www.yalelawjournal.org/article/the-decline-of-american-government) of delivering on their promises, this failure can lead to alienation, resignation, distrust and withdrawal among many citizens. It can also trigger demands for authoritarian leaders who promise to cut through messy politics. At an even greater extreme, it can lead people to question democracy itself and become open to anti-democratic systems of government.

The struggle of the Biden administration to deliver on its policy agenda offers a good example of the political fragmentation of politics taking place throughout Western democracies. It takes different forms in the multiparty systems of Europe and the two-party system of the United States. The European democracies are experiencing the unraveling of the traditionally dominant center-left and center-right major parties and coalitions that have governed since World War II. Support for these parties has splintered into new parties of the right and left, along with others with less-easily defined ideological elements. From 2015 to 2017, [*over 30 new political parties*](https://ecpr.eu/Events/Event/SectionDetails/778) entered European parliaments. Across European democracies, the percentage of people who identify strongly with a political party or are members of one has declined precipitously.

The effects on the ability to govern have been dramatic. In Germany, the stable anchor of Europe since the 1950s, the two major parties regularly used to receive over 90 percent of the vote combined; in this fall’s elections, that plummeted to [*less than 50 percent*](https://www.politico.eu/germany-election-2021/). Support has hemorrhaged to green, anti-immigrant, free-market and other parties. After its 2017 elections, with support fragmented among many parties, it took Germany six months to cobble together a governing coalition, the longest time in the country’s history. The Netherlands, after its 2017 elections, needed a record 225 days to form a government.

The coalitional governments assembled amid this cacophony of parties are also more fragile. Spain, for example, was forced to hold four national elections between 2015 and 2019 to find a stable governing coalition. Spain had effectively been a two-party democracy until 2015, but mass protest movements spawned a proliferation of new parties that made forging stable governments difficult. In Sweden, the prime minister lost a vote of no confidence this summer — a first in the country’s modern political history. Digital pop-up parties, including anti-party parties, arise out of nowhere and radically disrupt politics, as the Brexit Party did in Britain and the Five Star Movement did in Italy.

The same forces driving fragmentation in other democracies are also roiling the United States, though our election structures make effective third parties highly unlikely. Here the forces of fragmentation get channeled within the two major parties. The most dramatic example on the Republican side is that when the party controlled the House from 2011 to 2019, it devoured two of its own speakers, John Boehner and Paul Ryan. Mr. Boehner’s memoir portrays a party caucus so internally fragmented as to be ungovernable.

Similarly, the central story of the Biden administration is whether the Democratic Party can overcome its internal conflicts to deliver effective policies. Remarkably, Speaker Nancy Pelosi scheduled floor votes on the infrastructure bill, only to pull it because she could not deliver enough Democratic votes — extraordinary evidence of how difficult it is for a speaker to unite her caucus amid the forces of fragmentation. It took a disastrous election night for progressives to bury their concerns and support the bill — and several now regret having done so.

The recent collapse of Build Back Better, at least for now, led to a remarkable public bloodletting between different elements within the party.

Large structural forces have driven the fragmentation of politics throughout the West. On the economic front, the forces include globalization’s contribution to the stagnation of middle- and ***working-class*** incomes, rising inequality and outrage over the 2008 financial crisis. On the cultural side: conflicts over immigration, nationalism and other issues.

Since the New Deal in the United States and World War II in Europe, the parties of the left had represented less affluent, less educated voters. Now those voters are becoming the base of parties on the right, with more affluent, more educated voters shifting to parties on the left. Major parties are struggling to figure out how to patch together winning coalitions in the midst of this shattering transformation.

The communications revolution is also a major force generating the disabling fragmentation of politics. Across Europe, it has given rise to loosely organized, leaderless protest movements that disrupt politics and give birth to other parties — but make effective government harder to achieve.

In the United States, the new communications era has enabled the rise of free-agent politicians. A Congress with more free agents is [*more difficult to govern*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-the-capitol-riot-turned-a-partisan-congress-toxic-11640601010). Even in their first years in office, individual members of Congress (like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez or Ted Cruz) no longer need to work their way up through the party or serve on major committees to attract national visibility and influence.

Through cable television and social media, they can find and construct their own national constituencies. Through internet fund-raising (particularly small donations), politicians (particularly from the extremes) can become effective fund-raising machines on their own. In this era, party leaders lack the leverage they once had to force party members to accept the party line. That is why speakers of the House resign or reschedule votes on which they cannot deliver.

The political fragmentation that now characterizes nearly all Western democracies reflects deep dissatisfaction with the ability of traditional parties and governments to deliver effective policies. Yet perversely, this fragmentation makes it all the more difficult for governments to do so. Mr. Biden is right: Democracies must figure out how to overcome the forces of fragmentation to show they once again can deliver effective government.

Richard H. Pildes, a professor at New York University’s School of Law, is the author of the casebook “The Law of Democracy: Legal Structure of the Political Process.”

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**Load-Date:** December 30, 2021

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[***Why a Middle-Class Lifestyle Remains Out of Reach for So Many***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65YT-2WC1-DXY4-X1Y1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 20, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; EZRA KLEIN

**Length:** 1879 words

**Byline:** By Ezra Klein

**Body**

June's just-released inflation data is startling. At 9.1 percent, it's the highest year-on-year rate we've seen since 1981.

Maybe it's the highest we will see. Oil and other commodity prices are falling, real wage growth has turned negative and retail inventories are thickening. None of that is fertile soil for continued inflation. If the only prices problem we had was the one that the past year of inflation reports tracked, I'd think the light was beginning to glint into the tunnel.

But it's not. In February of 2020, The Atlantic published a piece on the affordability crisis that was souring a seemingly strong economy. ''In one of the best decades the American economy has ever recorded, families were bled dry by landlords, hospital administrators, university bursars and child-care centers,'' Annie Lowrey wrote. ''For millions, a roaring economy felt precarious or downright terrible.'' Lowrey's framing has stuck in my mind over the last couple of years. I don't think you can understand the broader price crisis without it. (I should mention here that Lowrey and I are married, but don't hold that against her -- or her work!)

The numbers are startling. The median home price in 1950 was 2.2 times the average annual income; by 2020, it was six times average annual income. Parents' average child care spending per child grew by about 200 percent from 1972 to 2007. Family premiums for employer-based health insurance jumped by 47 percent between 2011 and 2021, and deductibles and out-of-pocket costs shot up by almost 70 percent. The average price for brand-name drugs on Medicare Part D rose by 236 percent between 2009 and 2018. Between 1980 and 2018, the average cost of an undergraduate education rose by 169 percent. I could keep going.

We papered over the affordability crisis with low prices for consumer goods, soaring asset values that kept richer Americans happy, subsidies for some Americans at certain times and mountains of debt: housing debt and student-loan debt and medical debt that kept the ***working class*** semi-afloat. But none of this addressed the core problem. For far too long, the prices of the things we need most have been growing far faster than inflation.

And so a weird economy emerged, in which a secure, middle-class lifestyle receded for many, but the material trappings of middle-class success became affordable to most. In the 1960s, it was possible to attend a four-year college debt-free, but impossible to purchase a flat-screen television. By the 2020s, the reality was close to the reverse.

The affordability crisis makes some sense of the last few decades of our economic debates: a crisis of housing debt, a huge new program to subsidize health insurance costs, debates about making college free and forgiving student loans, proposal after proposal for the government to pay for child care and preschool, a bubble in crypto that attracted so many investors in part because it seemed like an elevator into wealth that anyone could ride.

But now asset prices are plummeting. The cost of loans is rising. The price of consumer goods and the energy needed to make and access them has shot up. Congress is getting stingier. The high prices remain, but the policies and palliatives we used to obscure them are crumbling. (Thankfully, the Affordable Care Act remains, and I shudder to think how much worse these years would be in its absence.)

There's a famous video where you're told to keep your eye on a basketball being passed around and, as you do, you miss an actor in a gorilla suit ambling across the scene. But once you've seen the gorilla, you never miss it again. Politics works like that, too. It's not just about the problems we have. It's about the problems we learn to see. The prices problem has been lurking for years, but it's never been the core of our politics. Now it is. It's on gas station signs and at the supermarket. It's in rental contracts and tuition checks. Even if headline inflation falls, I don't think we're going to unsee the high price of a middle-class life anytime soon. The political party that dominates this next era will be the one that shares the public's fury and puts prices at the center of its agenda.

There are some early glimmers of what that might look like. The New Democrat Coalition, which is made up of 99 moderate-ish House Democrats, recently released a package of policy proposals meant to address inflation. But much of it is aimed at the affordability crisis that predates the rise in inflation. It includes legislation that would use federal transportation dollars to push cities and states to make it easier to build housing, that would ease worker shortages by raising legal immigration and that would cap insulin costs and allow Medicare to negotiate more drug prices.

If liberals look, they'll find no end of ideas for bringing down prices across the economy. ''I've been pulling my hair out about this stuff for years,'' Dean Baker, one of the founders of the liberal Center for Economic and Policy Research, told me. ''We can't just accept markets as structured and then use tax and subsidy policy to make it less bad. A real big problem with progressives is we treat the market problems as givens rather than restructure those markets.''

Baker's long-running argument is that the division between market and government is now, and always has been, false. ''The idea of a free market is nonsense,'' he said. ''I've had a lot of fun with libertarians who say they want the government out of markets. And I say, 'Oh, you don't want to have corporations anymore?' Those are legal entities.''

Or take drug pricing. For years, liberals have sought legislation to let Medicare bargain down drug prices. Conservatives counter that government can't set prices; the market should be left to its own devices. Baker has long thought liberals mad to accept this framing of the debate.

New drugs can be as expensive as they are only because the government grants lengthy patents covering both the formulas and the production processes behind those drugs (which are, in many cases, built on publicly funded research). The market for prescription drugs is shaped by government-granted-and-enforced monopolies, and the result is exactly what any Econ 101 class would predict: high prices.

''You can argue on behalf of the policy,'' Baker told me. ''Maybe it's good for research and development. But we can't debate whether the government is structuring that market.''

I've long liked Baker's arguments for two reasons. First, they apply basic economic principles fairly, which is rarely true in politics. He's relentless about deploying the arguments that are often used against government intervention on behalf of the poor to criticize ongoing interventions on behalf of the rich. Second, they slice through the ideological morass of markets versus governments to ask the more fundamental question: Who are our markets structured to serve?

Follow analyses like that and you'll find an array of bad actors, cutting across partisan and professional lines. Housing is so hard to build in dense cities in large part because governments have made it hard to build. Those governments are disproportionately run by Democrats. ''Blue places have chosen to make their housing supply inelastic -- to use econ speak -- and red places, by and large, have allowed housing markets to continue functioning and for supply to respond when there's an increase in demand,'' Jenny Schuetz, the author of ''Fixer-Upper: How to Repair America's Broken Housing Systems,'' told me.

But drug prices are high because Republicans support expansive patent protections but won't let the government use its purchasing power to bargain down prices, which is how virtually every other rich nation holds down costs. We're granting monopolies on one end and refusing to use purchasing power on the other. The Warp Speed program for vaccine development was an example of how it could be done otherwise: The government made itself the buyer for vaccines, and then distributed them freely. And what about public competition for off-patent products? Gavin Newsom, the governor of California, just announced the state has put aside $100 million to begin making its own low-cost insulin. If it works, it could become a national model.

Elsewhere, it's professional lobbies that are the culprit. America has too few doctors, particularly primary care doctors, leading to higher prices and longer waits. A big part of the reason is that trade groups representing doctors have lobbied to restrict the supply, capping the number that we train, erecting barriers to letting nurse practitioners take over more primary care duties, and blocking efforts to allow doctors trained in high-performing systems abroad from being able to practice here.

This, too, has been a longtime bugaboo of Baker's. We could ease physician shortages quickly by allowing doctors from Europe to come here freely and practice easily. Over the longer term, we could open more medical schools, make telehealth easier and expand the freedom of nurse practitioners to practice autonomously.

There are also an array of tariffs that the Biden administration could lift if it wanted to quickly reduce at least some prices. Some of these tariffs -- like those on Canadian lumber -- are meant to protect American industries. Others, like the tariffs that Donald Trump slapped on China, and that President Biden has done nothing to reverse, are foreign policy tools. But if high prices are the problem, then perhaps new priorities should be set. An analysis by the Peterson Institute for International Economics found that a large but plausible trade liberalization package could cut costs by $797 per household, per year.

Inflation crises in the United States tend to be driven, or badly worsened, by our exposure to petrostates. That's true for the OPEC embargo of the '70s and what the Biden administration likes to call ''the Putin price hike'' of 2022. As Mark Zandi, the chief economist at Moody's Analytics, noted, the spike in fuel prices accounted for more than half of June's inflation. That will probably ease. But a world where the bulk of America's power was generated by wind and solar and nuclear and geothermal is a world where we'd be far less reliant on the fluctuations of the global energy market. (And while it seems almost ridiculous to have to say this, a world of unchecked climate crisis won't be good for prices, either; there is no end of good reasons to decarbonize.)

For decades now, we've been in a politics of spending. The questions were about how much to spend and what to spend on. We're moving into a politics that looks superficially similar but is fundamentally different: a politics of prices. How much to spend, and where to direct that spending, still matters. But it'll be subordinate to a larger goal: bringing down prices across the economy. And that'll be the work of years, perhaps decades.

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**Graphic**

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**Load-Date:** July 26, 2022

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[***A ‘Fair Fares’ Program So Exclusive, Barely Anyone Can Qualify For It***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64ST-89Y1-JBG3-60K7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 15, 2022 Tuesday 12:13 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1319 words

**Byline:** Ana Ley

**Highlight:** A city program gives 260,000 low-income New Yorkers half-price transit rides. Advocates and transit leaders are calling on the mayor to expand his investment.

**Body**

A city program gives 260,000 low-income New Yorkers half-price transit rides. Advocates and transit leaders are calling on the mayor to expand his investment.

Derek Jiminez relies on the New York City subway to get to a maintenance job that pays about $1,000 a month. The fare adds up fast, but since he got a half-priced MetroCard two years ago, his checks have stretched a little further.

With the extra money, he can afford things he couldn’t before, like a pair of guitars he got on sale. But mostly, he said, he saves what he can.

“I hold onto it for now, for rainy days,” said Mr. Jiminez, 56, who lives in East Harlem. “The economy is really hurting.”

Mr. Jiminez is among 260,000 riders enrolled in the city’s Fair Fares program, which subsidizes public transit fares for New Yorkers whose income falls below the federal poverty line — about [*$28,000 a year for a family of four*](https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html). Since the program started in April 2019, enrollment has grown nearly sevenfold.

Many elected officials, advocates and the leader of the transit agency that operates the subway have been pressing the new mayor, Eric Adams, to provide more financing for the program and expand eligibility for it, arguing that many more riders could benefit.

New York, where it generally costs $2.75 to ride the subway, operates one of the most expensive major public transit systems in the country, and despite popularity of the reduced fare program, it only reaches the poorest riders. Many ***working-class*** commuters, who rely on public transit every day, do not qualify and must dig deep to be able to ride.

Of the American cities that offer discounted fares, New York has among the strictest income eligibility rules for its program, requiring applicants to be at or below the federal poverty level.

Roughly [*900,000 adult New Yorkers live in poverty*](https://censusreporter.org/data/table/?table=B17001&amp;geo_ids=16000US3651000&amp;primary_geo_id=16000US3651000), according to census data.

“It is imperative that public transportation be accessible, affordable, and equitable for all New Yorkers,” Adrienne Adams, the City Council speaker, said in a statement on Sunday, as she called on the mayor to double the program’s funding, from $53 million to $106 million. The city promised that amount when the program began, but it was halved when the pandemic triggered a financial crisis.

Mr. Adams agreed on Monday to raise the funding, but only to $75 million. “Since its inception, Fair Fares has proven to be a transformative program for so many New Yorkers struggling to get by,” Mr. Adams said in a joint statement with the speaker.

Though Ms. Adams said that she was pleased with the additional funds, she added that the Council would continue to push for more money.

Discounted MetroCards, which can be used on the subway and on buses, can be a financial lifeline in New York, where for many residents public transit is a basic necessity.

“People are literally choosing between having a meal and paying for a MetroCard,” said Danny Pearlstein, a spokesman for the Riders Alliance, an advocacy group.

Felix Cepeda, 41, makes a modest living, in part by doing community outreach for an immigrant advocacy group. He sleeps at his girlfriend’s apartment in East Harlem or at a sister’s home in the Bronx. He said he used to jump turnstiles before enrolling in Fair Fares last fall.

“It’s very hard to be putting money that I don’t have to spend on the card,” Mr. Cepeda said. “That is money I can use for food.”

Janno Lieber, the M.T.A.’s chairman and chief executive, said expanding the subsidized MetroCard program could help the transit system lure riders back as it struggles to emerge from the pandemic.

City leaders have “talked about all these different priorities of addressing poverty and equity,” Mr. Lieber said. “They already made a commitment to this. They just need to fund it at a level that makes it real.”

The agency’s finances, which have been battered by the pandemic-era loss of ridership, have been stabilized by infusions of federal aid, as well as millions in state money allocated by Gov. Kathy Hochul to help delay planned fare hikes. But the M.T.A. still faces a $1.4 billion deficit in 2025.

Mr. Adams’s first proposed budget is due Wednesday and transit advocates say the city can afford to spend more money on the subsidized fare program. The city’s current spending plan is $102.8 billion.

“For a relatively small percentage of the city’s budget, it can make a very big difference,” Mr. Pearlstein said.

[*A survey released on Monday by the Community Service Society*](https://www.cssny.org/publications/entry/mass-transit-economic-equity-fair-fares), an antipoverty nonprofit, found that many low-income New Yorkers were not aware that the Fair Fares program even existed. The report also found that many poorer people, especially those who identify as Latino or Black, struggled to pay for subway or bus fares.

Beyond spending more money on the program, the group is urging officials to raise the income threshold for applicants and to promote Fair Fares more aggressively. Today, some of that outreach takes place through advertisements in subways, buses and some shops.

“We’re using a poverty rate that applies to Mississippi and to Manhattan, which is crazy,” said David Jones, president and chief executive of the Community Service Society and a member of the M.T.A. board. “What may seem like a bonanza in Mississippi can barely pay the rent in the city of New York.”

Among larger American cities, New York’s transit system is [*the third least affordable*](https://www.valuepenguin.com/most-and-least-affordable-cities-commuting#least-affordable) by percentage of income spent on fares, behind only Los Angeles and Miami, according to a recent assessment by ValuePenguin, a consumer research website.

[*At least 15 cities in the United States offer*](https://journals.sagepub.com/na101/home/literatum/publisher/sage/journals/content/trra/2021/trra_2675_7/03611981211017900/20210921/images/large/10.1177_03611981211017900-table1.jpeg) reduced-fare programs for low-income transit riders, according to a study published last summer in Transportation Research Record, an academic journal.

Low-income riders on the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority system can receive $6 off the cost of [*$12.50 weekly passes*](https://www.metro.net/riding/fares/) and $24 off the cost of $50 monthly passes through the [*Low-Income Fare is Easy program*](https://www.metro.net/riding/life/). Boston offers a more limited program for low-income riders who are 18 to 25 years old.

In New York, the Fair Fares discount can be applied to weekly and monthly unlimited ride cards, [*reducing the price*](https://new.mta.info/fares) of a weekly pass from $33 to $16.50 and a monthly card from $127 to $63.50.

The 50 percent discount is also available for the Access-A-Ride program, which offers door-to-door transportation within the city to people who can’t use public transit because of a physical or mental disability.

Early on in the pandemic, some transit systems, including the M.T.A., temporarily stopped charging bus fare to limit contact between riders and drivers. In Boston, officials have decided to make [*at least three bus routes free*](https://www.boston.gov/departments/transportation/free-route-23-28-and-29-bus-program) through February 2024, in hopes of making the system more equitable.

The Fair Fares program was created after years of aggressive lobbying from transit advocates and anti-poverty groups, who argued that it would help the city address inequality.

Mr. Adams’s predecessor, Bill de Blasio, was initially cool to the idea because he did not want to provide more money to the M.T.A. than the city already did.

He finally relented under pressure from the City Council, but the program’s rollout was disorganized: it failed to start on time, people were confused about how to apply and it was not always clear who could qualify or what types of MetroCards would be offered at half price.

“A huge share of the population is low income, providing service jobs and ensuring, essentially, that our communities continue to be able to function. And they continue to ride transit in much higher numbers,” said Yonah Freemark, a senior research associate at the Urban Institute. “I think we have to see transit as this essential provision for people of lower incomes.”

PHOTO: Derek Jiminez said his discounted MetroCard has enabled him to stretch his modest income and save more. “I hold onto it now, for rainy days,’’ he said.  (PHOTOGRAPH BY Desiree Rios for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2022

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[***Can Lee Zeldin Reinvent His Way to the N.Y. Governor’s Mansion?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66S6-CGF1-JBG3-61K1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 2, 2022 Wednesday 12:25 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 2731 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Fandos

**Highlight:** Representative Lee Zeldin’s political career reflects decades of preparation, alliances with more powerful Republicans and a hard-right embrace of former President Donald J. Trump.

**Body**

SHIRLEY, N.Y. — As a young U.S. Army lawyer of unmistakable ambition, Lee Zeldin could almost see his future unfurling before him. It was his first stint in Iraq, and he was already imagining the kind of distinguished career in uniform that would have laid the groundwork for one in politics.

Then a Red Cross message arrived on the base where Mr. Zeldin was embedded as a captain with the 82nd Airborne Division. His girlfriend had gone into dangerously premature labor with twin girls. Doctors were not optimistic about the babies’ survival. His commanding officer sent him home to mourn.

“This I vividly remember the emotion of,” Mr. Zeldin, now a conservative congressman, recalled in a recent interview. “My priorities became all about my daughters.”

The girls survived after months in the hospital. But rather than returning to Iraq, Mr. Zeldin took a desk job back at Fort Bragg in North Carolina, got married and then was discharged. At just 27, he found that the life he had imagined had veered off course.

It was not the first time, nor the last. As a high school senior here on the South Shore of Long Island, Mr. Zeldin sought a prestigious appointment to West Point, only to fall short. After leaving the Army in 2007, he almost immediately entered a race for Congress, hoping to jump-start his political career. He lost in a blowout.

But in every case, Mr. Zeldin has shown aptitude for finding a quick path to reinvention that has helped fuel his political ascent. Now, at age 42, it has put him closer than any Republican since George E. Pataki two decades ago to one of the nation’s most influential political posts, the governorship of New York.

Though Gov. Kathy Hochul, the Democratic incumbent, remains the front-runner, [*Mr. Zeldin’s late surge in the polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/18/nyregion/hochul-zeldin-poll-governor.html) has shocked even political strategists and [*sent Democrats scrambling to prop up their candidate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/nyregion/hochul-governor-zeldin-democratic.html). With Ms. Hochul’s huge war chest and a vast Democratic registration advantage, few expected Mr. Zeldin to come close to winning, and perhaps with good reason: He does not easily fit the profile of a New York power player.

In a state shaped by wealthy business interests and often governed by larger-than-life personalities and family dynasties, Mr. Zeldin is an outlier. He grew up in law enforcement households of modest means. He can be introverted and awkward with voters. And in a state dominated by the political left, he is probably the most conservative serious contender for the governorship in modern memory — even voting to overturn the 2020 election on Jan. 6, 2021.

Yet a careful review of his public and private life, including two dozen interviews with family, friends, colleagues and critics, shows that Mr. Zeldin’s emergence as a political force stems from decades of meticulous planning, comfort with taking risks, well-timed alliances with more powerful Republicans and, above all, a knack honed from a young age for what allies call adaptation but his critics view as a more cynical political shape-shifting.

Those qualities have been on full display in this fall’s campaign, as Mr. Zeldin moved swiftly to tap into two powerful currents of discontent that [*Democrats appear to have misjudged*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/25/nyregion/hochul-zeldin-governor-ny.html) and that threaten to scramble the state’s usual political order: painful inflation eroding New Yorkers’ sense of financial well-being and fears about rising crime.

“He’s grabbed the right issues and hasn’t let go,” said Rob Astorino, who lost to Mr. Zeldin in this year’s Republican primary.

But his instincts have also been evident as he tries to execute another on-the-fly transformation, playing down hard-line positions that served him well while he climbed the Republican ranks in Albany and Washington but are now politically inconvenient, while offering scant details on some of his latest policy proposals.

Among them are fights to limit abortion rights and gun control, and votes against legalizing same-sex marriage and in favor of eliminating the Affordable Care Act — all in conflict with most New Yorkers’ views. And though most days Mr. Zeldin avoids public mentions of former President Donald J. Trump, he was until recently [*one of Mr. Trump’s most vocal defenders*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/nyregion/zeldin-trump-january-6th.html), a fact that Democrats have driven home in millions of dollars of ads.

“He comes across as your mildly opinionated next-door neighbor,” said Tim Bishop, a former Democratic congressman who defeated Mr. Zeldin in 2008 but lost to him six years later. “But debate him — be on the receiving end of some poison-pen-type emails and postings — and that’s not who he is.”

‘Nobody had already made it’

For many New Yorkers, the South Shore of Long Island evokes images of sand, summer and the superrich. That has almost nothing to do with Shirley, the ***working-class*** hamlet where Lee Michael Zeldin grew up and that left a clear imprint on his social and political worldview.

It was a predominantly white town of cops, small-business owners and nurses trying to make it on the outskirts of New York City’s suburban sprawl — the kind of voters Mr. Zeldin channels in his campaign.

“Nobody was wealthy. Nobody had already made it,” Mr. Zeldin said. “Every single person, whatever they were going to achieve in life, they were going to have to earn.”

His own family, which was Jewish, was no exception. After his parents’ early divorce, Mr. Zeldin’s home life was cleaved in two. His mother, a teacher, remarried a state trooper. His father was [*a fraud investigator*](https://investicorp.com/about-us/david-e-zeldin-background/) and [*private detective*](https://www.nytimes.com/1992/04/26/nyregion/in-tough-times-private-detectives-thrive.html) who graduated from the New York Military Academy, Mr. Trump’s alma mater, and later married a Nassau County probation officer.

At William Floyd High School, Mr. Zeldin stood apart and sometimes alone. When other students got high or in fights, former classmates said, he was busy taking college-level courses and playing varsity tennis and running track.

“Lee was driven in a direction to where he is now, he stayed out of trouble,” said Frank Kazanecki, a classmate. “There was plenty of trouble if you wanted it. I’m not going to say it’s a rough school, because there are rougher out there, but in terms of the Island, the area doesn’t have a great reputation.”

In 10th grade, Mr. Zeldin joined Youth and Government, recalling in the interview that his motivation was “to pick up girls.” He got hooked on politics instead. He was voted best debater by the statewide group and later served as lieutenant governor on an annual trip to mock legislate on the floor of the State Capitol.

“There was no doubt,” said Spencer Gaines, an uncle. “He had ambitions.”

After the appointment to West Point fell through, he returned to Albany to attend college at the state university in August 1998 and wasted little time setting a course that might get him back to the Capitol for real. He signed up for R.O.T.C., began working in the office of a Republican state senator, Kenneth LaValle, and was elected president of the campus Republicans.

Mr. Zeldin began law school, at the Army’s expense, just days before two planes flew into the World Trade Center, and passed the bar at 23, making him the state’s youngest lawyer at the time. By 2005, with two wars underway in the Middle East, he was stationed at Fort Bragg.

‘Lee had a plan’

Since his first campaign, Mr. Zeldin has put his military service at the center of his pre-politics biography. He stresses that he served on “the front lines” in Iraq with fellow paratroopers, leveraging the reputation of the Army’s famed 82nd Airborne Division.

The job was far from glamorous. Though Mr. Zeldin says he did parachute from a plane 18 times in training, as part of the Judge Advocate General’s Corps, he spent much of his early military career in law offices working on tax returns, family disputes and courts-martial. “Used car sales scams, near-usurious interest rate deals and threatening bill collectors became his passion,” one superior wrote in a 2005 performance evaluation.

His stint overseas was not quite two months in the summer of 2006.

In the interview, Mr. Zeldin described it as a “CSI: Miami-type mission” in which he provided legal advice to a detainee operations mission during a brutal stretch of the conflict. Given the mission’s secretive nature, it was difficult to independently corroborate details.

“My commander operated under the belief that everyone in the battalion should be participating in every mission, so I was in full gear kicking out doors and on foot patrols,” he said.

In September, when his girlfriend went into labor at just 22 weeks, Mr. Zeldin raced back to Washington. He married her the following January in North Carolina, and the couple decided he would have to move to the Army Reserves.

“It was a drastic, sudden shift,” Mr. Zeldin said.

But even before then, he had a political future in mind.

“Lee had a plan,” said Cory Simpson, who lived with him near Fort Bragg. “He was always going to do politics. That was very, very clear.”

Mr. Simpson recalled that at their shared house, Mr. Zeldin became a poker maven and learned to count cards in blackjack. He played video games and the piano, and delighted in pushing boundaries with his humor.

Mr. Zeldin said in the interview that he closed the door on politics after college for a career in uniform. But Mr. Simpson, who later ran for Congress himself, remembered that at home at night, serving in elected office never seemed far from his roommate’s mind.

“He was thinking about and iterating on opportunities and races and numbers and what percent win and that stuff,” Mr. Simpson said.

Indeed, almost a year to the day after his daughters’ birth, Mr. Zeldin [*filed paperwork*](https://docquery.fec.gov/pdf/047/27039534047/27039534047.pdf) to run for Congress back home in Shirley, where he had returned to live with his wife, Diana Zeldin, who is Mormon and now works at a law firm.

‘Ahead of his time’

In a state where power is often built around the political clubhouse and oversize personalities, Mr. Zeldin has always operated as an aloof — if opinionated — outsider.

“He was not a socializer, not a cocktail circle guy,” said Chapin Fay, a former aide. “Every time I was with him in Albany, he would go back to the hotel after session, he’d get a binder from staff filled with news clips, issues research, legislation, and he’d study.”

After Mr. Zeldin [*lost by 16 points*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2008/results/states/new-york.html) to Mr. Bishop in 2008, Republicans — including Kevin McCarthy, the future House Republican leader — advised him to lower his sights and build up more methodically. He poured himself into a small law practice, and two years later, with the midterm tide moving in Republicans’ favor, Mr. Zeldin flipped a State Senate seat, harnessing outrage over a Metropolitan Transportation Authority payroll tax in a way that would foreshadow his intense focus on crime in the present race.

In Albany, he allied himself with Dean Skelos, a fellow Long Islander and more moderate Republican who led the Senate. The proximity to power helped him deliver on promises to curtail the transit authority tax and fund a landmark program for veterans dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder and brain injuries.

In private, he was already discussing the possibility of a statewide run, and in public, he poked fun at his own ambition. During the Legislative Correspondents’ Association’s 2013 roast, he [*parodied Billy Joel’s “Piano Man”*](https://youtu.be/1cxlBG2f5u4?t=754): “Sing me a song, I’m a senator. Sing me a song tonight. Cause someday I might be a congressman, if I get enough votes from the right.”

“He was a perfectly pleasant, polite young man,” said State Senator Liz Krueger, a liberal Democrat, who described Mr. Zeldin as a backbencher. “He seems to have drank the MAGA Kool-Aid after he left us and just become more and more of a zealous right-winger.”

His conservative views were already evident, though. In 2011, he [*voted against legalizing same-sex marriage*](https://www.nysenate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/lee-m-zeldin/statement-senator-lee-m-zeldin-re-same-sex-marriage) and in 2013, in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, opposed a new law [*expanding the state’s assault weapons ban*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/24/nyregion/cuomo-used-all-his-means-to-pass-gun-control-package.html).

Those views spilled over into a 2014 rematch with Mr. Bishop in a district that had been steadily shifting rightward during the Obama years. This time, Mr. Zeldin vowed to repeal Obamacare and warned that illegal immigration was threatening the nation’s safety. In another midterm rout year for Republicans, [*he gave up a safe Senate seat and won*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/2014/new-york-elections).

In Congress, Mr. Zeldin [*worked across the aisle*](https://www.thelugarcenter.org/assets/htmldocuments/2019%20BPI%20House%20Scores.pdf?eType=EmailBlastContent&amp;eId=20abfc4c-e01c-49d2-8a26-5d420d4918fb) on veterans’ issues and parochial legislative priorities. He even [*opposed Mr. Trump’s signature tax cut*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/29/nyregion/ryan-fundraiser-zeldin-tax-bill.html) because it disproportionately punished high-tax states like New York.

But the League of Conservation Voters consistently gave him [*among the lowest environmental records*](https://scorecard.lcv.org/moc/lee-zeldin), and abortion-rights groups labeled him an enemy. He also showed a willingness to meet with far-right groups, [*including the Long Island chapter of the Oath Keepers*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/rep-hit-meeting-extreme-conservatives-article-1.2281013).

After Mr. Trump was elected, [*an alliance blossomed and helped rapidly build Mr. Zeldin’s national profile*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/19/nyregion/zeldin-trump-january-6th.html). He signed up for Mr. Trump’s first impeachment defense team, amplified doubts about the 2020 election and ultimately voted on Jan. 6, after the Capitol was sieged, [*to overturn election results*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/01/07/us/elections/electoral-college-biden-objectors.html).

Mr. Trump has since [*endorsed Mr. Zeldin for governor*](https://truthsocial.com/@realDonaldTrump/posts/109177903368464493) and [*helped him raise money*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/02/nyregion/zeldin-trump-fund-raiser.html). Some Republican allies have privately expressed misgivings.

“Frankly, I think it’s pretty clear I would certainly have certified the election if I was there, but I can’t put myself in his shoes,” said Jack Martins, another Long Island Republican. “Only he can explain why he felt the need to vote the way he did.”

By then, Mr. Zeldin was already eyeing his next step up: a run for New York’s highest office. Everything in his experience suggested the timing — the midterms after Democrats swept into power — would make for the ideal conditions.

Even as he has softened some of his positions, like those on abortion, some of Mr. Zeldin’s proposals around crime have already attracted legal and racial scrutiny. He has, for example, [*pledged to fire the district attorney in Manhattan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/10/27/nyregion/lee-zeldin-alvin-bragg.html), the first Black man elected to the office, on his first day as governor. And after criticizing Ms. Hochul for maintaining a state of emergency during the coronavirus pandemic, Mr. Zeldin has said he would declare a crime emergency to allow him to suspend the state’s bail law. Democrats say the pledges are demagogy and argue that Mr. Zeldin has no serious plan on inflation, either.

But in a state where even Republicans have so internalized their own low chances of winning that the party often fails to field top-tier candidates for major offices, the very fact of Mr. Zeldin’s competitiveness has also triggered unfamiliar enthusiasm.

To many of his supporters, including some moderate Democrats, the specific policies are less important than the message that Mr. Zeldin will stop at nothing to fight crime — a message that has at times become unexpectedly personal.

In recent months, Mr. Zeldin became a regular presence at scenes of brutal crimes. Subway slashings. Shootings. Acts of hate against Orthodox Jews and Asians.

Then, in mid-October, one found him. While he was marching in a Columbus Day parade in the Bronx, gunshots erupted near his home, a freakish coincidence that sent his twin daughters into hiding.

Flanked by his family back home that night, Mr. Zeldin did not miss a beat [*when addressing reporters*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TzeqJGRqsg).

“We cannot surrender any street anywhere in the state of New York to criminals,” he said. “I’m standing in front of crime-scene tape in front of my own house. You can’t get me more outraged than right now.”

Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

Kirsten Noyes contributed research.

PHOTOS: Lee Zeldin in the William Floyd High yearbook.; Mr. Zeldin, a candidate for governor, grew up in Shirley, N.Y., in Suffolk County, and moved back as an adult. (PHOTOGRAPH BY OHNNY MILANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); In the Army, he served with the Judge Advocate General’s Corps and spent two months in Iraq. (PHOTOGRAPH VIA LEE ZELDIN CAMPAIGN); Mr. Zeldin in 2015 with his wife, Diana, second from left, and twin daughters as he was sworn in as a House member. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SUSAN WALSH/ASSOCIATED PRESS); Representative Lee Zeldin’s emergence reflects decades of preparation, strategic alliances with powerful Republicans and an embrace of Donald J. Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN CLEETON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Mr. Zeldin was one of the first congressmen to take Mr. Trump’s presidential run seriously, and they quickly forged an alliance after he became president. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A17) This article appeared in print on page A1, A17.

**Load-Date:** November 3, 2022

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[***Home Is Where Her Story Was. Leaving Helped Her Find It.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YTH-HF11-JBG3-6076-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 3, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 20; INSIDE THE LIST

**Length:** 423 words

**Byline:** By Elisabeth Egan

**Body**

LONE STAR ''I'm 52 and this is my first novel,'' says Elizabeth Wetmore, the author of ''Valentine,'' which is now at No. 10 on the hardcover fiction list. She worked on the book for years, taking frequent breaks to teach, pursue freelance editing projects and raise her son. Going without a paycheck was not an option: ''In the end, I think I was finally able to finish because my husband took on a second job. And one of the promises I made to myself was that, if I ever was able to sell a book, I would be mindful about talking about what this looks like for ***working-class*** writers, writers who don't come from families or communities where people are saying, 'Yay, write full time.'''

''Valentine'' takes place in Odessa, Texas, where Wetmore grew up. She says, ''There was a time when I was a teenager when I came to believe -- falsely, of course -- that there were girls who stayed and girls who left. I wanted very much to be one who left.'' She struck out on her own at 18, becoming one of the first of her family to attend college. She also waited tables, tended bar, drove a cab and painted silos and cooling towers at a petrochemical plant.

Wetmore never moved back to Texas but went back as often as she could afford to, taking long drives to get reacquainted with her hometown. Wetmore says, ''It took me a long time to be able to see the place clearly. I had to fall back in love with the land and the people in a way that made it possible to write with nuance and sympathy.''

''Valentine'' grew out of two questions: What do you do when a stranger comes to your door, and how can the fallout from that encounter affect a whole town? Wetmore's stranger is a 14-year-old girl who has been brutally attacked in a nearby oil field. Readers learn what happens next through the eyes of four women whose individual chapters read like fully developed short stories. This was by design, says Wetmore, who prefers to work in that form. She toggled between perspectives as she wrote, eventually plastering her bedroom walls with notes on butcher paper that helped her keep track of the action.

Of course the publication of the book has not been without its challenges. Wetmore's author tour was canceled before it started. But she says she has enjoyed virtual events, and especially receiving messages from her readers. One of her favorites was from a woman in Texas. It said, ''I live here, you nailed it, thank you so much for writing this book.''Elisabeth Egan is an editor at the Book Review and the author of ''A Window Opens.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/23/books/review/valentine-elizabeth-wetmore.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/23/books/review/valentine-elizabeth-wetmore.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A To-Do List for Eric Adams***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YY-KPM1-JBG3-649Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 6; THE EDITORIAL BOARD

**Length:** 1088 words

**Byline:** By The Editorial Board

**Body**

Barring political cataclysm, Eric Leroy Adams, a former police captain turned Democratic politician, will become New York City's next mayor.

For Mr. Adams, Brooklyn's charismatic borough president and the Democratic nominee for mayor, winning the general election on Tuesday is likely to be the easy part. Democrats outnumber Republicans in New York City nearly seven to one. The real challenge comes in January, when the new mayor will begin setting the pandemic-scarred city back on its feet.

If he is elected, Mr. Adams will enter City Hall with very few of the advantages that Bill de Blasio enjoyed eight years ago. He may have to guide the city's recovery without the same generous surpluses and steady economy, for example. Unlike Mr. de Blasio, Mr. Adams only barely won the Democratic primary. To govern effectively, he will also have to find a way to reassure those who didn't vote for him -- which includes a large portion of voters in his own party -- that he will be a mayor for all New Yorkers.

Since the Democratic primary, a great deal of the mayoral race has focused on crime. Mr. Adams has staked his campaign in large part around law and order, while also supporting police reform. That may seem strange for a Democratic politician in liberal New York City. Coming from Mr. Adams -- who served in the Police Department for 22 years, rising through the ranks to become a captain, even as he publicly fought to reform the department -- it is more complicated.

In many ways, Mr. Adams, who is Black and grew up in South Jamaica, Queens, represents the unaddressed hunger of Black communities for both safer streets and better policing. If Mr. Adams can better protect communities that bear the burden of gun violence while also bringing accountability and reform to the city's Police Department, as he has promised to do, that will be a triumph.

The city is also facing other, arguably even greater, challenges.

The top priorities for the next administration ought to include ensuring that the city's roughly one million public school students recover from a year of lost learning in the pandemic, particularly the 600,000 students who learned remotely last year. Even as the pandemic recedes, the city's public school system needs significant help: more aid for some 100,000 homeless students in the city, sweeping reforms to improve schools in low-income communities and progress in integrating some of the nation's most segregated schools.

In order to fund better schools and all the rest of the good that the administration is capable of doing, it is vital that New York regains a solid financial footing. That means working with businesses large and small to restart the economic engine that can power progress.

That progress should include building far more affordable housing, especially in wealthy areas with good transit where less city subsidy is needed to create units for poor and middle-income New Yorkers.

The city should speed its plodding march toward reclaiming its streets from cars for pedestrians, restaurants and cyclists. Of course, ultimate success there depends on getting the beleaguered subway system back on its feet. That means maintaining a good relationship with the governor, who holds the real power over the city's transit system. The endless cycle of fruitless bickering between the former governor and current mayor helped no one.

The next administration will also need to work alongside the state government to close the jail complex on Rikers Island, holding fast to reforms that prioritize mental health services and modernize detention facilities, while still keeping the city safe.

All this work must be done while continuing to shore up this waterfront city against the rising tides of climate change.

There are also several policy areas in which we hope Mr. Adams will change his mind over the next four years from promises made on the campaign trail. We hope he will take a greater interest in racially integrating the city's public schools. We also hope he will adopt a tougher approach to ensuring that ultra-Orthodox yeshivas that have been the subject of serious complaints from parents and former students actually meet basic state education standards.

If the polls and history are any indication, Mr. Adams has little competition at the ballot box Tuesday in Curtis Sliwa, a Republican and the founder of the Guardian Angels who has laid out few detailed proposals for what he would do in office. Voters intent on differentiating the two need look no further than the fact that Mr. Adams supports the city mandates requiring thousands of city workers to get vaccinated. Mr. Sliwa not only does not support the mandate, but recently marched alongside workers protesting the policy.

Mr. Adams has our endorsement.

We're encouraged by the passion Mr. Adams shows for championing the needs of ***working-class*** New Yorkers, who have for too long been left out of the city's success. Some of Mr. Adams's most thoughtful ideas include straightforward policies and changes that stem from his own personal experiences. His promise to create universal screening for dyslexia -- a learning disability Mr. Adams dealt with as a child -- is an encouraging example of how he viscerally understands the role city government can play in a child's life.

Several years ago, Mr. Adams overhauled his diet and is now a vegan. For plenty of politicians, that would be a biographical detail. Mr. Adams has parlayed the story into a call to arms (as well as a cookbook), and a poignant example of the connection between racism and health for Black Americans. He has said he is determined to improve the quality of food in schools, jails and shelters.

''When we feed people, we should only feed them healthy food,'' he told Times Opinion's Ezra Klein. ''They go to the government because they don't have any other choices. So it's almost a betrayal when you know someone has no other choice but to eat what you give them, and you're giving them food that feeds their chronic diseases.''

For some voters, this may be a distant priority. But there are millions of New Yorkers who need a mayor who so clearly understands the impact of municipal government on their everyday lives.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/30/opinion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/30/opinion/eric-adams-nyc-mayor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK PETERSON/REDUX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 31, 2021

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[***Republicans Are Winning the School Wars***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6539-9M61-DXY4-X031-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 27, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 6; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1442 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer C. Berkshire and Jack Schneider

**Body**

The warning signs are everywhere. For 30 years, polls showed that Americans trusted Democrats over Republicans to invest in public education and strengthen schools. Within the past year, however, Republicans have closed the gap; a recent poll shows the two parties separated on the issue by less than the margin of error.

Since the Republican Glenn Youngkin scored an upset win in Virginia's race for governor by making education a central campaign issue, Republicans in state after state have capitalized on anger over mask mandates, parental rights and teaching about race, and their strategy seems to be working. The culture wars now threatening to consume American schools have produced an unlikely coalition -- one that includes populists on the right and a growing number of affluent, educated white parents on the left. Both groups are increasingly at odds with the Democratic Party.

For the party leaders tasked with crafting a midterm strategy, this development should set off alarms. Voters who feel looked down on by elites are now finding common cause with those elites, forming an alliance that could not only cost the Democrats the midterm elections but also fundamentally realign American politics.

The Democrats know they have a problem. One recent analysis conducted by the Democratic Governors Association put it bluntly: ''We need to retake education as a winning issue.'' But reclaiming their trustworthiness on education will require more than just savvier messaging. Democrats are going to need to rethink a core assumption: that education is the key to addressing economic inequality.

The party's current education problem reflects a misguided policy shift made decades ago. Eager to reclaim the political center, Democratic politicians increasingly framed education, rather than labor unions or a progressive tax code, as the answer to many of our economic problems, embracing what Barack Obama would later call ''ladders of opportunity,'' such as ''good'' public schools and college degrees, which would offer a ''hand up'' rather than a handout. Bill Clinton famously pronounced, ''What you earn depends on what you learn.''

But this message has proved to be deeply alienating to the people who once made up the core of the party. As the philosopher Michael Sandel wrote in his recent book ''The Tyranny of Merit,'' Democrats often seemed to imply that people whose living standards were declining had only themselves to blame. Meanwhile, more affluent voters were congratulated for their smarts and hard work. Tired of being told to pick themselves up and go to college, working people increasingly turned against the Democrats.

Today, as the middle class falls further behind the wealthy, the belief in education as the sole remedy for economic inequality appears more and more misguided. And yet, because Democrats have spent the past 30 years framing schooling as the surest route to the good life, any attempt to make our education system fairer is met with fierce resistance from affluent liberals worried that Democratic reforms might threaten their carefully laid plans to help their children get ahead.

In California, plans to place less emphasis on calculus in an effort to address persistent racial and socioeconomic disparities in math achievement have spawned furious backlash. So, too, did the announcement last fall that New York City schools would be winding down their gifted and talented program, which has been widely criticized for exacerbating segregation -- an announcement that Mayor Eric Adams has begun to walk back.

Mr. Youngkin was one of the first to recognize that these anxieties could be used for political gain, and he carefully tailored his messaging to parents from both affluent families and the conservative movement. In his appeals to the Republican base, he railed against critical race theory and claimed that allies of George Soros had inserted ''operatives'' on local school boards. To centrist parents, he pledged to undo admissions policy changes aimed at bolstering diversity at Virginia's prestigious Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, where graduates regularly go on to attend Ivy League universities.

These promises seem to have worked. A recent focus group conducted by a Democratic polling firm showed that education was the top issue cited by Joe Biden supporters who had voted or considered voting for Mr. Youngkin. Participants referred to an array of complaints about education, including a sense that the focus on race and social justice in Virginia's schools had gone too far, eclipsing core academic subjects. Similar charges echoed through the San Francisco school board election last month as Asian American voters, furious over changes to the admissions process at a highly selective high school, galvanized a movement to oust three school board members.

How can Democrats claw out of this bind? In the near term, they can remind voters that Republican efforts to limit what kids are taught in school will hurt students, no matter their background. The College Board's Advanced Placement program, for example, recently warned that it would remove the A.P. designation from courses when required topics were banned. Whatever the limitations of the A.P. program, students from all class backgrounds still use it to earn college credit and demonstrate engagement in rigorous coursework. Democrats could also take a page from Mr. Youngkin's playbook and pledge, as he did, to invest more ''than has ever been invested in education,'' an issue that resonates across party lines.

But if Democrats want to stop bleeding ***working-class*** votes, they need to begin telling a different story about education and what schools can and can't do. For a generation, Democrats have framed a college degree as the main path to economic mobility, a foolproof way to expand the middle class. But now kids regularly emerge from college burdened with crushing student debt and struggling to find stable jobs. To these graduates and to their parents it is painfully obvious that degrees do not necessarily guarantee success. A generation ago, Mr. Clinton may have been able to make a convincing case that education could solve all people's problems, but today Democrats risk irrelevance -- or worse -- by sticking with that tired mantra.

So, yes, strong schools are essential for the health and well-being of young people: Schools are where they gain confidence in themselves and build relationships with adults and with one another, where they learn about the world and begin to imagine life beyond their neighborhoods. But schools can't level a playing field marred by racial inequality and increasingly sharp class distinctions; to pretend otherwise is both bad policy and bad politics. Moreover, the idea that schools alone can foster equal opportunity is a dangerous form of magical thinking that not only justifies existing inequality but also exacerbates our political differences by pitting the winners in our economy against the losers.

Democrats can reclaim education as a winning issue. They might even be able to carve out some badly needed common ground, bridging the gap between those who have college degrees and those who don't by telling a more compelling story about why we have public education in this country. But that story must go beyond the scramble for social mobility if the party is to win back some of the working people it has lost over the past few decades.

Schools may not be able to solve inequality. But they can give young people a common set of social and civic values, as well as the kind of education that is valuable in its own right and not merely as a means to an end. We don't fund education with our tax dollars to wash our hands of whatever we might owe to the next generation. Instead, we do it to strengthen our communities -- by preparing students for the wide range of roles they will inevitably play as equal members of a democratic society.

Jennifer Berkshire (@BisforBerkshire) is a freelance journalist, and Jack Schneider (@Edu\_Historian) is an associate professor of education at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. They are the authors of ''A Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door: The Dismantling of Public Education and the Future of School'' and the hosts of the education policy podcast ''Have You Heard.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/21/opinion/democrats-public-education-culture-wars.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/21/opinion/democrats-public-education-culture-wars.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kati Lacker FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2022

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[***The Many Ways in Which Abortion Views Differ***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62PY-G681-DXY4-X3T1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 21, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 794 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

For nearly 50 years, public opinion has had only a limited effect on abortion policy. The Roe v. Wade decision, which the Supreme Court issued in 1973, established a constitutional right to abortion in many situations and struck down restrictions in dozens of states. But now that the court has agreed to hear a case that could lead to the overturning of Roe, voters and legislators may soon again be determining abortion laws, state by state. Americans' views on abortion are sufficiently complex that both sides in the debate are able to point to survey data that suggests majority opinion is on their side -- and then to argue that the data friendly to their own side is the ''right'' data.

These competing claims can be confusing. But when you dig into the data, you discover there are some clear patterns and objective truths. 1. A pro-Roe majority . . . Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans -- 60 percent to 70 percent, in recent polls by both Gallup and Pew -- say they do not want the Supreme Court to overturn Roe. Similarly, close to 60 percent of Americans say they favor abortion access in either all or most circumstances, according to Pew. These are the numbers that abortion rights advocates often emphasize. 2. . . . and a pro-restriction majority The most confounding aspect of public opinion is a contradiction between Americans' views on Roe itself and their views on specific abortion policies: Even as most people say they support the ruling, most also say they favor restrictions that Roe does not permit. Roe, for example, allows only limited restrictions on abortion during the second trimester, mostly involving a mother's health. But less than 30 percent of Americans say that abortion should ''generally be legal'' in the second trimester, according to Gallup. Many people also oppose abortion in specific circumstances -- because a fetus has Down syndrome, for example -- even during the first trimester. One sign that many Americans favor significant restrictions is in the Gallup data. Gallup uses slightly different wording from Pew, creating an option that allows people to say that abortion should be legal ''in only a few'' circumstances. And that is the most popular answer, with 35 percent of respondents giving it. This helps explain why many abortion rights advocates are worried that the justices will gut Roe without officially overturning it. Yes, they are often influenced by public opinion. 3. Remarkable stability Opinion on some major political issues has changed substantially over the last half-century. On taxes and regulation, people's views have ebbed and flowed. On some cultural issues -- like samesex marriage and marijuana legalization -- views have moved sharply in one direction. But opinion on abortion has barely budged. A key reason is that abortion opinion differs only modestly by age group. Americans under 30 support abortion rights more strongly than Americans over 50, but the gap is not huge. The age gaps on marijuana legalization, same-sex marriage and climate change are all larger. Abortion remains a vexing issue for large numbers of Americans in every generation -- which suggests the debate is not likely to be resolved anytime soon. 4. A modest gender gap . . . Gender plays a major role in American politics. Most women voted for Joe Biden, while most men voted for Donald Trump. On many issues, like gun control and the minimum wage, there is a large gender gap. But the gap on abortion is not so large. If anything, it seems to be smaller than the partisan gap. That suggests, perhaps surprisingly, that there are more Democratic-voting women who favor significant abortion restrictions than Republican-voting women who favor almost universal access -- while the opposite is true for men. 5. . . . and a big class gap One of the strongest predictors of a person's view on abortion is educational attainment, as you can see in the chart above. ***Working-class*** Americans often favor restrictions. Many religiously observant people also favor restrictions. It's yet another way in which the Democratic coalition is becoming tilted toward college graduates and the Republican coalition is going in the other direction. The bottom line Both advocates and opponents of abortion access believe the issue is too important to be decided by public opinion. For advocates, women should have control over their bodies; after all, no major decision of men's health is subject to a veto by politicians or other voters. And for opponents, the life of an unborn child is too important to be subject to almost any other consideration. If Roe is overturned or substantially weakened, this debate will play out state by state. Many states are likely to restrict abortion access substantially.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/pageoneplus/20rex2.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/19/pageoneplus/20rex2.html)

**Load-Date:** May 20, 2021

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[***Former Shoe Shiner Wins Back Nearly $30,000 Seized by Federal Agents***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YY-R9C1-DXY4-X0P2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 31, 2021 Sunday 10:56 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1026 words

**Byline:** Michael Levenson

**Highlight:** Authorities at an airport last year seized a bag of cash that Kermit Warren was carrying to buy a truck. It was his life’s savings but prosecutors contended the money was linked to drugs.

**Body**

Authorities at an airport last year seized a bag of cash that Kermit Warren was carrying to buy a truck. It was his life’s savings but prosecutors contended the money was linked to drugs.

When Kermit Warren lost his job shining shoes during the Covid-19 pandemic last year, he and his son took his life savings of nearly $30,000 to buy a tow truck to support Mr. Warren’s longtime side business of collecting scrap metal.

But after flying from New Orleans to Ohio to buy the truck, Mr. Warren and his son discovered that it was the wrong kind — it was designed for hauling heavy equipment, not scrap metal — so they returned home with $28,180 in cash in a pink gift bag.

As Mr. Warren walked through security at the airport in Columbus, Ohio, the screeners asked him about the money and then let him continue on.

At the gate, just before Mr. Warren and his son boarded their flight, three agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration asked Mr. Warren about the cash. He “stammered” that he had flown to Ohio to buy a truck but could not give the year, make or model, or show an ad or a picture of the truck, federal prosecutors later said in court papers.

In a panic, Mr. Warren said, he pulled out a badge that had belonged to another son, a former New Orleans police officer, and claimed to be a retired officer. The agents soon suspected that Mr. Warren was carrying illegal drug money and seized the cash. Then they let him and his son, Leo, board the plane.

“I never knew in my whole 58 years as a man in the United States that three D.E.A. agents could take a man’s money from him that he worked for, and not had committed any kind of crime, or was arrested for doing any type of wrongdoing,” Mr. Warren said in [*a video*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mMfE-NM8Eu4) released by his lawyers. “How could they just take my money from me like that?”

The seizure, on Nov. 4, 2020, led to a yearlong ordeal that highlighted what Mr. Warren’s lawyers call the injustice of [*civil forfeiture*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/19/us/politics/justice-department-civil-asset-forfeiture.html), which allows law enforcement officials to seize the cash, cars or other personal property of people suspected of crimes but not charged.

The practice is a popular way to raise revenue but has been easily abused and widely criticized for depriving people of their right to due process and for disproportionately affecting poor people and people of color like Mr. Warren, who is Black.

Flying domestically with any amount of cash is legal, but law enforcement officials routinely seize large amounts of cash at airports, according to the [*Institute for Justice*](https://ij.org/), a public interest law firm that represents Mr. Warren. The institute has [*sued the D.E.A. and the Transportation Security Administration*](https://ij.org/press-release/major-class-action-lawsuit-against-tsa-and-dea-over-airport-seizures-achieves-first-round-victory/), accusing the agencies of seizing travelers’ money without probable cause.

Dan Alban, an institute lawyer who represents Mr. Warren, said that prosecutors already have tools to seize cash and other property used in crimes after a person is charged and convicted.

“Civil forfeiture, in contrast, does not even require criminal charges to be brought, let alone a criminal conviction,” Mr. Alban said. “It punishes people for a crime without convicting them of that crime.”

It wasn’t until April that federal prosecutors filed a formal [*civil forfeiture complaint*](https://ij.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2-21-cv-1621_Verified-Complaint-for-Forfeiture-in-Rem.pdf), asserting that the money was connected to illegal drug activity and that the government should keep it.

Prosecutors noted that Mr. Warren had falsely claimed to be a retired police officer, that he was flying with a one-way ticket and that he did not have any carry-on bags or a change of clothes. They also later said he was “linked” to a house connected to drug trafficking — a claim his lawyers refuted.

Mr. Alban said he provided prosecutors with text messages that showed that workers at Buckeye Forklift in Plain City, Ohio, were aware that Mr. Warren was coming to inspect a truck. Mr. Alban also gave prosecutors an Uber receipt showing that Mr. Warren and his son had traveled from a gas station near Buckeye Forklift to the airport in Columbus on the morning the cash was seized.

He gave prosecutors Mr. Warren’s tax returns and pay stubs dating to 2016, proving that he had worked at Central Grocery &amp; Deli in New Orleans (where he mixed olive salad for muffuletta sandwiches), that he had been a longshoreman at the Port of New Orleans and that he had shined shoes at the Roosevelt New Orleans hotel until he was laid off last year.

The evidence showed “he had a legitimate purpose for his trip to Ohio and a legitimate source for the cash he had earned,” Mr. Alban said.

On Thursday, federal prosecutors agreed to return all $28,180 to Mr. Warren and to dismiss their civil forfeiture complaint “with prejudice,” which means that it cannot be refiled, Mr. Alban said.

In the agreement, prosecutors did not admit any wrongdoing. Prosecutors and the D.E.A. did not respond to emails seeking comment on Saturday.

“It’s amazing,” Mr. Warren said in an interview on Saturday. “I thank God for it because without facts, you can’t have truth. I had everything in order. All my i’s were dotted. All my t’s were crossed. We didn’t do anything wrong.”

Unlike Mr. Warren, most people do not go to court to reclaim their seized cash and property, Mr. Alban said, in part because the cost of a lawyer is often greater than the value of the property they are seeking.

The median amount of cash forfeitures by agencies under the Justice Department from 2015 to 2019 was about $12,000, Mr. Alban said. At the state level, it was about $1,000, he said.

The amounts show “these are not big drug kingpins,” Mr. Alban said. “The people most frequently impacted are everyday people, ***working-class*** people and the poor.”

Mr. Warren said the hardest part of having his money seized was not being able to pay his bills over the past year, buy gifts for his grandchildren or treat himself to a steak dinner.

In the agreement he reached with federal prosecutors, they said they would return his money to him by Nov. 25, Thanksgiving.

PHOTO: Kermit Warren said the hardest part of having his money seized was not being able to pay his bills over the past year, buy gifts for his grandchildren or treat himself to a steak dinner. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Institute for Justice FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 8, 2021

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[***A To-Do List for Eric Adams; The Editorial Board***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63YS-2551-DXY4-X0D9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 30, 2021 Saturday 22:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1091 words

**Byline:** The Editorial Board

**Highlight:** Mr. Adams has The Times’s endorsement.

**Body**

Barring political cataclysm, Eric Leroy Adams, a former police captain turned Democratic politician, will become New York City’s next mayor.

For Mr. Adams, Brooklyn’s charismatic borough president and the Democratic nominee for mayor, winning the general election on Tuesday is likely to be the easy part. Democrats outnumber Republicans in New York City nearly seven to one. The real challenge comes in January, when the new mayor will begin setting the pandemic-scarred city back on its feet.

If he is elected, Mr. Adams will enter City Hall with very few of the advantages that Bill de Blasio enjoyed eight years ago. He may have to guide the city’s recovery without the same generous surpluses and steady economy, for example. Unlike Mr. de Blasio, Mr. Adams only barely won the Democratic primary. To govern effectively, he will also have to find a way to reassure those who didn’t vote for him — which includes a large portion of voters in his own party — that he will be a mayor for all New Yorkers.

Since the Democratic primary, a great deal of the mayoral race has focused on crime. Mr. Adams has staked his campaign in large part around law and order, while also supporting police reform. That may seem strange for a Democratic politician in liberal New York City. Coming from Mr. Adams — who served in the Police Department for 22 years, rising through the ranks to become a captain, even as he publicly fought to reform the department — it is more [*complicated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/23/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-nyc.html).

In many ways, Mr. Adams, who is Black and grew up in South Jamaica, Queens, represents the unaddressed hunger of Black communities for both safer streets and better policing. If Mr. Adams can better protect communities that bear the burden of gun violence while also bringing accountability and reform to the city’s Police Department, as he has promised to do, that will be a triumph.

The city is also facing other, arguably even greater, challenges.

The top priorities for the next administration ought to include ensuring that the city’s roughly one million public school students recover from a year of lost learning in the pandemic, particularly the [*600,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/13/nyregion/nyc-school-reopening.html) students who learned remotely last year. Even as the pandemic recedes, the city’s public school system needs significant help: more aid for some [*100,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/09/09/magazine/homeless-students.html) homeless students in the city, sweeping reforms to improve schools in low-income communities and progress in integrating some of the nation’s most [*segregated*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/02/opinion/nyc-schools.html) schools.

In order to fund better schools and all the rest of the good that the administration is capable of doing, it is vital that New York regains a solid financial footing. That means working with businesses large and small to restart the economic engine that can power progress.

That progress should include building far more affordable housing, especially in [*wealthy areas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/10/opinion/affordable-housing-soho-nyc.html) with good transit where less city subsidy is needed to create units for poor and middle-income New Yorkers.

The city should speed its plodding march toward reclaiming its streets from cars for pedestrians, restaurants and cyclists. Of course, ultimate success there depends on getting the beleaguered subway system back on its feet. That means maintaining a good relationship with the governor, who holds the real power over the city’s transit system. The endless cycle of fruitless bickering between the former governor and current mayor helped no one.

The next administration will also need to work alongside the state government to close the jail complex on [*Rikers Island*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/15/opinion/rikers-island-de-blasio-close.html), holding fast to reforms that prioritize mental health services and modernize detention facilities, while still keeping the city safe.

All this work must be done while continuing to shore up this waterfront city against the rising tides of climate change.

There are also several policy areas in which we hope Mr. Adams will [*change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/10/opinion/eric-adams-endorsement-interview.html) his mind over the next four years from promises made on the campaign trail. We hope he will take a greater interest in racially integrating the city’s public schools. We also hope he will adopt a tougher approach to ensuring that ultra-Orthodox yeshivas that have been the subject of serious [*complaints*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/23/opinion/yeshiva-orthodox-jews-deblasio.html) from parents and former students actually meet basic state education standards.

If the polls and history are any indication, Mr. Adams has little competition at the ballot box Tuesday in Curtis Sliwa, a Republican and the founder of the Guardian Angels who has laid out few detailed proposals for what he would do in office. Voters intent on differentiating the two need look no further than the fact that Mr. Adams supports the city mandates requiring thousands of city workers to get vaccinated. Mr. Sliwa not only does not support the mandate, but recently marched alongside workers protesting the policy.

Mr. Adams has our endorsement.

We’re encouraged by the passion Mr. Adams shows for championing the needs of ***working-class*** New Yorkers, who have for too long been left out of the city’s success. Some of Mr. Adams’s most thoughtful ideas include straightforward policies and changes that stem from his own personal experiences. His promise to create universal screening for dyslexia — a learning disability Mr. Adams dealt with as a child — is an encouraging example of how he viscerally understands the role city government can play in a child’s life.

Several years ago, Mr. Adams overhauled his diet and is now a vegan. For plenty of politicians, that would be a biographical detail. Mr. Adams has parlayed the [*story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/02/well/an-inspiring-story-of-weight-loss-and-its-aftermath.html) into a call to arms (as well as a cookbook), and a poignant example of the connection between racism and health for Black Americans. He has said he is determined to improve the quality of food in schools, jails and shelters.

“When we feed people, we should only feed them healthy food,” he [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/01/podcasts/transcript-ezra-klein-interviews-eric-adams.html?.?mc=aud_dev&amp;ad-keywords=auddevgate&amp;gclid=Cj0KCQjwlOmLBhCHARIsAGiJg7kqHXzWb2CIVKfkexiZc9z4TUzANp0UoQsffcog0C477vju5qEOAdUaAhZNEALw_wcB&amp;gclsrc=aw.ds) Times Opinion’s Ezra Klein. “They go to the government because they don’t have any other choices. So it’s almost a betrayal when you know someone has no other choice but to eat what you give them, and you’re giving them food that feeds their chronic diseases.”

For some voters, this may be a distant priority. But there are millions of New Yorkers who need a mayor who so clearly understands the impact of municipal government on their everyday lives.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK PETERSON/REDUX FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 30, 2021

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[***Halle Berry Still Awaits Her Oscar Successor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6539-9M61-DXY4-X021-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 27, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 8

**Length:** 1369 words

**Byline:** By Sarah Bahr

**Body**

Since she won best actress for ''Monster's Ball,'' no other Black woman has taken the prize, a fact she calls ''heartbreaking.''

Halle Berry had all but counted herself out.

It was a cool March night in Hollywood in 2002, and she was just excited to have been nominated for her first Academy Award, in the best actress category, for her role as a waitress who has an affair with her convicted husband's executioner in Marc Forster's dark drama ''Monster's Ball.''

Up against Nicole Kidman (''Moulin Rouge''), Judi Dench (''Iris''), Sissy Spacek (''In the Bedroom'') and Renée Zellweger (''Bridget Jones's Diary''), Berry was only the seventh African American actress ever nominated. A win would vault her into the annals of history as the first Black winner.

But Berry never thought it would happen.

''Back in those days, if you didn't win the Globe, you really didn't get the Academy Award,'' Berry, 55, said in a recent phone conversation, referring to the Golden Globe that she had lost to Spacek. ''So I'd pretty much resigned myself to believing, 'It's great to be here, but I'm not going to win.'''

But then the previous year's best actor winner, Russell Crowe, opened the envelope and read her name, the camera zooming in on her teary, shocked face. She took a moment to collect herself, then walked to the stage in her now-iconic Elie Saab gown, the voluminous burgundy train trailing behind her, as the applause went on, and on, and on.

''Oh my God,'' were her first words when she finally had breath enough to speak, tears still rolling down her cheeks, hands trembling as she clutched the statuette. She hadn't prepared a speech. She had no list of people to thank either.

''I don't have any memory of it,'' Berry said. ''I don't even know how I got up there. It was totally a blackout moment. All I remember is Russell Crowe saying, 'Breathe, mate.' And then I had a golden statue in my hand, and I just started talking.''

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

She dedicated the moment to Dorothy Dandridge, who in 1955 became the first African American woman nominated for best actress (for ''Carmen Jones''), and to other previous African American nominees like Diahann Carroll and Angela Bassett.

''This moment is so much bigger than me,'' Berry told the crowd, adding, ''It's for every nameless, faceless woman of color that now has a chance because this door tonight has been opened.''

At one point, she looked up to the balcony and spotted Sidney Poitier, who in 1964 became the first Black man to win an Academy Award for best actor, for ''Lilies of the Field,'' and was there that night to receive an honorary award.

''It was so special to have him there,'' Berry said in an interview, a few weeks after he died in January at age 94. ''He and Dorothy Dandridge allowed me to dream outside my own backyard and believe that a little Black kid from Cleveland could do this.''

When the orchestra signaled her to wrap it up after about three minutes, she resisted.

''It's been 74 years,'' she said onstage, referring to all the ceremonies in which a white actress had won the award. ''I got to take this time.'' (It would be an evening of long speeches, clocking in as the longest Oscars ever, at four hours and 23 minutes.)

A few moments later, the night entered the history books again: Denzel Washington became the second African American man to win best actor, for his role as a crooked cop in ''Training Day,'' making the 2002 ceremony the first -- and only -- time both of the top acting awards went to actors of color.

But in the 20 years since that night, just 12 other Black performers have won Oscars. Though two men -- Jamie Foxx and Forest Whitaker -- have joined the ranks of African American best actor winners, no other Black women have been named best actress, and it took eight years after Berry's win for another Black woman to even be nominated in the category (Gabourey Sidibe for ''Precious'' in 2010).

''It didn't open the door,'' Berry said. ''The fact that there's no one standing next to me is heartbreaking.''

Mia L. Mask, a professor of film at Vassar College and the author of ''Divas on Screen: Black Women in American Film,'' said Berry's victory was particularly notable because it came amid a paucity of quality roles for Black men -- and even fewer for Black women.

''For a woman of color to win, the film itself has to be a good movie and meet the sensibility of academy members,'' she said. ''And the performance has to be good.''

The roles historically available to African American performers, she noted, have largely been isolated characters dependent on white benefactors, as was the case with some of the parts for which Black actors won Oscars before Berry: Hattie McDaniel's Mammy in ''Gone With the Wind'' and Poitier's handyman in ''Lilies of the Field.''

The carnal nature of the central ''Monster's Ball'' relationship between Berry's character, Leticia, and Billy Bob Thornton's character, Hank, a white corrections officer, was the target of criticism from another Black actress, Angela Bassett, who told Newsweek in June 2002 that she had declined the part because she ''wasn't going to be a prostitute on film.'' (Bassett did not respond to a request for comment for this story.)

Noting that she didn't ''begrudge Halle her success,'' Bassett said at the time, ''I couldn't do that because it's such a stereotype about Black women and sexuality.'' (Tom Ortenberg, president of Lionsgate Films, which produced the movie, later said Bassett was never offered the role of Leticia, who was not a prostitute.)

Mask said that today's audiences are more attuned to the contrivances of ''Monster's Ball'' than they were 20 years ago, particularly the restaurant and prison scenes that are strikingly underpopulated, even for rural Georgia. Berry's character has no church, school or civic groups available for her to even consider joining.

''It's not credible that a young woman -- particularly as attractive as Berry's Leticia -- would live in isolation without any Black community,'' she said.

In a 2004 article published in Film Quarterly, Mask noted that the film, which is set in a Georgia town in the 1990s, is also problematic because of its voyeuristic attitude toward ***working-class*** women's sexuality in the context of American race relations.

''Many viewers interpreted the film's sex scenes as reproducing the pornographic gaze at the Black female body, thereby re-stigmatizing Black feminine sexuality,'' she wrote.

Berry said that she was aware of the criticism and that she would ''absolutely'' take the role today.

''I loved that character from the minute I read the script,'' she said. ''I thought the story was important, and it touched me. So if I read that today and felt that same way, which I think I would -- absolutely.''

Berry said that while she certainly celebrated her milestone win, she was determined not to let it change the types of parts she took.

''You have to stay true to whatever got you to that place to get that award,'' she said. ''And, for me, it was taking risks and doing things outside the box.''

But, Berry emphasized, the fact that no African American has won the academy's top acting award for women in the past two decades should not take anything away from women like Lena Waithe and Viola Davis, who are producing ''miraculous, wonderful work.''

''We can't always judge success or progress by how many awards we have,'' she said. ''Awards are the icing on the cake -- they're your peers saying you were exceptionally excellent this year -- but does that mean that if we don't get the exceptionally excellent nod, that we were not great, and we're not successful, and we're not changing the world with our art, and our opportunities aren't growing?''

Even more important than the statuette in her bedroom, Berry said, is the work she's been able to do in the years since. She recently directed her first film, the mixed martial arts drama ''Bruised,'' which began streaming on Netflix in November.

''Twenty years ago, a Black woman directing a movie about the fight genre?'' she said. ''I don't think I could've even wrapped my brain around it. That's proof to me that things are changing.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, a tearful Halle Berry accepting the Oscar in 2002. The win came for her role in ''Monster's Ball,'' left, which also starred Billy Bob Thornton. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

JEANNE LOUISE BULLIARD/LIONSGATE)

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY ADRIENNE RAQUEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 27, 2022

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[***The Many Ways in Which Abortion Views Differ***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62R5-WJF1-JBG3-6488-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 20, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 794 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

For nearly 50 years, public opinion has had only a limited effect on abortion policy. The Roe v. Wade decision, which the Supreme Court issued in 1973, established a constitutional right to abortion in many situations and struck down restrictions in dozens of states. But now that the court has agreed to hear a case that could lead to the overturning of Roe, voters and legislators may soon again be determining abortion laws, state by state. Americans' views on abortion are sufficiently complex that both sides in the debate are able to point to survey data that suggests majority opinion is on their side -- and then to argue that the data friendly to their own side is the ''right'' data.

These competing claims can be confusing. But when you dig into the data, you discover there are some clear patterns and objective truths. 1. A pro-Roe majority . . . Polls consistently show that a majority of Americans -- 60 percent to 70 percent, in recent polls by both Gallup and Pew -- say they do not want the Supreme Court to overturn Roe. Similarly, close to 60 percent of Americans say they favor abortion access in either all or most circumstances, according to Pew. These are the numbers that abortion rights advocates often emphasize. 2. . . . and a pro-restriction majority The most confounding aspect of public opinion is a contradiction between Americans' views on Roe itself and their views on specific abortion policies: Even as most people say they support the ruling, most also say they favor restrictions that Roe does not permit. Roe, for example, allows only limited restrictions on abortion during the second trimester, mostly involving a mother's health. But less than 30 percent of Americans say that abortion should ''generally be legal'' in the second trimester, according to Gallup. Many people also oppose abortion in specific circumstances -- because a fetus has Down syndrome, for example -- even during the first trimester. One sign that many Americans favor significant restrictions is in the Gallup data. Gallup uses slightly different wording from Pew, creating an option that allows people to say that abortion should be legal ''in only a few'' circumstances. And that is the most popular answer, with 35 percent of respondents giving it. This helps explain why many abortion rights advocates are worried that the justices will gut Roe without officially overturning it. Yes, they are often influenced by public opinion. 3. Remarkable stability Opinion on some major political issues has changed substantially over the last half-century. On taxes and regulation, people's views have ebbed and flowed. On some cultural issues -- like samesex marriage and marijuana legalization -- views have moved sharply in one direction. But opinion on abortion has barely budged. A key reason is that abortion opinion differs only modestly by age group. Americans under 30 support abortion rights more strongly than Americans over 50, but the gap is not huge. The age gaps on marijuana legalization, same-sex marriage and climate change are all larger. Abortion remains a vexing issue for large numbers of Americans in every generation -- which suggests the debate is not likely to be resolved anytime soon. 4. A modest gender gap . . . Gender plays a major role in American politics. Most women voted for Joe Biden, while most men voted for Donald Trump. On many issues, like gun control and the minimum wage, there is a large gender gap. But the gap on abortion is not so large. If anything, it seems to be smaller than the partisan gap. That suggests, perhaps surprisingly, that there are more Democratic-voting women who favor significant abortion restrictions than Republican-voting women who favor almost universal access -- while the opposite is true for men. 5. . . . and a big class gap One of the strongest predictors of a person's view on abortion is educational attainment, as you can see in the chart above. ***Working-class*** Americans often favor restrictions. Many religiously observant people also favor restrictions. It's yet another way in which the Democratic coalition is becoming tilted toward college graduates and the Republican coalition is going in the other direction. The bottom line Both advocates and opponents of abortion access believe the issue is too important to be decided by public opinion. For advocates, women should have control over their bodies; after all, no major decision of men's health is subject to a veto by politicians or other voters. And for opponents, the life of an unborn child is too important to be subject to almost any other consideration. If Roe is overturned or substantially weakened, this debate will play out state by state. Many states are likely to restrict abortion access substantially.

**Load-Date:** May 21, 2021

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[***Divided by a Common Language***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SB-PJK1-JBG3-6138-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 13, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 12

**Length:** 1430 words

**Byline:** By Amy Chua

**Body**

THE RISE OF ENGLISHGlobal Politics and the Power of LanguageBy Rosemary Salomone

''Every time the question of language surfaces,'' the Italian Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci wrote, ''in one way or another a series of other problems are coming to the fore,'' like ''the enlargement of the governing class,'' the ''relationships between the governing groups and the national--popular mass'' and the fight over ''cultural hegemony.'' Vindicating Gramsci, Rosemary Salomone's ''The Rise of English'' explores the language wars being fought all over the world, revealing the political, economic and cultural stakes behind these wars, and showing that so far English is winning. It is a panoramic, endlessly fascinating and eye-opening book, with an arresting fact on nearly every page.

English is the world's most widely spoken language, with some 1.5 billion speakers even though it's native for fewer than 400 million. English accounts for 60 percent of world internet content and is the lingua franca of pop culture and the global economy. All 100 of the world's most influential science journals publish in English. ''Across Europe, close to 100 percent of students study English at some point in their education.''

Even in France, where countering the hegemony of English is an official obsession, English is winning. French bureaucrats constantly try to ban Anglicisms ''such as gamer, dark web and fake news,'' Salomone writes, but their edicts are ''quietly ignored.'' Although a French statute called the Toubon Law ''requires radio stations to play 35 percent French songs,'' ''the remaining 65 percent is flooded with American music.'' Many young French artists sing in English. By law, French schoolchildren must study a foreign language, and while eight languages are available, 90 percent choose English.

Salomone, the Kenneth Wang professor of law at St. John's University School of Law, tends to glide over why English won, simply stating that English is the language of neoliberalism and globalization, which seems to beg the question. But she is meticulous and nuanced in chronicling the battles being fought over language policy in countries ranging from Italy to Congo, and analyzing the unexpected winners and losers.

Exactly whom English benefits is complicated. Obviously it benefits native Anglophones. Americans, with what Salomone calls their ''smug monolingualism,'' are often blissfully unaware of the advantage they have because of the worldwide dominance of their native tongue. English also benefits globally connected market-dominant minorities in non-Western countries, like English-speaking whites in South Africa or the Anglophone Tutsi elite in Rwanda. In former French colonies like Algeria and Morocco, shifting from French to English is seen not just as the key to modernization, but as a form of resistance against their colonial past.

In India, the role of English is spectacularly complex. The ruling Hindu nationalist Indian People's Party prefers to depict English as the colonizers' language, impeding the vision of an India unified by Hindu culture and Hindi. By contrast, for speakers of non-Hindi languages and members of lower castes, English is often seen as a shield against majority domination. Some reformers see English as an ''egalitarian language'' in contrast to Indian languages, which carry ''the legacy of caste.'' English is also a symbol of social status. As a character in a recent Bollywood hit says: ''English isn't just a language in this country. It's a class.'' Meanwhile, Indian tiger parents, ''from the wealthiest to the poorest,'' press for their children to be taught in English, seeing it as the ticket to upward mobility.

Salomone's South Africa chapter is among the most interesting in the book. Along with Afrikaans, English is one of South Africa's 11 official languages, and even though only 9.6 percent of the population speak English as their first language, it ''dominates every sector,'' including government, the internet, business, broadcasting, the press, street signs and popular music. But English is not only the language of South Africa's commercial and political elite. It was also the language of Black resistance to the Afrikaner-dominated apartheid regime, giving it enormous symbolic importance. Thus, recent years have seen poor and ***working-class*** Black activists pushing for English-only instruction in universities, even though many of them are not proficient in the language. Opponents of English, however, argue that shifting away from Afrikaans instruction disproportionately hurts the poor of all races, including lower-income Blacks, whites and mixed-race ''colored'' South Africans. Meanwhile, younger ''colored activists are challenging the English-Afrikaans binary and exploring alternate forms of expression, like AfriKaaps,'' a form of Afrikaans promoted by hip-hop artists. For now, though, ''the constitutional commitment to language equality in South Africa is aspirational at best,'' and ''English reigns supreme for its economic power.''

Learning English pays, with ''positive labor market returns across the globe.'' Throughout academia today, even in Europe and Asia, ''the rule no longer is 'Publish or perish' but rather 'Publish in English ... or perish.''' In the Middle East, ''employees who were more proficient in English earned salaries from 5 percent (Tunisia) to a stunning 200 percent (Iraq) more than their non-English-speaking counterparts.'' In Argentina, 90 percent of employers ''believed that English was an indispensable skill for managers and directors.'' In every country she surveys, higher income is correlated with English proficiency.

Salomone concludes with a brief discussion of American monolingualism, describing the waves of political angst over threats to English as the national language, while advocating for more multilingualism in Anglophone countries. Beyond the economic benefits of speaking multiple languages in a globalized world, Salomone cites studies that show learning new languages improves overall cognitive function. In addition, she argues, ''observing life through a wide linguistic and cultural lens leads to greater creativity and innovation.''

''The Rise of English'' has its weaknesses. Most important, the book lacks any clear thesis beyond suggesting ''language is political; it's complicated.'' In addition, the book doesn't tie together or reflect on the divergence of its case studies; I frequently found myself wondering why the experiences of (say) France or Italy or Denmark were different, and what we should take from that fact.

Finally, the book offers no clear evaluative framework. Salomone focuses primarily on straightforward economic factors (which often boil down to the same thing: access to global markets), but there is a smattering of underdeveloped discussion of other, more elusive themes too, like race, equity, colonialism and imperialism. This hodgepodge of incommensurables may trace back to the book's origins. In her preface, Salomone writes, ''My initial plan was to write a book on the value of language in the global economy.'' But ''the deeper I dug ... the more I viewed the issues through a wider global lens and the clearer the connections to educational equity, identity and democratic participation appeared.'' Unfortunately, she never quite gets a handle on these deeper issues.

Will Mandarin, with its 1.11 billion speakers, eventually replace English as the world's lingua franca? Will Google or Microsoft Translate moot the issue? Salomone's painstakingly thorough book addresses these questions too (concluding probably not).

The justifications for English -- or any language -- as a global lingua franca are based primarily in economic efficiency. By contrast, the reasons to protect local languages mostly sound in different registers -- the importance of cultural heritage; the geopolitics of resistance to great powers; the value of Indigenous art; the beauty of idiosyncratic words in other languages that describe all the different types of snow or the different flavors of melancholia. As Gramsci reminded us, the question of who speaks what language invariably puts all this on the table.Amy Chua is the John M. Duff Jr. professor of law at Yale Law School and the author of ''World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability'' and ''Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations.''THE RISE OF ENGLISHGlobal Politics and the Power of LanguageBy Rosemary Salomone488 pp. Oxford University Press. $35.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/18/books/review/the-rise-of-english-rosemary-salomone.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/18/books/review/the-rise-of-english-rosemary-salomone.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: An English-language class in South Carolina, 2015. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE BELLEME FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***In-Betweens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SB-PJK1-JBG3-60Y5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 13, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 22; CHILDREN'S BOOKS

**Length:** 1266 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Hubert Swan

**Body**

ANYBODY HERE SEEN FRENCHIE?By Leslie Connor

A SONG CALLED HOMEBy Sara Zarr

Is there anything more frustrating than being 11? Elevens are often the biggest of the big kids, yet they're still two long years away from being teenagers. The two-faced Roman god Janus, who rules over time and transitions, may as well be the patron deity of 11s, trapped as they are between childhood and adolescence, reluctant to let go of one and unsure how to embrace the other. It's a moment where zippers stick, crushes are crushing and personal freedom is at a premium. But it can also be a period of prodigious growth. Two new middle grade novels, by the National Book Award finalists Leslie Connor (''The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle'') and Sara Zarr (''Story of a Girl''), explore the costs and benefits of this in-between season.

In Connor's ''Anybody Here Seen Frenchie?'' the titular character is on the autism spectrum and loves all things avian. Frenchie Livernoise doesn't speak, with the exception of an occasional bird call. Aurora Petrequin, his loquacious 11-year-old neighbor, has taken Frenchie under her wing since he and his family moved to her small town on the coast of Maine. Together they have formed an unusual bond: Frenchie serves as a willing audience to Aurora's endless discourse, while Aurora is Frenchie's trusted interpreter and protector. In the summer, they hike the beaches and woods of their little hamlet, constantly on the lookout for Frenchie's beloved birds, and during the school year they are always in the same class, serving as each other's ''special person.'' This arrangement has worked beautifully since third grade, shielding both of them from the unkindness of other children when it comes to their unique personality traits.

But now it's the start of sixth grade, and Aurora and Frenchie have been placed in separate classes. As Aurora begins to make new friends and explore experiences outside their circle of two, she starts to realize what she's been missing by having Frenchie as her only companion.

When torn between playing ''Preposterous Pursuits'' with her new friends Leena and Joanie at recess or running her usual 100-yard dashes with Frenchie, who ''counts on things to happen the same way every day,'' Aurora describes her conflicted feelings as ''a little burn'': ''Frustration is what that is.''

Though Frenchie's new classroom aide, Mr. Menkis, advises a guilty Aurora that ''having new friends doesn't mean you're leaving someone else behind,'' Aurora's worst fears come true when Frenchie goes missing from school. She is certain it is her fault for not watching over him as carefully as she used to.

But when the whole community rallies together to find him, Aurora begins to understand that she doesn't have to shoulder the responsibility of Frenchie's well-being all on her own. He's under the loving concern of the entire town.

Connor has created a soft-focus community that reads like a contemporary Grover's Corners with its quirky assortment of kind adults and its cozy woodland setting populated with songbirds and even a fabled piebald deer. The tone is homey, the pacing leisurely and the introduction of neurodiversity thoughtful.

The ebullient Aurora is a perfect foil for the reserved Frenchie. Both characters take big developmental steps toward the land of 12 by not only trusting each other, but also becoming a little less dependent on each other. Children seeking a gentle story of rare birds being seen, supported and understood will feel right at home within these pages.

The young adult author Sara Zarr's middle grade debut, ''A Song Called Home,'' skews more pensive, with a deeply affecting depiction of a ***working-class*** Christian family in flux.

Lou lives with her mom and her older sister, Casey, in an apartment in San Francisco. Though Mom still struggles to pay the rent, things have been better since she divorced their alcoholic father: ''No more walking on eggshells. ... No more wondering how long he'd be able to keep his job this time, or if he'd remember things like your birthday or your baptism or if it was a Saturday or a Tuesday.''

On the eve of her 11th birthday, change is once more in the air, as Lou's mom is about to marry Steve, a man from their church: ''Lou's birthday was on Friday. And then Saturday, the wedding.''

While this will provide some much-needed financial stability, along with separate bedrooms for Lou and Casey, it will also mean changing schools and leaving friends behind.

Steve's offer to adopt Lou and Casey does not sit well with Lou. Steve is perfectly nice, but she already has a dad. ''She didn't need a new one. She just wanted the one she had to be different.''

Lou wants everything to go back to the ''we'' it used to be: ''Before Steve, we was Lou and Casey and Mom. ... Now it seemed like we was Steve and Mom, while Lou and Casey had suddenly become a separate us,'' with no room for Dad at all.

So when Lou is gifted a mysterious guitar for her birthday, she decides to assume it's from Dad, though there is no name on the card. She starts taking lessons from Steve's kind neighbor, and focuses on learning Dad's favorite songs from his old Neil Young and R.E.M. albums. The guitar lessons, along with a new haircut, new friends and a new spelling of her name (''Lu''), help ease the transition to her new school, and slowly her new life becomes just ... her life.

While Dad doesn't suddenly stop drinking, he does show up to see Lou play the guitar in the middle school talent show. And when he admits he was not the one who gave her the guitar, Lou's disappointment is tempered by the fact that she has finally become a ''we'' with the person who did: Steve.

Zarr's portrayal of Lou is achingly authentic, because she lived it. She has been candid about her evangelical Christian childhood in San Francisco, where she grew up without a father after age 10. But what Zarr captures especially well are those small moments of clinging to the past while being pushed into the future that are so quintessentially characteristic of 11-year-olds.

When Mom tells Lou that the yellow kitchen table from the old apartment went to Goodwill, ''Lou froze, then rolled away. It felt as though something had been torn right from her hands.''

On the last day in her old school, Lou is stunned to realize that ''they were all going to go on without her'': ''This classroom would still exist and everyone else would still be in it. ... All the usual games and conversations at recess and lunch would happen. It didn't seem real or possible, but that's how it would be.'' Life will continue, and so, despite all evidence to the contrary, will Lou.

When Lou's mom says, ''Change is hard. Even good change,'' it speaks to the ambivalence 11s feel as they run down the up escalator of life, trying desperately to stay in place. Sometimes adults who have weathered a thousand transformations forget how tumultuous a move, a new school or a fluctuating friendship can be when a decade constitutes your whole life. So thank Janus for author-seers who share their wise insights about this turbulent time to remind both kids and grown-ups that, no matter how awkward or painful, this too shall pass.Jennifer Hubert Swan is the library department chair at the Hackley School in Tarrytown, N.Y., and an adjunct assistant professor at Pratt Institute School of Information, where she teaches youth literature.ANYBODY HERE SEEN FRENCHIE?By Leslie Connor336 pp. Katherine Tegen Books. $16.99.(Ages 8 and up)A SONG CALLED HOMEBy Sara Zarr368 pp. Balzer + Bray. $16.99.(Ages 8 to 12)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/11/books/review/anybody-here-seen-frenchie-leslie-connor-a-song-called-home-sara-zarr.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/11/books/review/anybody-here-seen-frenchie-leslie-connor-a-song-called-home-sara-zarr.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** February 13, 2022

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[***The Marriage Between Republicans and Big Business Is on the Rocks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62F8-W4P1-JBG3-60MF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 14, 2021 Wednesday 15:04 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2740 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** But the internal contradictions of “woke capitalism” are a mixed blessing for the Democratic Party.

**Body**

But the internal contradictions of “woke capitalism” are a mixed blessing for the Democratic Party.

“Woke capitalism” has been a steadily growing phenomenon over the past decade. The muscle of the movement was evident as early as [*2015 in Indiana*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) and [*2016 in North Carolina*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), when corporate opposition forced Republicans to back off anti-gay and anti-transgender legislation.

Much to the dismay of the right — a recent Fox News headline read “[*Corporations fear woke left minority more than silent majority*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205)” — the movement has been gaining momentum, obscuring classic partisan allegiances in corporate America.

This drive has a fast-growing list of backers from the ranks of the Fortune 500, prepared to challenge Republican legislators across the nation.

Right now, the focus of chief executives who are attempting to burnish their progressive credentials is on blocking legislation [*in 24 states*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) that curtails access to the ballot box for racial and ethnic minorities — legislation that, among other things, reduces the number of days for advance voting, that requires photo ID to accompany absentee ballots and that limits or eliminates ballot drop boxes.

Perhaps most threatening to Republicans, key corporate strategists attempting to woo liberal consumers have come to believe that their support for progressive initiatives will generate sufficient revenue to counter retaliation by hostile white voters and the Republican politicians who represent them.

The corporate embrace of these strategies has generally received favorable press, but there are some doubters.

Adam Serwer, a staff writer at The Atlantic, argued in “‘[*Woke Capital’ Doesn’t Exist*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205)” on April 6 that capital “pursues its financial interests in whatever political or social context it finds itself.”

As Serwer puts it,

For big firms, talk is very cheap. Similarly, the actions of Major League Baseball, Coca-Cola, and Delta reflect the political landscape in Georgia and its interaction with their bottom line, not the result of a deep ideological commitment to racial equality.

Similarly, Matthew Walther argued in an [*August 2017 article*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) in The Week, that “we should not be looking to corporate America for moral instruction or making exemplars of its leaders or heaping approbation upon their bland, cynical consultant-designed utterances.”

Apple’s Tim Cook, Walther continued, “tells us that he is against racism. I believe it. Good on him.” As commendable as Cook may be for his antiracism, Walther writes, he

is the C.E.O. of a corporation that has made profits on a scale hitherto unimaginable in human history by exploiting cheap labor in a poor country ruled by tyrants whose authority is perpetuated in no small part thanks to Apple’s own compliance in its silencing of dissent and hiring the smartest lawyers in the world to make their tax burden negligible.

Companies leading the charge against laws promoted by Republican state legislators include Delta Air Lines, Coca-Cola, Merck, Dell Technologies, Mars, Nestlé USA, Unilever and American Airlines.

And just two days ago, 30 chief executives of Michigan’s largest companies, including Ford, General Motors and Quicken Loans, [*declared their opposition*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) to similar changes in voting rules pending before the legislature.

The[*headline*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) on an April 10 Wall Street Journal article sums up the situation: “With [*Georgia Voting Law*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), the Business of Business Becomes Politics.” The law was described by [*USA Today*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) on April 10 as one “that includes restrictions some activists say haven’t been seen since the Jim Crow era.”

Last week, [*executives from over 100 companies*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) held a video conference call to explore ways to voice their opposition to pending and enacted election legislation.

For many Republicans, the future of their party’s dominance in such states as Texas, Florida, North Carolina and Georgia rides on their ability to hold back the rising tide of minority voters.

While Republicans are convinced of the effectiveness of their legislative strategies, [*poll data from the 2020 election*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) suggests they may be mistaken. Republicans made inroads last year among Black and Hispanic voters, the constituencies they would now suppress, while losing ground among white voters, their traditional base of support.

Growing numbers of Republicans are refusing to buckle under pressure from the corporate establishment.

For Gov. Brian Kemp of Georgia, who rejected Donald Trump’s pleas to overturn the state’s presidential election results, the controversy offers the opportunity to claim populist credentials and perhaps to win back the support of Trump loyalists.

“I will not be backing down from this fight,” Kemp [*declared at an April 3 news conference*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205): “This is a call to everyone, not only in Georgia but all across the country to wake up and get in the fight and help us in that fight. Because they are coming for you next.”

In Texas, where American Airlines, Dell Technologies, Microsoft and Southwest Airlines have opposed laws under consideration by Republican state legislators, Republicans have been [*quick to go on the attack*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205).

“Texans are fed up with corporations that don’t share our values trying to dictate public policy,” Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, a Republican, declared in a news release attacking liberalized voting protocols. “The majority of Texans support maintaining the integrity of our elections, which is why I made it a priority this legislative session.”

Other Republicans are explicitly warning business that it will pay a price if it goes too far. “Corporations will invite serious consequences if they become a vehicle for far-left mobs to hijack our country from outside the constitutional order,” Mitch McConnell, the Senate minority leader, [*declared*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) at an April 5 news conference. “Our private sector must stop taking cues from the outrage-industrial complex.”

In the past, the corporate community has been one of McConnell’s most steadfast allies, and its current adversarial stance is a major loss.

[*Alma Cohen*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), a professor at Harvard Law School, and three colleagues analyzed campaign contributions made by 3,800 individuals who served as chief executive of large companies from 2000 to 2017 in their 2019 paper, “[*The Politics of C.E.O.s*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205).” They found a decisive Republican tilt: “More than 57 percent of C.E.O.s are Republicans, 19 percent are Democrats and the rest are neutral.”

I asked [*W. Bradford Wilcox*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), a conservative professor of sociology at the University of Virginia, for his assessment of the conflict between big business and Republicans. His reply suggested that Kemp’s defiant stance will resonate among Republican voters:

The decades-long marriage between the G.O.P. and big business is clearly on the rocks. This is especially true because the G.O.P. is increasingly drawn to a pugnacious and populist cultural style that has more appeal to the ***working class***, and Big Business is increasingly inclined to support the progressive cultural agenda popular among the highly educated.

Taking on corporate America meshes with the goal of [*rebranding*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) the Republican Party — from the party of Wall Street to the [*party of the* ***working class***](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205).

The response of the white ***working-class*** to the leftward shift on social issues by American businesses remains unpredictable.

Democracy Corps, a liberal group, [*conducted focus groups*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) of white Republicans in March and reached the conclusion that conservative voters are cross-pressured, saying, “The Trump loyalists and Trump-aligned were angry, but also despondent, feeling powerless and uncertain they will become more involved in politics.”

While anger is a powerful motivator of political engagement, despondency and the feeling of powerlessness often depress turnout and foster the belief that political participation is futile.

Opinion on the motives of corporate leaders diverges widely among those who study the political evolution of American business.

Scholars and strategists differ over how much the growth of activism is driven by market forces, by public opinion, by conviction and by the growing strength of Black and Hispanic Americans as consumers, employees and increasingly as corporate executives.

[*James Davison Hunter*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), professor of religion, culture and social theory at the University of Virginia, is interested in the psychology of those in the executive suite:

At least on the surface, corporate America has accommodated progressive interests on these issues and others, including the larger agenda of critical race theory, the Me-Too movement, the gay and transgender rights, etc. There has been a shift leftward.

The question he poses is why. His answer is complex:

The idea, once held, that what was good for business was good for America is now a distant memory. A reputation, long in the making, for avoiding taxes and opposing unions all in pursuit of profit has done much to undermine the credibility of business as a force for the common good. Embracing the progressive agenda is a way to position itself as a “good” corporate citizen. Corporations gain legitimacy.

The fluid ideological commitments of business should be seen in the larger context of American politics and culture, Hunter argues:

Over the long haul, conservatives have fought the culture war politically. For them, it was the White House, the Senate and, above all, the Supreme Court that mattered. Political power was pre-eminent.

Progressives have struggled in political combat, while in the nation’s cultural disputes, in Hunter’s view, the left has dominated:

Even while progressives were losing elections, gay and transgender rights, feminism, Black Lives Matter and critical race perspectives were all gaining credibility — in important cultural institutions including journalism, academia, entertainment, advertising, public education, philanthropy, and elsewhere. Sooner or later, it was bound to influence corporate life, the military, and other so-called conservative institutions not least because there was no credible conservative alternative to these questions; only a defensive rejection.

How will this play out?

We will continue to see ugly political battles long into the future, but the culture wars are tilting definitively toward a progressive win and not least because they have a new patron in important corporations.

[*Malia Lazu*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), a lecturer at M.I.T.’s Sloan School of Management, argued in an email that the public’s slow but steady shift to the left on racial and social issues is driving corporate decision-making: “Corporations understand consumers want to see their commitment to environmental and social issues.”

Lazu cited studies by Cone, a business consulting firm, “showing that 86 percent of Americans would support a brand aligned with their values and 75 percent would refuse to buy a product they saw as contrary to their beliefs.”

Lazu contends that “there is a generational shift in America toward increasing justice and collective responsibility” and that as a result, “institutions, including corporations, will make incremental change.”

[*John A. Haigh*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), co-director of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government at Harvard’s Kennedy School, does not agree with those who see business motivated solely by potential profits, arguing instead that idealism has become a major force.

“Corporations have an obligation to deliver high performance for their shareholders and other stakeholders — customers, employees, and suppliers,” Haigh wrote in an email. But, he continued, “corporations also have an obligation to do so with high integrity.”

In the case of challenges to restrictive voting laws, Haigh believes that

there is also a possibility that they are behaving with some sense of their moral obligation to society — with integrity. The right to vote could be seen as a pillar of our democratic system, and blatant attempts to suppress votes are offensive to our core values.

Haigh says that he does not want

to sound Pollyannish — these are difficult trade-offs within corporations, and it is much more complicated than simply “doing good.” But there are thresholds for moral behavior, and companies do have an obligation to speak up. There is a long history in the U.S. around issues of civil rights and their suppression, and mixed engagement by companies in addressing these issues.

[*Neal Hartman*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), a senior lecturer who is also at M.I.T.’s Sloan School, argued that in attacking voting rights, Republicans violated a tenet of American democracy important to voters of all stripes.

Not only have the restrictive proposals [*in Georgia*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) and other states awakened “strong levels of activism among many moderate-to-liberal voters,” Hartman wrote by email, but

many people in the United States — including a number of more conservative individuals — believe voting should be as simple and widespread as possible. It is a fundamental principle of our democracy.

Corporations, Hartman continued, “are responding to calls from the public, their shareholders, and their employees to respond to bills and laws deemed as being unfair.”

Hartman argues that “voting rights is front and center today,” but that “not far behind will be efforts to thwart L.G.B.T.Q.I. rights — bills targeting the transgender community are already being introduced and passed — as well as continuing battles regarding abortion and the rights of women to choose.”

There is some overlap between the thinking of [*Robert Livingston*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), a lecturer in public policy at Harvard’s Kennedy School, and Haigh and Hartman:

What we are seeing in Georgia is an affront to people’s basic sense of morality and decency. And people will sometimes subordinate their self-interest to cherished values and beliefs. Many of these companies have credos and core values that are internalized by their leadership and employees, and we see leaders becoming increasingly willing to express their disapproval of the reckless temerity of politically savvy but socially irresponsible politicians.

Livingston acknowledges that many companies are

motivated by their own interests as well. Major League Baseball is an organization that depends on people of color. Nike tends to cater to an increasingly youthful and diverse customer base. So, there is something in it for them too.

But, he continued, “I’ve worked with a lot of top leaders and can tell you that for many of them, it’s more a question of principle than politics.”

[*Joseph Aldy*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205), a professor of public policy at the Kennedy School, noted in an email that willingness to engage in controversial political issues is most evident in the case of climate change “The climate denial/climate skeptic attitude that characterizes many Republican elected officials is increasingly out of step with the majority of the American public and the American business community,” he said, while

“the continued focus on cultural issues among Republicans reflects a growing estrangement between the business community and the Republican Party.”

There are several possible scenarios of how these preoccupations and conflicts will evolve.

Insofar as the split between American business and the Republican Party widens and companies begin to cut campaign contributions, the likely loser is Mitch McConnell, the leader of the party’s corporate wing. Any limit on McConnell’s ability to channel business money to campaigns would be a setback.

Such a development would further empower the more extreme members of the Republican Party’s Trump wing and would embolden Republican officials to escalate their conflict with corporate America.

For example, David Ralston, the speaker of the Georgia House — which has just passed a retaliatory bill penalizing Delta by eliminating a tax break on jet fuel — [*told reporters*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205): “You don’t feed a dog that bites your hand.”

Finally, for Democrats, the leftward shift of business is a mixed blessing.

On the plus side, Democrats gain an ally in pressing a liberal agenda on social and racial issues.

On the downside, the perception of the party as allied with corporate interests may take root and Democratic officials are very likely to face pressure to make concessions to their new allies on fundamental economic policies — bad for the party, in my view, and bad for the country.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205). And here&#39;s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/pence-religious-freedom-doesn-discrimination-article-1.2168205).

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

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2021

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[***Why a Middle-Class Lifestyle Remains Out of Reach for So Many; Ezra Klein***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65Y6-1BT1-JBG3-62KN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 17, 2022 Sunday 17:57 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1875 words

**Byline:** Ezra Klein

**Highlight:** Inflation has unmasked the depths of our affordability crisis.

**Body**

June’s just-released inflation data is startling. At [*9.1 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/13/business/economy/inflation-june-interest-rates.html), it’s the highest year-on-year rate we’ve seen since 1981.

Maybe it’s the highest we will see. Oil and other commodity prices are falling, real wage growth has turned negative and retail inventories are thickening. None of that is fertile soil for continued inflation. If the only prices problem we had was the one that the past year of inflation reports tracked, I’d think the light was beginning to glint into the tunnel.

But it’s not. In February of 2020, The Atlantic published a piece on [*the affordability crisis*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/02/great-affordability-crisis-breaking-america/606046/) that was souring a seemingly strong economy. “In one of the best decades the American economy has ever recorded, families were bled dry by landlords, hospital administrators, university bursars and child-care centers,” Annie Lowrey wrote. “For millions, a roaring economy felt precarious or downright terrible.” Lowrey’s framing has stuck in my mind over the last couple of years. I don’t think you can understand the broader price crisis without it. (I should mention here that Lowrey and I are married, but don’t hold that against her — or her work!)

The numbers are startling. The [*median home price*](https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MSPUS) in 1950 was 2.2 times the average annual income; by 2020, it was six times average annual income. Parents’ average child care spending per child grew by about [*200 percent*](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13524-012-0146-4) from 1972 to 2007. Family premiums for employer-based health insurance [*jumped*](https://www.kff.org/report-section/ehbs-2021-section-1-cost-of-health-insurance/#:~:text=The%20average%20annual%20premiums%20in,2011%20and%2022%25%20since%202016.) by 47 percent between 2011 and 2021, and deductibles and out-of-pocket costs shot up by almost 70 percent. The average price for brand-name drugs on Medicare Part D [*rose*](https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2022-01/57050-Rx-Spending.pdf) by 236 percent between 2009 and 2018. Between 1980 and 2018, the [*average cost*](https://1gyhoq479ufd3yna29x7ubjn-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/cew-all_one_system-fr.pdf) of an undergraduate education rose by 169 percent. I could keep going.

We papered over the affordability crisis with low prices for consumer goods, soaring asset values that kept richer Americans happy, subsidies for some Americans at certain times and mountains of debt: housing debt and student-loan debt and medical debt that kept the ***working class*** semi-afloat. But none of this addressed the core problem. For far too long, the prices of the things we need most have been growing far faster than inflation.

And so a weird economy emerged, in which a secure, middle-class lifestyle receded for many, but the material trappings of middle-class success became affordable to most. In the 1960s, it was possible to attend a four-year college debt-free, but impossible to purchase a flat-screen television. By the 2020s, the reality was close to the reverse.

The affordability crisis makes some sense of the last few decades of our economic debates: a crisis of housing debt, a huge new program to subsidize health insurance costs, debates about making college free and forgiving student loans, proposal after proposal for the government to pay for child care and preschool, a bubble in crypto that attracted so many investors in part because it seemed like an elevator into wealth that anyone could ride.

But now asset prices are plummeting. The cost of loans is rising. The price of consumer goods and the energy needed to make and access them has shot up. Congress is getting stingier. The high prices remain, but the policies and palliatives we used to obscure them are crumbling. (Thankfully, the Affordable Care Act remains, and I shudder to think how much worse these years would be in its absence.)

There’s [*a famous video*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJG698U2Mvo) where you’re told to keep your eye on a basketball being passed around and, as you do, you miss an actor in a gorilla suit ambling across the scene. But once you’ve seen the gorilla, you never miss it again. Politics works like that, too. It’s not just about the problems we have. It’s about the problems we learn to see. The prices problem has been lurking for years, but it’s never been the core of our politics. Now it is. It’s on gas station signs and at the supermarket. It’s in rental contracts and tuition checks. Even if headline inflation falls, I don’t think we’re going to unsee the high price of a middle-class life anytime soon. The political party that dominates this next era will be the one that shares the public’s fury and puts prices at the center of its agenda.

There are some early glimmers of what that might look like. The New Democrat Coalition, which is made up of 99 moderate-ish House Democrats, recently released a [*package*](https://newdemocratcoalition.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/new-dems-release-comprehensive-action-plan-to-fight-inflation-and-cut-costs-for-americans) of policy proposals meant to address inflation. But much of it is aimed at the affordability crisis that predates the rise in inflation. It includes legislation that would use federal transportation dollars to push cities and states to make it easier to build housing, that would ease worker shortages by raising legal immigration and that would cap insulin costs and allow Medicare to negotiate more drug prices.

If liberals look, they’ll find no end of ideas for bringing down prices across the economy. “I’ve been pulling my hair out about this stuff for years,” Dean Baker, one of the founders of the liberal Center for Economic and Policy Research, told me. “We can’t just accept markets as structured and then use tax and subsidy policy to make it less bad. A real big problem with progressives is we treat the market problems as givens rather than restructure those markets.”

Baker’s [*long-running argument*](https://deanbaker.net/books/the-end-of-loser-liberalism.htm) is that the division between market and government is now, and always has been, false. “The idea of a free market is nonsense,” he said. “I’ve had a lot of fun with libertarians who say they want the government out of markets. And I say, ‘Oh, you don’t want to have corporations anymore?’ Those are legal entities.”

Or take drug pricing. For years, liberals have sought legislation to let Medicare bargain down drug prices. Conservatives counter that government can’t set prices; the market should be left to its own devices. Baker has long thought liberals mad to accept this framing of the debate.

New drugs can be as expensive as they are only because the government grants lengthy patents covering both the formulas and the production processes behind those drugs (which are, in many cases, built on publicly funded research). The market for prescription drugs is shaped by government-granted-and-enforced monopolies, and the result is exactly what any Econ 101 class would predict: high prices.

“You can argue on behalf of the policy,” Baker told me. “Maybe it’s good for research and development. But we can’t debate whether the government is structuring that market.”

I’ve long liked Baker’s arguments for two reasons. First, they apply basic economic principles fairly, which is rarely true in politics. He’s relentless about deploying the arguments that are often used against government intervention on behalf of the poor to criticize ongoing interventions on behalf of the rich. Second, they slice through the ideological morass of markets versus governments to ask the more fundamental question: Who are our markets structured to serve?

Follow analyses like that and you’ll find an array of bad actors, cutting across partisan and professional lines. Housing is so hard to build in dense cities in large part because governments have made it hard to build. Those governments are disproportionately run by Democrats. “Blue places have chosen to make their housing supply inelastic — to use econ speak — and red places, by and large, have allowed housing markets to continue functioning and for supply to respond when there’s an increase in demand,” Jenny Schuetz, the author of “Fixer-Upper: How to Repair America’s Broken Housing Systems,” told me.

But drug prices are high because Republicans support expansive patent protections but won’t let the government use its purchasing power to bargain down prices, which is how virtually every other rich nation holds down costs. We’re granting monopolies on one end and refusing to use purchasing power on the other. The Warp Speed program for vaccine development was an example of how it could be done otherwise: The government made itself the buyer for vaccines, and then distributed them freely. And what about public competition for off-patent products? Gavin Newsom, the governor of California, just [*announced*](https://twitter.com/GavinNewsom/status/1545122879649374209) the state has put aside $100 million to begin making its own low-cost insulin. If it works, it could become a national model.

Elsewhere, it’s professional lobbies that are the culprit. America has [*too few doctors*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/02/why-does-the-us-make-it-so-hard-to-be-a-doctor/622065/), particularly primary care doctors, leading to higher prices and longer waits. A big part of the reason is that trade groups representing doctors have lobbied to restrict the supply, capping the number that we train, erecting barriers to letting nurse practitioners take over more primary care duties, and blocking efforts to allow doctors trained in high-performing systems abroad from being able to practice here.

This, too, has been a longtime bugaboo of Baker’s. We could ease physician shortages quickly by allowing doctors from Europe to come here freely and practice easily. Over the longer term, we could open more medical schools, make telehealth easier and expand the freedom of nurse practitioners to practice autonomously.

There are also an array of tariffs that the Biden administration could lift if it wanted to quickly reduce at least some prices. Some of these tariffs — like those on Canadian lumber — are meant to protect American industries. Others, like the tariffs that Donald Trump slapped on China, and that President Biden has done nothing to reverse, are foreign policy tools. But if high prices are the problem, then perhaps new priorities should be set. An [*analysis*](https://www.piie.com/sites/default/files/documents/pb22-4.pdf) by the Peterson Institute for International Economics found that a large but plausible trade liberalization package could cut costs by $797 per household, per year.

Inflation crises in the United States tend to be driven, or badly worsened, by our exposure to petrostates. That’s true for the OPEC embargo of the ’70s and what the Biden administration likes to call “the Putin price hike” of 2022. As Mark Zandi, the chief economist at Moody’s Analytics, [*noted*](https://twitter.com/Markzandi/status/1547203697414922242?s=20&amp;t=hkuo8MrPS2uUS_KgEIAlYQ), the spike in fuel prices accounted for more than half of June’s inflation. That will probably ease. But a world where the bulk of America’s power was generated by wind and solar and nuclear and geothermal is a world where we’d be far less reliant on the fluctuations of the global energy market. (And while it seems almost ridiculous to have to say this, a world of unchecked climate crisis won’t be good for prices, either; there is no end of good reasons to decarbonize.)

For decades now, we’ve been in a politics of spending. The questions were about how much to spend and what to spend on. We’re moving into a politics that looks superficially similar but is fundamentally different: a politics of prices. How much to spend, and where to direct that spending, still matters. But it’ll be subordinate to a larger goal: bringing down prices across the economy. And that’ll be the work of years, perhaps decades.

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[***Everything's Coming Up Prose***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652V-G4T1-DXY4-X0N1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 25, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 14; BOOKS SPRING PREVIEW: FICTION

**Length:** 1488 words

**Byline:** By Joumana Khatib and Elisabeth Egan

**Body**

New novels from Jennifer Egan, Ali Smith and Hernan Diaz; debuts from Aamina Ahmad and Jenny Tinghui Zhang; posthumous stories and a novel by Tove Ditlevsen; and plenty more.

This season, watch for new books by Emily St. John Mandel, Chris Bohjalian, Monica Ali and Douglas Stuart; a literary vampire story by Claire Kohda; and new novels in translation.

FAMILY SAGAS

'The Candy House,' by Jennifer Egan

A follow-up to her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel ''A Visit From the Goon Squad,'' this story picks up with familiar characters, including the friends and descendants of the music producer Bennie Salazar and his protégé, Sasha, who is now an installation artist of renown. But you don't need to be familiar with ''Goon Squad'' to enjoy this book, which opens with the ''tech demi-god'' Bix Bouton, who has created technology that allows people to upload their memories to an external consciousness and browse the experiences other users have shared.

Scribner, April 5

'Young Mungo,' by Douglas Stuart

Stuart follows his debut novel, ''Shuggie Bain,'' which won the Booker Prize and earned praise for its portrayal of ***working class*** Scottish life, with a love story set in a Glasgow housing project. Two young men, Mungo and James, fall in love and imagine a brighter future for themselves while protecting their secret.

Grove, April 5

'The Return of Faraz Ali,' by Aamina Ahmad

As a young boy, Faraz is taken from his mother, who works in Lahore's red light district, and sent to live with distant relatives in a more respectable part of the city. Years later, his father -- a political operator with connections throughout the city -- asks him to return to the neighborhood to help contain the fallout of a young girl's murder.

Riverhead, April 5

'Companion Piece,' by Ali Smith

Smith has a notably fast literary metabolism: Her most recent novels, referred to as the Seasonal Quartet, incorporated contemporary political and social events -- Brexit, immigration debates, climate change -- practically in real time. Her latest opens when Sandy receives a mysterious call from a former classmate. The ingredients? An antique lock and key, a puzzling interaction with border control, and a bit of wordplay that could explain it all.

Pantheon, May 3

'Love Marriage,' by Monica Ali

Ali's 2003 novel, ''Brick Lane,'' centered on a young Bangladeshi woman who enters an arranged marriage and lives in Britain, and later discovered her own desires and strengths. Now, Ali focuses again on a marriage -- between Yasmin, a 26-year-old of Indian ancestry studying to be a doctor, and Joe, a middle-class white man whose mother is an outspoken feminist. As the families prepare for the wedding, their beliefs and traditions evolve, a betrayal threatens to derail the marriage and a years-old secret comes to light.

Scribner, May 3

TIME TRAVELING NOVELS

'Sea of Tranquility,' by Emily St. John Mandel

The lives of characters living centuries apart converge in this time-traveling novel. They include an aristocrat's son on a trans-Atlantic journey, a grieving composer and a writer visiting Earth from her interstellar colony while on her book tour. During the visit, the writer faces endless questions from readers about the imaginary disease she wrote about -- perhaps a sly reference to Mandel's own experience talking about her earlier novel, ''Station Eleven,'' which took on new resonance during the pandemic.

Knopf, April 5

'Four Treasures of the Sky,' by Jenny Tinghui Zhang

This debut follows Daiyu, a Chinese girl in the 1880s, who reinvents herself to survive a string of tragedies. As a child, she is kidnapped and taken from China to the United States in the 1880s, sold into prostitution and escapes from California to Idaho. Later, she lives as a man, and deals with both external threats -- including the rising tide of anti-Asian sentiment -- and her private longings.

Flatiron, April 5

'Trust,' by Hernan Diaz

In Gilded Age New York, Benjamin and Helen Rask have risen to the top of society. The couple is the object of fascination: He is a successful Wall Street trader, she is the daughter of offbeat socialites, and together they amass a huge fortune. As the book progresses, readers get glimpses of their story, with each new perspective peeling back layers of intrigue and suppressed history.

Riverhead, May 3

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

'The Faces,' by Tove Ditlevsen. Translated by Tiina Nunnally.

'The Trouble With Happiness: And Other Stories,' by Tove Ditlevsen. Translated by Michael Favala Goldman.

Ditlevsen's collected memoirs, released last year in English as ''The Copenhagen Trilogy,'' were among the Book Review's 10 best books of 2021, earning praise for ''stunning clarity, humor and candidness.'' Two works of fiction from the Danish writer will come this year, including ''The Faces,'' a novel about a children's book author in 1960s Copenhagen grappling with creative frustrations, marital infidelity and the specter of insanity. ''The Trouble With Happiness,'' too, unfolds in midcentury Copenhagen, following all manner of unhappy people. But if you know Ditlevsen's writing, you know she finds a way to make even misery luminous.

The Faces (Picador, April 19)

The Trouble With Happiness (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, April 19)

'All the Lovers in the Night,' by Mieko Kawakami. Translated by Sam Bett and David Boyd.

Kawakami has been a feminist voice in her home country, Japan, with novels that tackle the interior lives of women. In this book, she follows Fuyuko, a solitary proofreader in her 30s whose connections with the outside world are a tenuous friendship with a colleague and her annual walks on her birthday. But when she meets a physics teacher in Tokyo, their shared fascination with light helps draw Fuyuko out, helping her confront her past -- and her desire to change her life.

Europa, May 3

'Paradais,' by Fernanda Melchor. Translated by Sophie Hughes.

Long listed for the International Booker, this novel follows two miserable teenagers who meet at a gated community in Mexico. Franco Andrade is consumed by thoughts of his neighbor, the wife of a TV personality, and has an unhealthy appetite for pornography, while Polo, the community's gardener, is desperate to escape his own circumstances. Together, they concoct a plan that quickly spirals into violence and risk.

New Directions, April 26

PAGE TURNERS

'Lessons in Chemistry,' by Bonnie Garmus

In Garmus's debut novel, a frustrated chemist finds herself at the helm of a cooking show that sparks a revolution. Welcome to the 1960s, where a woman's arsenal of tools was often limited to the kitchen -- and where Elizabeth Zott is hellbent on overturning the status quo one meal at a time.

Doubleday, April 5

'Woman, Eating: A Literary Vampire Novel,' by Claire Kohda

We've seen sexy vampires, scary vampires and psychic vampires, but never one quite like the one in this ambitious debut. Lydia is a 23-year-old, mixed-race artist whose appetite can only be sated with a tall serving of blood. With wit and a poet's eye, Kohda examines cravings, desire and emptiness.

HarperVia, April 12

'The Fervor,' by Alma Katsu

The author of ''The Hunger'' and ''The Deep'' -- two hair-raising, twisty novels with deceptively simple titles -- returns with ''The Fervor.'' Having mined the Donner Party and the high seas for suffering and trauma, Katsu sets ''The Fervor'' in a Japanese American internment camp during World War II. The conditions there are hellish enough ... and then a mysterious disease begins to spread among the imprisoned.

Putnam, April 26

'The Hacienda,' by Isabel Cañas

Hacienda San Isidro is the house of your worst nightmares. As we learn on the first page of Cañas's supernatural suspense story (think ''Mexican Gothic'' meets ''Rebecca''), ''white stucco walls rose like the bones of a long-dead beast jutting from dark, cracked earth.'' A young bride finds herself pulled into the clutches of this creepy place after being abandoned there by her new husband.

Berkley, May 3

'The Lioness,' by Chris Bohjalian

If you're getting on a long flight and have no idea what book to bring, Bohjalian's novels are always a safe bet. If you're going on a safari, you may want to approach his latest with caution: It's the story of a lavish expedition in Tanzania in 1964 gone very wrong. The travelers are Hollywood A-listers; wildebeest and zebras abound; and Bohjalian steers this runaway Land Rover of a story into some wildly entertaining territory.

Doubleday, May 10

'The Cherry Robbers,' by Sarai Walker

A renowned artist living under an assumed identity (she's a hungry journalist, go figure) finds herself face-to-face with her past in Walker's long-awaited, much-anticipated follow-up to ''Dietland.'' This feminist Gothic thriller whisks readers from New Mexico in 2017 to Connecticut in 1950 -- straight into the bull's-eye of a firearms dynasty.

Harper, May 17

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/25/books/new-fiction-books-spring-2022.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/25/books/new-fiction-books-spring-2022.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

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[***Wavy Lines***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64CX-4GF1-DXY4-X1K5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 26, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 12; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1212 words

**Byline:** By Sadie Stein

**Body**

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATEDA MemoirBy Edward Sorel

Toward the end of Edward Sorel's new memoir, ''Profusely Illustrated,'' the veteran artist describes first seeing, in these pages, a cover review, written by Woody Allen, of his 2017 book ''Mary Astor's Purple Diary.'' ''To say that it made me 'very happy' would be an understatement,'' he writes of the glorious moment. To Mr. Sorel, then, apologies in advance: I can only assume that seeing this byline will be pretty anticlimactic -- or perhaps his habitual modesty has rubbed off. But if there's one thing I learned from his memoir, it's that the guy's a mensch, and one with a solid regard for jobbers on a deadline.

Sorel, 92, has indeed had a profusely illustrated life. Over the past six decades, you've probably seen his many New Yorker covers, his political satire in The Nation, his cartoons in New York magazine, his caricatures in Vanity Fair. Perhaps you're familiar with Ramparts magazine's bestiaries, which lampooned the political follies of the 1960s, or ''Sorel's Unfamiliar Quotations'' in The Atlantic Monthly. Maybe one of his many books? And all that's to say nothing of the thousands of sketches and commissions and album covers and illustrations that animate the margins of a working artist's career. Of course there's no question your chances of recognizing his distinctively wavy drawing style are a lot better if you're what he'd call an ''Old Lefty.''

Sorel came into the world as Edward Schwartz in 1929. He adored his smart and beautiful Romanian-born mother; meanwhile his father, who'd immigrated from Poland, was ''stupid, insensitive, grouchy, meanspirited, faultfinding, and a racist.'' Their ***working-class*** Bronx neighborhood was pretty evenly divided between card-carrying Communists, Communist sympathizers and New Deal Democrats; Aunt Jeanette, the self-anointed family intellectual, ''felt compelled, when there was a band playing at one of her sisters' weddings, to use her long scarf to do a solo dance in the manner of Isadora Duncan -- another fervent supporter of the Communist regime in Russia.'' His world was shtetl-tiny but filled with opportunity; provincial but progressive; jaundiced, but optimistic -- ''a city where being Jewish, far from setting you apart, was a reminder of just how ordinary you were.''

This was a depression-era New York of Third Avenue Els, Friday night chicken soup, Saturday matinees and -- lest we get nostalgic -- no penicillin. When 7-year-old Edward contracted double pneumonia, it meant an at-home oxygen tent and a year's convalescence, during which time he started drawing on shirt cardboards. He attended art classes funded by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, before moving to a public arts high school in Harlem and the Cooper Union, both of which emphasized abstraction and modernism with an unrelenting zeal that nearly killed the young man's enthusiasm for figurative drawing. After a few lackluster design jobs in an art world still reeling from Cold War paranoia, Sorel -- who had swapped his despised father's common surname for that of a romantic Stendhal protagonist -- co-founded Push Pin Studios with his art school classmates Milton Glaser and Seymour Chwast.

In Sorel's telling, he was the least talented of the three -- and certainly the least dedicated undergrad -- but despite his self-deprecation, Sorel's success is a testament as much to his multifaceted skill as to his persistence and luck. While he claims he didn't pull his full weight at Push Pin -- and always dreamed of doing political work in the mold of the cartoonist Jules Feiffer -- in fact his time peddling the studio's portfolio serves the reader well; the nuts-and-bolts descriptions of midcentury Madison Avenue are one of the book's pleasures.

From the time he went freelance, in 1956, Sorel worked more or less steadily -- often for financially precarious left-wing publications of the era: The Realist, Monocle, Ramparts. (At a time when, it must be remembered, he could get a Manhattan apartment for $28 a month -- albeit with a shared bathroom -- and take dates to the all-night chess parlor in Times Square.) Increasingly, he was developing a reputation as an irreverent -- and sometimes lacerating -- satirist of the nation's sacred cows.

Indeed, in a sense, ''Profusely Illustrated'' is really an easygoing history of the left at a particular moment, with Sorel moving like a haimish Forrest Gump through print media New York. He was at Bill Golden's gray-flannel-suited CBS and the cool-cat Push Pin. When Esquire published Gay Talese's ''Frank Sinatra Has a Cold,'' it was Sorel's portrait -- also done without the subject's cooperation -- that graced the cover. An early contributor to The National Lampoon, Sorel would illustrate the iconic Truman Capote cover for Clay Felker's New York and be a mainstay of the golden-age Village Voice. Victor Navasky -- a colleague since the 1950s -- brought him on board at The Nation. Later, he joined Tina Brown's early-90s New Yorker, and then Graydon Carter's Vanity Fair. Do I even need to say that he did the mural at the Waverly Inn?

In between, of course, he had a life: four children, and two marriages -- the second a lasting personal and professional partnership. There was a long stint in the country, a return to the still-uncharted TriBeCa, and many, many lifelong friendships. (While the chapter devoted to Sorel's friends is doubtless a labor of love, I'm not sure how much interest it holds to readers outside of his own circle.) The book's not just a who's who of liberal luminaries, but of cartoon-world royalty as well. I can pay the author no greater compliment than to say that, through it all, he does not come off as an operator.

As should perhaps be obvious, the memoir is overtly political. Indeed, Sorel makes a point of giving a highly opinionated ''exposé'' of every administration in his lifetime. (A choice he later writes he's ''beginning to regret,'' given the research involved.) But really, nothing provides so vivid a record of the events he lived through as the cartoons, caricatures and drawings that do, yes, profusely illustrate every chapter. He's not proud of all of them (''awfully heavy-handed,'' he writes of a 1970 cartoon of Richard Nixon that got him in hot water; ''overworked,'' he says of another), but together they concisely convey the passions and pieties of their moment.

Despite the deceptive neatness inherent in any retrospective glance backward, Sorel's has not been an uncomplicated life. There are personal challenges, professional setbacks, regrets, controversy. There's the loss of his beloved wife, Nancy. By his own account, this is a book about the failures of 13 administrations. And yet, the takeaway's not a grim one.

In an introductory author's note, Sorel states his aim: ''to save a few of my drawings from the oblivion that awaits all protest art, and almost all magazine illustrations.'' He does more than this. Warm, affectionate, often angry but never cruel, cynical but not without a certain faith in people, Sorel gives us a life -- and a world -- in pictures. It made me very happy.Sadie Stein was the deputy editor of The Paris Review.PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATEDA MemoirBy Edward SorelIllustrated. 272 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $30.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/24/books/review/profusely-illustrated-edward-sorel.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/24/books/review/profusely-illustrated-edward-sorel.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Edward Sorel's cover for the April 1966 issue of Esquire, which contained Gay Talese's article ''Frank Sinatra Has a Cold.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY Edward Sorel FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

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[***18 New Works of Fiction to Read This Spring; Books Spring Preview: Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652V-0GG1-JBG3-63GC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 25, 2022 Friday 18:29 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1460 words

**Byline:** Joumana Khatib and Elisabeth Egan

**Highlight:** New novels from Jennifer Egan, Ali Smith and Hernan Diaz; debuts from Aamina Ahmad and Jenny Tinghui Zhang; posthumous stories and a novel by Tove Ditlevsen; and plenty more.

**Body**

New novels from Jennifer Egan, Ali Smith and Hernan Diaz; debuts from Aamina Ahmad and Jenny Tinghui Zhang; posthumous stories and a novel by Tove Ditlevsen; and plenty more.

This season, watch for new books by Emily St. John Mandel, Chris Bohjalian, Monica Ali and Douglas Stuart; a literary vampire story by Claire Kohda; and new novels in translation.

FAMILY SAGAS

‘[*The Candy House*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Candy-House/Jennifer-Egan/9781476716763),’ by Jennifer Egan

A follow-up to her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel “A Visit From the Goon Squad,” this story picks up with familiar characters, including the friends and descendants of the music producer Bennie Salazar and his protégé, Sasha, who is now an installation artist of renown. But you don’t need to be familiar with “Goon Squad” to enjoy this book, which opens with the “tech demi-god” Bix Bouton, who has created technology that allows people to upload their memories to an external consciousness and browse the experiences other users have shared.

Scribner, April 5

‘[*Young Mungo*](https://groveatlantic.com/book/young-mungo/),’ by Douglas Stuart

[*Stuart*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/23/books/douglas-stuart-shuggie-bain.html) follows his debut novel, “[*Shuggie Bain*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/11/books/review/shuggie-bain-douglas-stuart.html),” which won the Booker Prize and earned praise for its portrayal of ***working class*** Scottish life, with a love story set in a Glasgow housing project. Two young men, Mungo and James, fall in love and imagine a brighter future for themselves while protecting their secret.

Grove, April 5

‘[*The Return of Faraz Ali*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/668169/the-return-of-faraz-ali-by-aamina-ahmad/),’ by Aamina Ahmad

As a young boy, Faraz is taken from his mother, who works in Lahore’s red light district, and sent to live with distant relatives in a more respectable part of the city. Years later, his father — a political operator with connections throughout the city — asks him to return to the neighborhood to help contain the fallout of a young girl’s murder.

Riverhead, April 5

‘[*Companion Piece*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/679002/companion-piece-by-ali-smith/),’ by Ali Smith

Smith has a notably fast literary metabolism: Her most recent novels, referred to as the Seasonal Quartet, incorporated contemporary political and social events — Brexit, immigration debates, climate change — practically in real time. Her latest opens when Sandy receives a mysterious call from a former classmate. The ingredients? An antique lock and key, a puzzling interaction with border control, and a bit of wordplay that could explain it all.

Pantheon, May 3

‘[*Love Marriage*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Love-Marriage/Monica-Ali/9781982181475),’ by Monica Ali

Ali’s 2003 novel, “[*Brick Lane*](https://www.nytimes.com/2003/09/07/books/east-enders.html),” centered on a young Bangladeshi woman who enters an arranged marriage and lives in Britain, and later discovered her own desires and strengths. Now, Ali focuses again on a marriage — between Yasmin, a 26-year-old of Indian ancestry studying to be a doctor, and Joe, a middle-class white man whose mother is an outspoken feminist. As the families prepare for the wedding, their beliefs and traditions evolve, a betrayal threatens to derail the marriage and a years-old secret comes to light.

Scribner, May 3

TIME TRAVELING NOVELS

‘[*Sea of Tranquility*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/692735/sea-of-tranquility-by-emily-st-john-mandel/),’ by Emily St. John Mandel

The lives of characters living centuries apart converge in this time-traveling novel. They include an aristocrat’s son on a trans-Atlantic journey, a grieving composer and a writer visiting Earth from her interstellar colony while on her book tour. During the visit, the writer faces endless questions from readers about the imaginary disease she wrote about — perhaps a sly reference to Mandel’s own experience talking about her earlier novel, “[*Station Eleven*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/14/books/review/station-eleven-by-emily-st-john-mandel.html),” which took on [*new resonance during the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/13/books/station-eleven-hbo-emily-st-john-mandel.html).

Knopf, April 5

‘[*Four Treasures of the Sky*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250811783/fourtreasuresofthesky),’ by Jenny Tinghui Zhang

This debut follows Daiyu, a Chinese girl in the 1880s, who reinvents herself to survive a string of tragedies. As a child, she is kidnapped and taken from China to the United States in the 1880s, sold into prostitution and escapes from California to Idaho. Later, she lives as a man, and deals with both external threats — including the rising tide of anti-Asian sentiment — and her private longings.

Flatiron, April 5

‘[*Trust*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/678664/trust-by-hernan-diaz/),’ by Hernan Diaz

In Gilded Age New York, Benjamin and Helen Rask have risen to the top of society. The couple is the object of fascination: He is a successful Wall Street trader, she is the daughter of offbeat socialites, and together they amass a huge fortune. As the book progresses, readers get glimpses of their story, with each new perspective peeling back layers of intrigue and suppressed history.

Riverhead, May 3

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION

‘[*The Faces*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9781250838193/thefaces),’ by Tove Ditlevsen. Translated by Tiina Nunnally.

‘[*The Trouble With Happiness: And Other Stories*](https://us.macmillan.com/books/9780374605605/thetroublewithhappiness),’ by Tove Ditlevsen. Translated by Michael Favala Goldman.

Ditlevsen’s collected memoirs, released last year in English as “[*The Copenhagen Trilogy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/26/books/review/tove-ditlevsen-copenhagen-trilogy.html),” were among the Book Review’s [*10 best books of 2021*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/books/review/best-books-2021.html), earning praise for “stunning clarity, humor and candidness.” Two works of fiction from the Danish writer will come this year, including “The Faces,” a novel about a children’s book author in 1960s Copenhagen grappling with creative frustrations, marital infidelity and the specter of insanity. “The Trouble With Happiness,” too, unfolds in midcentury Copenhagen, following all manner of unhappy people. But if you know Ditlevsen’s writing, you know she finds a way to make even misery luminous.

The Faces (Picador, April 19)

The Trouble With Happiness (Farrar, Straus &amp; Giroux, April 19)

‘[*All the Lovers in the Night*](https://www.europaeditions.com/book/9781609456993/all-the-lovers-in-the-night),’ by Mieko Kawakami. Translated by Sam Bett and David Boyd.

[*Kawakami has been a feminist voice*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/09/world/asia/mieko-kawakami-breasts-and-eggs.html) in her home country, Japan, with novels that tackle the interior lives of women. In this book, she follows Fuyuko, a solitary proofreader in her 30s whose connections with the outside world are a tenuous friendship with a colleague and her annual walks on her birthday. But when she meets a physics teacher in Tokyo, their shared fascination with light helps draw Fuyuko out, helping her confront her past — and her desire to change her life.

Europa, May 3

‘[*Paradais*](https://www.ndbooks.com/book/paradais/),’ by Fernanda Melchor. Translated by Sophie Hughes.

Long listed for the [*International Booker*](https://thebookerprizes.com/the-booker-library/books/paradais), this novel follows two miserable teenagers who meet at a gated community in Mexico. Franco Andrade is consumed by thoughts of his neighbor, the wife of a TV personality, and has an unhealthy appetite for pornography, while Polo, the community’s gardener, is desperate to escape his own circumstances. Together, they concoct a plan that quickly spirals into violence and risk.

New Directions, April 26

PAGE TURNERS

‘[*Lessons in Chemistry*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/677234/lessons-in-chemistry-by-bonnie-garmus/),’ by Bonnie Garmus

In Garmus’s debut novel, a frustrated chemist finds herself at the helm of a cooking show that sparks a revolution. Welcome to the 1960s, where a woman’s arsenal of tools was often limited to the kitchen — and where Elizabeth Zott is hellbent on overturning the status quo one meal at a time.

Doubleday, April 5

‘[*Woman, Eating: A Literary Vampire Novel*](https://www.harpercollins.com/products/woman-eating-claire-kohda?variant=39402879057954),’ by Claire Kohda

We’ve seen sexy vampires, scary vampires and psychic vampires, but never one quite like the one in this ambitious debut. Lydia is a 23-year-old, mixed-race artist whose appetite can only be sated with a tall serving of blood. With wit and a poet’s eye, Kohda examines cravings, desire and emptiness.

HarperVia, April 12

‘[*The Fervor*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/667268/the-fervor-by-alma-katsu/),’ by Alma Katsu

The author of “The Hunger” and “The Deep” — two hair-raising, twisty novels with deceptively simple titles — returns with “The Fervor.” Having mined the Donner Party and the high seas for suffering and trauma, Katsu sets “The Fervor” in a Japanese American internment camp during World War II. The conditions there are hellish enough … and then a mysterious disease begins to spread among the imprisoned.

Putnam, April 26

‘[*The Hacienda*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/676676/the-hacienda-by-isabel-canas/),’ by Isabel Cañas

Hacienda San Isidro is the house of your worst nightmares. As we learn on the first page of Cañas’s supernatural suspense story (think “Mexican Gothic” meets “Rebecca”), “white stucco walls rose like the bones of a long-dead beast jutting from dark, cracked earth.” A young bride finds herself pulled into the clutches of this creepy place after being abandoned there by her new husband.

Berkley, May 3

‘[*The Lioness*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/550986/the-lioness-by-chris-bohjalian/),’ by Chris Bohjalian

If you’re getting on a long flight and have no idea what book to bring, Bohjalian’s novels are always a safe bet. If you’re going on a safari, you may want to approach his latest with caution: It’s the story of a lavish expedition in Tanzania in 1964 gone very wrong. The travelers are Hollywood A-listers; wildebeest and zebras abound; and Bohjalian steers this runaway Land Rover of a story into some wildly entertaining territory.

Doubleday, May 10

‘[*The Cherry Robbers*](https://www.hmhbooks.com/shop/books/The-Cherry-Robbers/9780358265726),’ by Sarai Walker

In Walker’s long-awaited follow-up to “[*Dietland*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/18/arts/television/dietland-amc-marti-noxon.html),” a renowned artist living under an assumed identity is contacted by a hungry journalist — and now finds herself face-to-face with her past. This feminist Gothic thriller whisks readers from New Mexico in 2017 to Connecticut in 1950, straight into the bull’s-eye of a firearms dynasty.

Harper, May 17

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2022

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[***Voters Haven't Been Worried Like This in a Long Time***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65B3-G9R1-JBG3-635W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 28, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1550 words

**Byline:** By Mark Penn

**Body**

In a rare convergence, America's voters are not merely unhappy with their political leadership, but awash in fears about economic security, border security, international security and even physical security. Without a U-turn by the Biden administration, these fears will generate a wave election like those in 1994 and 2010, setting off a chain reaction that could flip the House and the Senate to Republican control in November, and ultimately the presidency in 2024.

Take the economy, so often the harbinger of election results. From late 2017 until the pandemic, a majority of Americans believed that the economy was strong, and from 2014 until the pandemic at least a plurality believed their personal economic situation was improving. Covid-19 cut sharply into that feeling of well-being; this was initially seen as temporary, though, and trillions of dollars flowed into keeping people afloat. But then near-double-digit inflation hit consumers for the first time in 40 years; 60 percent of voters now see the economy as weak and 48 percent say their financial situation is worsening, according to a Harris poll conducted April 20-21. Many Americans under 60 have relatively little experience with anything but comparatively low fuel costs, negligible interest rates and stable prices. Virtually overnight these assumptions have been shaken. Only 35 percent approve of President Biden's handling of inflation.

These economic blows are just one element in a cascading set of problems all hitting at the same time. It combines the nuclear anxieties of the 1950s and '60s with the inflation threat of the '70s, the crime wave of the '80s and '90s and the tensions over illegal immigration in the 2000s and beyond. This electorate is not experiencing a malaise, as President Jimmy Carter was once apocryphally said to have proclaimed, but has instead formed into a deep national fissure ready to blow like a geyser in the next election if leadership does not move to relieve the pressure.

The return of fear about crime is especially worrisome for Democrats, who spent years trying to take over Republican ground on the issue. In 1991, the homicide rate was 9.71 per hundred thousand. Mr. Biden, when he was a senator, wrote the key federal bipartisan anti-crime bill widely credited then with reducing violence in America, but under criticism today by those who argue it led to inequitable rates of incarceration, particularly in communities of color. The homicide rate would decline to a low of 4.44 per 100,000 in 2014. Worries about walking the streets and riding the subway were less acute among new generations, and yet today those same streets and mass transit are once again hobbled by fear; even the head of the New York-area Metropolitan Transportation Authority argued that fear of crime and homelessness was behind a 36 percent drop in ridership between December 2021 and January 2022.

Immigration was used effectively by President Donald Trump as a wedge issue to win ***working-class*** voters. According to the April Harris poll, under Mr. Biden, 59 percent of voters believe that we have ''effectively'' open borders and, looking back, many even support some of Mr. Trump's immigration policies. Mr. Biden receives only 38 percent approval for his immigration policy, a troublingly low rating for a Democrat (President Barack Obama was at 29 percent approval on immigration policy before the 2010 midterm wipeout).

National security had become less salient for most Americans compared to the years of the Cold War and after 9/11. Foreign policy was barely discussed in the limited presidential debates of 2020. Today, fear of a great power conflict and nuclear weapons has emerged in ways not seen since the Cold War. With the invasion of Ukraine by Vladimir Putin, fresh ballistic missile tests, and Mr. Putin's explicit reference to the use of nuclear weapons and ''unpredictable'' consequences of opposing him, fear of nuclear weapons has been thrust front and center, as a recent focus group of Americans by Times Opinion found as well. Fear of nuclear weapons now ranks second in issues that worry voters, behind the effects of inflation.

To combat the drag that fear has on the electorate -- what I call a ''fear index'' -- Mr. Biden will have to move in some big and bold ways. Faced with runaway spending in the 1990s, President Bill Clinton proposed a balanced budget, a policy still favored by 80 percent of the electorate, according to April's Harris poll, but he did it in a way that still managed to finance entitlements like Social Security. Pushing a big, seven-year policy plan like that would mean finding budget cuts elsewhere to pay for a permanent child tax credit, rather than raising taxes, and deficit spending, which would most likely cause costs to fall on the average American through inflation. Balancing the budget would change the conversation about the economy and show Americans that Mr. Biden was serious about getting our fiscal house in order.

Continuing to let gas prices surge will hurt Democrats on the ballot in the fall; the party needs a new, tempered energy policy that includes a more gradual transition to alternative fuels and an appreciation of energy independence. In the presidential debates, Mr. Biden promised a ''transition'' to ''renewable energy over time,'' though noting he would not attempt to ban fracking. But in his first flurry of executive orders, Mr. Biden gave the public the impression he was far more aggressive in favoring climate change policies, though he has since angered activists by reversing a promise to prevent new drilling on public lands. He will need to shift to an ''all of the above'' energy approach and green-light the Keystone pipeline, which 65 percent of the electorate says should move forward, according to the Harris poll.

The Biden administration is also losing in swing areas on immigration, as evidenced by the nine Senate Democrats and the House's bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus that have expressed reservations about its plan to lift Title 42, the Trump administration's Covid-era policy of intercepting and returning migrants without due process. The answer is to keep in place the Covid-related border restrictions and revive trying to find a real compromise with at least 10 Republican senators on immigration that would adopt tougher barrier and enforcement measures to close the border, but also open up legal immigration and a path to citizenship for at least DACA recipients.

With rising crime as an issue, the favorable rating of the Department of Justice has sunk to just 51 percent under Merrick Garland, according to the Harris poll. Mr. Biden needs to shake up his top law-enforcement officials and back legislation that combines police reform with funding for hundreds of thousands of new community police officers, greater federal involvement in stopping violent crime syndicates and gangs, and wider discretion for judges to take violent criminals off the streets. The administration needs to consider interceding on behalf of victims in circumstances in which district attorneys are not prosecuting violent criminals to the full extent of the law, especially when they waive ''enhancements'' for gang-related crimes. One of our first campaign ads in 1996 established President Clinton as both against assault weapons and for more cops and crime-fighting measures; he kept that message up during his re-election bid, and Republicans never effectively stoked fears about crime.

Finally, Mr. Biden cannot let Mr. Putin win in Ukraine, and needs to continue to send whatever weapons are necessary, including jets, to prevent such a victory. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan precipitated a decline in his administration's approval rates. Ukraine's loss would compound the view among some voters that he is too weak.

According to reports, Mr. Biden now says he is running for re-election in 2024. But he is facing limited enthusiasm in his own party for a second run and loses even to Mr. Trump in hypothetical matchups, according to the Harris poll. Sticking to the high-priced Build Back Better legislation or variants of it on the basis of narrow party-line votes has not been successful.

People are afraid of being walloped financially, being injured or menaced by criminals, being in a country without strong borders or Covid protections for immigrants, and being under threat of nuclear weapons. If Mr. Biden and Democratic leaders cannot effectively address these fears, the wave election will hit them in November, and the president will then face a sobering choice of either passing the baton to another candidate in 2024 or finding the bold leadership necessary to reconcile his drive for more progressive policies with the realities of economics, politics and a more dangerous world.

Mark Penn was a pollster and adviser to President Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton from 1995 to 2008. He is chairman of the Harris Poll and chief executive of Stagwell Inc.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/25/opinion/biden-voters-midterms.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/25/opinion/biden-voters-midterms.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY MATHIEU LEWIS-ROLLAND/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** April 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Oscars Rewind: For Halle Berry, a Bittersweet Breakthrough***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652M-V871-JBG3-625J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 24, 2022 Thursday 13:00 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1394 words

**Byline:** Sarah Bahr

**Highlight:** Since she won best actress for “Monster’s Ball,” no other Black woman has taken the prize, a fact she calls “heartbreaking.”

**Body**

Since she won best actress for “Monster’s Ball,” no other Black woman has taken the prize, a fact she calls “heartbreaking.”

Halle Berry had all but counted herself out.

It was a cool March night in Hollywood in 2002, and she was just excited to have been nominated for her first Academy Award, in the best actress category, for her role as a waitress who has an affair with her convicted husband’s executioner in Marc Forster’s dark drama [*“Monster’s Ball.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-94HNhLJBs)

Up against Nicole Kidman (“Moulin Rouge”), Judi Dench (“Iris”), Sissy Spacek (“In the Bedroom”) and Renée Zellweger (“Bridget Jones’s Diary”), Berry was only the seventh African American actress ever nominated. A win would vault her into the annals of history as the first Black winner.

But Berry never thought it would happen.

“Back in those days, if you didn’t win the Globe, you really didn’t get the Academy Award,” Berry, 55, said in a recent phone conversation, referring to the Golden Globe that she had lost to Spacek. “So I’d pretty much resigned myself to believing, ‘It’s great to be here, but I’m not going to win.’”

But then the previous year’s best actor winner, Russell Crowe, opened the envelope and read her name, the camera zooming in on her teary, shocked face. She took a moment to collect herself, then walked to the stage in her now-iconic Elie Saab gown, the voluminous burgundy train trailing behind her, as the applause went on, and on, and on.

“Oh my God,” were her first words when she finally had breath enough to speak, tears still rolling down her cheeks, hands trembling as she clutched the statuette. She hadn’t prepared a speech. She had no list of people to thank either.

“I don’t have any memory of it,” Berry said. “I don’t even know how I got up there. It was totally a blackout moment. All I remember is Russell Crowe saying, ‘Breathe, mate.’ And then I had a golden statue in my hand, and I just started talking.”

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/llgL7mGYVTI)]

She dedicated the moment to [*Dorothy Dandridge*](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Dorothy-Dandridge), who in 1955 became the first African American woman nominated for best actress (for “Carmen Jones”), and to other previous African American nominees like [*Diahann Carroll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/04/arts/television/diahann-carroll-dead.html) and [*Angela Bassett*](https://people.com/movies/angela-bassett-agrees-robbed-oscar/).

“This moment is so much bigger than me,” Berry told the crowd, adding, “It’s for every nameless, faceless woman of color that now has a chance because this door tonight has been opened.”

At one point, she looked up to the balcony and spotted Sidney Poitier, who in 1964 became the first Black man to win an Academy Award for best actor, for “Lilies of the Field,” and was there that night to receive [*an honorary award*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mnjTANhBu3k).

“It was so special to have him there,” Berry said in an interview, a few weeks after he died in January at age 94. “He and Dorothy Dandridge allowed me to dream outside my own backyard and believe that a little Black kid from Cleveland could do this.”

When the orchestra signaled her to wrap it up after about three minutes, she resisted.

“It’s been 74 years,” she said onstage, referring to all the ceremonies in which a white actress had won the award. “I got to take this time.” (It would be an evening of long speeches, clocking in as the longest Oscars ever, at four hours and 23 minutes.)

A few moments later, the night entered the history books again: Denzel Washington became the second African American man [*to win best actor*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLKDfyFjQtc), for his role as a crooked cop in “Training Day,” making the 2002 ceremony the first — and only — time both of the top acting awards went to actors of color.

But in the 20 years since that night, just 12 other Black performers have won Oscars. Though two men — Jamie Foxx and Forest Whitaker — have joined the ranks of African American best actor winners, no other Black women have been named best actress, and it took eight years after Berry’s win for another Black woman to even be nominated in the category (Gabourey Sidibe for “Precious” in 2010).

“It didn’t open the door,” Berry said. “The fact that there’s no one standing next to me is heartbreaking.”

Mia L. Mask, a professor of film at Vassar College and the author of “Divas on Screen: Black Women in American Film,” said Berry’s victory was particularly notable because it came amid a paucity of quality roles for Black men — and even fewer for Black women.

“For a woman of color to win, the film itself has to be a good movie and meet the sensibility of academy members,” she said. “And the performance has to be good.”

The roles historically available to African American performers, she noted, have largely been isolated characters dependent on white benefactors, as was the case with some of the parts for which Black actors won Oscars before Berry: Hattie McDaniel’s Mammy in “Gone With the Wind” and Poitier’s handyman in “Lilies of the Field.”

The carnal nature of the central “Monster’s Ball” relationship between Berry’s character, Leticia, and Billy Bob Thornton’s character, Hank, a white corrections officer, was the target of criticism from another Black actress, Angela Bassett, who told Newsweek in June 2002 that she had declined the part because she “wasn’t going to be a prostitute on film.” (Bassett did not respond to a request for comment for this story.)

Noting that she didn’t “begrudge Halle her success,” Bassett said at the time, “I couldn’t do that because it’s such a stereotype about Black women and sexuality.” (Tom Ortenberg, president of Lionsgate Films, which produced the movie, later said Bassett was never offered the role of Leticia, who was not a prostitute.)

Mask said that today’s audiences are more attuned to the contrivances of “Monster’s Ball” than they were 20 years ago, particularly the restaurant and prison scenes that are strikingly underpopulated, even for rural Georgia. Berry’s character has no church, school or civic groups available for her to even consider joining.

“It’s not credible that a young woman — particularly as attractive as Berry’s Leticia — would live in isolation without any Black community,” she said.

In a 2004 article published in Film Quarterly, Mask noted that the film, which is set in a Georgia town in the 1990s, is also problematic because of its voyeuristic attitude toward ***working-class*** women’s sexuality in the context of American race relations.

“Many viewers interpreted the film’s sex scenes as reproducing the pornographic gaze at the Black female body, thereby re-stigmatizing Black feminine sexuality,” she wrote.

Berry said that she was aware of the criticism and that she would “absolutely” take the role today.

“I loved that character from the minute I read the script,” she said. “I thought the story was important, and it touched me. So if I read that today and felt that same way, which I think I would — absolutely.”

Berry said that while she certainly celebrated her milestone win, she was determined not to let it change the types of parts she took.

“You have to stay true to whatever got you to that place to get that award,” she said. “And, for me, it was taking risks and doing things outside the box.”

But, Berry emphasized, the fact that no African American has won the academy’s top acting award for women in the past two decades should not take anything away from women like Lena Waithe and Viola Davis, who are producing “miraculous, wonderful work.”

“We can’t always judge success or progress by how many awards we have,” she said. “Awards are the icing on the cake — they’re your peers saying you were exceptionally excellent this year — but does that mean that if we don’t get the exceptionally excellent nod, that we were not great, and we’re not successful, and we’re not changing the world with our art, and our opportunities aren’t growing?”

Even more important than the statuette in her bedroom, Berry said, is the work she’s been able to do in the years since. She recently directed her first film, the mixed martial arts drama [*“Bruised,” which began streaming on Netflix*](https://www.netflix.com/title/81043365) in November.

“Twenty years ago, a Black woman directing a movie about the fight genre?” she said. “I don’t think I could’ve even wrapped my brain around it. That’s proof to me that things are changing.”

PHOTOS: Above, a tearful Halle Berry accepting the Oscar in 2002. The win came for her role in “Monster’s Ball,” left, which also starred Billy Bob Thornton. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES; JEANNE LOUISE BULLIARD/LIONSGATE); PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY ADRIENNE RAQUEL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 25, 2022

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[***Lauren Boebert, Hard-Right Gun Activist, Wins in Colorado House District***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6170-FVH1-DXY4-X4TJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 4, 2020 Wednesday 11:40 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 578 words

**Byline:** Carl Hulse

**Highlight:** The Republican firebrand kept the seat in her party’s hands after toppling the incumbent in a primary, accusing him of being insufficiently supportive of President Trump.

**Body**

The Republican firebrand kept the seat in her party’s hands after toppling the incumbent in a primary, accusing him of being insufficiently supportive of President Trump.

[[*Joe Biden has won the 2020 U.S. presidential election. Read our story*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/us/politics/biden-election.html)]

Lauren Boebert, a Glock-wearing conservative firebrand, won the race for Colorado’s sprawling Third Congressional District on Wednesday, holding the seat for Republicans as they tried to limit their House losses.

According to The Associated Press, Ms. Boebert, 33, defeated Diane Mitsch Bush, a former state legislator, in the race for the seat held by Representative Scott Tipton, a Republican [*toppled by Ms. Boebert in the party primary*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/us/politics/biden-election.html), the first time a challenger defeated a sitting House member in the state in decades. She did so by portraying Mr. Tipton as insufficiently supportive of President Trump.

Though Colorado is trending more Democratic, the Third Congressional District covers a huge expanse of the state’s more conservative Western Slope, where progressive upscale ski towns, such as Aspen and Steamboat Springs, are interspersed with conservative ranching and ***working-class*** communities such as Pueblo and Grand Junction.

Ms. Boebert, the owner of a restaurant in Rifle, Colo., where the waitresses openly carry handguns, gained attention for expressing some interest in QAnon, but has since disavowed the baseless conspiracy theory, which maintains that the world is run by a cabal of Satan-worshiping pedophiles plotting against Mr. Trump. Instead, [*Ms. Boebert has positioned herself*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/07/us/politics/biden-election.html) as the antidote to what she has called socialist ideology spreading through Washington, represented by lawmakers such as Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Democrat of New York.

The congresswoman-elect gained national attention in 2019 when she confronted Beto O’Rourke, then a Democratic candidate for president, at a televised town hall outside Denver over his pledge to confiscate weapons such as semiautomatic assault rifles. “I am here to say, ‘Hell no, you’re not,’” she told Mr. O’Rourke.

She said she decided to take on Mr. Tipton, a low-profile, conservative congressman, after his office declined to aid a ballot measure preventing Colorado from awarding its electoral votes to the overall national popular vote winner. He did not appear to take the primary challenge seriously and lost.

Ms. Mitsch Bush is a former Routt County commissioner and state lawmaker who stressed her bipartisan record and expertise on water issues, always a major concern in Colorado. She said Ms. Boebert was more interested in achieving political celebrity than working on the issues most important to Coloradans. She also attacked Ms. Boebert for backing the Republican drive to overturn the Affordable Care Act.

Ms. Boebert was dogged in her campaign by the disclosure of a series of run-ins she had with local police over traffic charges and other conduct, including being arrested on warrants for failure to appear in court.

A group opposed to her paid for billboards featuring her mug shot at various locations in the district. But many voters in the district were apparently willing to overlook those transgressions and back Ms. Boebert for her pledge to be an aggressive conservative combatant in Congress.

PHOTO: Lauren Boebert gained attention for expressing some interest in QAnon, but she has since disavowed belief in the baseless conspiracy theory. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kelsey Brunner for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 7, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Former Head of Boston's Transit System Is Named to Lead New York's***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652M-GXW1-JBG3-61K5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 24, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 21

**Length:** 1358 words

**Byline:** By Michael Gold

**Body**

Richard A. Davey, a former Massachusetts transportation secretary, will be the first permanent president of New York City Transit since the start of the pandemic.

As New York City's subway system, the nation's largest, lurches out of the throes of a pandemic that has drained it of millions of riders and the fares they pay, it will have a new permanent leader for the first time in more than two years.

Richard A. Davey, a former Massachusetts secretary of transportation who once led Boston's transit system, was named on Wednesday as the next president of New York City Transit, the agency that runs the city's subway and buses and is a division of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Mr. Davey, 48, who currently advises transit systems around the world as a partner at Boston Consulting Group, will take the reins at one of the most difficult moments in the subway's 117-year history, as it faces an existential question: How many of its prepandemic riders will return, and when?

With New York continuing to take cautious steps toward post-pandemic normalcy, top officials, from the governor to the mayor to major corporate leaders, agree that a robust subway is crucial to the region's economy and its recovery.

In an interview, Mr. Davey, who will take over the transit agency on May 2, acknowledged the challenges but said the central role that the subway and buses played in the city was something that drew him to the job.

''New York is a city that relies so heavily on its transit system,'' he said. ''And if the transit system doesn't work, then New York isn't working.''

His first priority, he added, will be to grow ridership and lure back riders whose fares are crucial to financing the subway's operation.

Before March 2020, New York's subway carried about 5.5 million people on an average weekday. When shutdown orders sent students and workers home, left others unemployed and kept tourists away, the subway's ridership plunged by more than 90 percent. The bus system, whose riders are more likely to come from predominantly low-income, minority or immigrant neighborhoods, saw ridership fall by close to 80 percent.

More than two years later, the system is still struggling. Last week, the subway hovered at around 58 percent of prepandemic ridership, while bus ridership stood at about 62 percent. Under current projections, subway ridership is not expected to reach 86 percent of prepandemic levels until 2024.

But with more companies adopting a hybrid work schedule, many of the riders who do start filling public transit again will no longer be typical five-day-a-week commuters.

The depressed ridership has created a looming financial crisis for the public transit agency. Before the pandemic, the M.T.A. raised 38 percent of its revenue from fares, a relatively high percentage compared with other major American transit systems.

Though federal pandemic aid has helped the transportation authority postpone fare increases and avoid drastic service cuts, its most recent financial plan forecasts a $500 million deficit in 2025 that will balloon to about $2 billion in 2026.

Janno Lieber, the M.T.A.'s chairman and chief executive, said the system's deepening troubles led the agency to seek someone with experience dealing with operating a complex transit system, weathering policy debates and tackling financial issues.

''We're facing a new reality as we come out of the pandemic,'' Mr. Lieber said. ''And it is the right time to have somebody who has looked at things broadly.''

The M.T.A. cannot compel a return to daily commuting. But Mr. Davey said he planned to focus on the factors within its control: reliable service, boosting some of the slowest buses in the country and public safety.

''We can't tell employers to bring employees back,'' he said. ''But on the flip side, if the employees don't feel safe or we're not providing good service, they're not going to want to come back.''

While overseeing the Boston system, Mr. Davey was criticized for implementing fare hikes that some transit advocates said burdened ***working-class*** and older people and for not doing more to reduce delays. Working in the private sector in recent years, Mr. Davey has focused on transportation issues, but he has not managed the daily operations of a public transit agency in a decade.

Though he has spent most of his life in Massachusetts, Mr. Davey is not inexperienced with New York's transit system. He worked at a law firm in Manhattan from 1999 to 2002 and commuted daily by subway from the Upper East Side.

In 2003, Mr. Davey began working for the Massachusetts Bay Commuter Railroad Company in Boston, which operated the Boston area's commuter rail system. After becoming general manager there, he was tapped in 2010 to lead the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, the transit system serving greater Boston.

New York City's transit system dwarfs Boston's. When Mr. Davey was in charge, he oversaw about 6,000 employees, and Boston's subways, buses and rails carried about 1.3 million riders every weekday.

But Mr. Davey said that he believed the two systems were also similar.

''Boston and New York are the oldest systems in the United States,'' he said. ''So maintenance and lack of capital investment were some of the big issues there.''

Josh Ostroff, the interim director of Transportation for Massachusetts, an advocacy group, said Mr. Davey inherited a system that was saddled with debt and had been in a prolonged state of disrepair.

''He was able to convey the urgency of that message to legislators, to the public and to local civic leaders,'' Mr. Ostroff said. ''And he helped to marshal support for legislation that ultimately helped.''

He also built a reputation for engaging with riders and listening to their complaints. Mr. Davey gave up his car more than a decade ago and relied on Boston's transit system to commute. ''He's gotten out there more than any general manager we've ever seen,'' a watchdog group told Boston.com in 2011.

Mr. Davey is also no stranger to leading a transit organization caught in political crossfire. By the time he led Boston's system, elected officials had for years made financial decisions that bolstered their political priorities but left the transit system starved of money for upgrades, Mr. Ostroff said.

New York City Transit has faced similar headwinds. The agency has been without a permanent chief since February 2020, when Andy Byford, then the head, stepped down after repeated clashes with Andrew M. Cuomo, then governor.

Much like Mr. Davey, Mr. Byford took charge of the subway at a moment of crisis in 2018, when years of political and financial neglect had made service reliably unreliable and led Mr. Cuomo to declare a state of emergency on the system. When Mr. Byford left, he was widely praised for helping reverse the decline.

Mr. Davey had a positive relationship with Boston's mayor and governor; they both supported his eventual leadership of the city's 2024 Olympics bid, which was ultimately withdrawn.

But at the transit agency and as Massachusetts' transportation secretary from 2011 to 2014, he pushed for politically unpopular policies that had to garner support from skeptical legislators, Mr. Ostroff said.

Among them were an effort that led to an increase in the gas tax to help fund transit and repair roads, and fare increases that Mr. Davey said were needed to close the M.B.T.A.'s financial deficits while maintaining service.

''I can't say that every rider loved him, because he was bearing bad news,'' Mr. Ostroff said. ''But he was able to get legislators and the other leaders behind him.''

In New York, Mr. Davey said that he would try to minimize potential fare increases and service cuts. But he will be open to adjusting subway operations and bus routes for shifting travel patterns as the city emerges from the pandemic.

Mr. Davey will also approach the job with the perspective of someone who has studied international transit systems closely, including New York's. In 2017, as a consultant, he worked on the Subway Action Plan, an $800 million rescue plan that helped stabilize the system.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/nyregion/nyc-subway-chief-richard-davey.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/nyregion/nyc-subway-chief-richard-davey.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Richard A. Davey, left, takes on the city's transit system at a difficult moment: Ridership on the subway is still under 60 percent of the prepandemic level of roughly 5.5 million weekday riders. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIK JACOBS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

GABBY JONES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Republicans Oust Collin Peterson in Minnesota***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616Y-79G1-DXY4-X36J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 4, 2020 Wednesday 14:44 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 587 words

**Byline:** Luke Broadwater

**Highlight:** The long-serving chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, who had bucked political trends in his conservative district for years, succumbed to a challenge from Michelle Fischbach.

**Body**

The long-serving chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, who had bucked political trends in his conservative district for years, succumbed to a challenge from Michelle Fischbach.

Representative Collin C. Peterson, Democrat of Minnesota, the chairman of the Agriculture Committee who has represented his large agrarian district for three decades, lost his re-election bid early Wednesday, handing Republicans a pickup in the House.

Mr. Peterson, 76, had bucked political trends for years, winning re-election in a rural district that was increasingly shifting toward the Republican Party. Michelle Fischbach, 55, a former lieutenant governor who vowed to “fire” Speaker Nancy Pelosi upon arriving in Washington and sought to tie the congressman to his party’s left flank, finally ended his run, according to The Associated Press.

“It really is the death knell for the moderate rural Democrat,” said Tim Lindberg, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Minnesota Morris. “It was clear he knew he was in trouble.”

President Trump won the district by 31 points in 2016, and Republican strategists had theorized that should Mr. Peterson face tough competition during the president’s re-election year, they could flip the seat. His defeat underscored a growing divide between suburban areas that are increasingly aligning with Democrats and the white ***working-class*** rural districts that are shifting ever more sharply toward Republicans.

On the campaign trial, Ms. Fischbach had echoed Mr. Trump’s “law and order” message, seeking to sow fear and blame Democrats for unrest in America’s cities over the killings of Black people by the police.

“They want to make sure the stuff going on in Minneapolis is not going to happen in their back yard,” Ms. Fischbach said of voters in the district during a recent debate.

Mr. Peterson sought to play up his seniority accumulated over years in the House, repeatedly making a practical pitch to his constituents. As chairman of the Agriculture Committee, he argued, he could help farmers in a way a newcomer to Congress such as Ms. Fischbach could not.

“Agriculture is this district,” Mr. Peterson said, citing the sugar industry’s importance to the local economy. “Any ag meeting in Washington in the House doesn’t start until I get into the room, and it ends when I leave. The secretary calls me all the time.”

Despite his powerful position in Washington, Mr. Peterson, a licensed pilot known to fly his private plane across his district, had grown increasingly endangered.

During the 2018 midterm election, Dave Hughes, an Air Force veteran endorsed by Mr. Trump, [*narrowly lost to Mr. Peterson*](https://www.nytimes.com/elections/results/minnesota-house-district-7) as conservatives flipped two neighboring rural districts.

Outside money poured into the 2020 contest, with Mr. Peterson and groups supporting him spending more than $16 million to try to retain the seat, while Ms. Fischbach and her allies spent nearly $7 million to seize it.

On the campaign trail, Mr. Peterson repeatedly emphasized his independent streak from his party. He often votes with Republicans, including against the Affordable Care Act, and earned an “A” rating from the National Rifle Association.

He is the only current Democrat in Congress who voted against both articles of impeachment against Mr. Trump.

PHOTO: Michelle Fischbach had echoed President Trump’s “law and order” message, seeking to blame Democrats for unrest in America’s cities over the killings of Black people by the police. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Stephen Maturen/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2020

**End of Document**



[***In-Betweens: 2 Middle Grade Novels About the Costs and Benefits of Being 11; Children’s Books***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64RW-FNF1-JBG3-60DK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 11, 2022 Friday 15:40 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1260 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Hubert Swan

**Highlight:** The National Book Award finalists Leslie Connor and Sara Zarr explore that frustrating time between childhood and adolescence.

**Body**

ANYBODY HERE SEEN FRENCHIE?

By Leslie Connor

A SONG CALLED HOME

By Sara Zarr

Is there anything more frustrating than being 11? Elevens are often the biggest of the big kids, yet they’re still two long years away from being teenagers. The two-faced Roman god Janus, who rules over time and transitions, may as well be the patron deity of 11s, trapped as they are between childhood and adolescence, reluctant to let go of one and unsure how to embrace the other. It’s a moment where zippers stick, crushes are crushing and personal freedom is at a premium. But it can also be a period of prodigious growth. Two new middle grade novels, by the National Book Award finalists Leslie Connor (“The Truth as Told by Mason Buttle”) and Sara Zarr ([*“Story of a Girl”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/12/books/review/the-lucy-variations-by-sara-zarr.html)), explore the costs and benefits of this in-between season.

In Connor’s “Anybody Here Seen Frenchie?” the titular character is on the autism spectrum and loves all things avian. Frenchie Livernoise doesn’t speak, with the exception of an occasional bird call. Aurora Petrequin, his loquacious 11-year-old neighbor, has taken Frenchie under her wing since he and his family moved to her small town on the coast of Maine. Together they have formed an unusual bond: Frenchie serves as a willing audience to Aurora’s endless discourse, while Aurora is Frenchie’s trusted interpreter and protector. In the summer, they hike the beaches and woods of their little hamlet, constantly on the lookout for Frenchie’s beloved birds, and during the school year they are always in the same class, serving as each other’s “special person.” This arrangement has worked beautifully since third grade, shielding both of them from the unkindness of other children when it comes to their unique personality traits.

But now it’s the start of sixth grade, and Aurora and Frenchie have been placed in separate classes. As Aurora begins to make new friends and explore experiences outside their circle of two, she starts to realize what she’s been missing by having Frenchie as her only companion.

When torn between playing “Preposterous Pursuits” with her new friends Leena and Joanie at recess or running her usual 100-yard dashes with Frenchie, who “counts on things to happen the same way every day,” Aurora describes her conflicted feelings as “a little burn”: “Frustration is what that is.”

Though Frenchie’s new classroom aide, Mr. Menkis, advises a guilty Aurora that “having new friends doesn’t mean you’re leaving someone else behind,” Aurora’s worst fears come true when Frenchie goes missing from school. She is certain it is her fault for not watching over him as carefully as she used to.

But when the whole community rallies together to find him, Aurora begins to understand that she doesn’t have to shoulder the responsibility of Frenchie’s well-being all on her own. He’s under the loving concern of the entire town.

Connor has created a soft-focus community that reads like a contemporary Grover’s Corners with its quirky assortment of kind adults and its cozy woodland setting populated with songbirds and even a fabled piebald deer. The tone is homey, the pacing leisurely and the introduction of neurodiversity thoughtful.

The ebullient Aurora is a perfect foil for the reserved Frenchie. Both characters take big developmental steps toward the land of 12 by not only trusting each other, but also becoming a little less dependent on each other. Children seeking a gentle story of rare birds being seen, supported and understood will feel right at home within these pages.

The young adult author Sara Zarr’s middle grade debut, “A Song Called Home,” skews more pensive, with a deeply affecting depiction of a ***working-class*** Christian family in flux.

Lou lives with her mom and her older sister, Casey, in an apartment in San Francisco. Though Mom still struggles to pay the rent, things have been better since she divorced their alcoholic father: “No more walking on eggshells. … No more wondering how long he’d be able to keep his job this time, or if he’d remember things like your birthday or your baptism or if it was a Saturday or a Tuesday.”

On the eve of her 11th birthday, change is once more in the air, as Lou’s mom is about to marry Steve, a man from their church: “Lou’s birthday was on Friday. And then Saturday, the wedding.”

While this will provide some much-needed financial stability, along with separate bedrooms for Lou and Casey, it will also mean changing schools and leaving friends behind.

Steve’s offer to adopt Lou and Casey does not sit well with Lou. Steve is perfectly nice, but she already has a dad. “She didn’t need a new one. She just wanted the one she had to be different.”

Lou wants everything to go back to the “we” it used to be: “Before Steve, we was Lou and Casey and Mom. … Now it seemed like we was Steve and Mom, while Lou and Casey had suddenly become a separate us,” with no room for Dad at all.

So when Lou is gifted a mysterious guitar for her birthday, she decides to assume it’s from Dad, though there is no name on the card. She starts taking lessons from Steve’s kind neighbor, and focuses on learning Dad’s favorite songs from his old Neil Young and R.E.M. albums. The guitar lessons, along with a new haircut, new friends and a new spelling of her name (“Lu”), help ease the transition to her new school, and slowly her new life becomes just … her life.

While Dad doesn’t suddenly stop drinking, he does show up to see Lou play the guitar in the middle school talent show. And when he admits he was not the one who gave her the guitar, Lou’s disappointment is tempered by the fact that she has finally become a “we” with the person who did: Steve.

Zarr’s portrayal of Lou is achingly authentic, because she lived it. She has been candid about her evangelical Christian childhood in San Francisco, where she grew up without a father after age 10. But what Zarr captures especially well are those small moments of clinging to the past while being pushed into the future that are so quintessentially characteristic of 11-year-olds.

When Mom tells Lou that the yellow kitchen table from the old apartment went to Goodwill, “Lou froze, then rolled away. It felt as though something had been torn right from her hands.”

On the last day in her old school, Lou is stunned to realize that “they were all going to go on without her”: “This classroom would still exist and everyone else would still be in it. … All the usual games and conversations at recess and lunch would happen. It didn’t seem real or possible, but that’s how it would be.” Life will continue, and so, despite all evidence to the contrary, will Lou.

When Lou’s mom says, “Change is hard. Even good change,” it speaks to the ambivalence 11s feel as they run down the up escalator of life, trying desperately to stay in place. Sometimes adults who have weathered a thousand transformations forget how tumultuous a move, a new school or a fluctuating friendship can be when a decade constitutes your whole life. So thank Janus for author-seers who share their wise insights about this turbulent time to remind both kids and grown-ups that, no matter how awkward or painful, this too shall pass.

Jennifer Hubert Swan is the library department chair at the Hackley School in Tarrytown, N.Y., and an adjunct assistant professor at Pratt Institute School of Information, where she teaches youth literature. ANYBODY HERE SEEN FRENCHIE? By Leslie Connor 336 pp. Katherine Tegen Books. $16.99. (Ages 8 and up) A SONG CALLED HOME By Sara Zarr 368 pp. Balzer + Bray. $16.99. (Ages 8 to 12)

PHOTOS

**Related Articles**

* [*The Playing’s the Thing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/12/books/review/the-lucy-variations-by-sara-zarr.html)

**Load-Date:** February 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***N.Y.C.’s New Subway Chief Comes From Boston and Doesn’t Own a Car***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652F-F571-JBG3-60CJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 23, 2022 Wednesday 11:50 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1391 words

**Byline:** Michael Gold

**Highlight:** Richard A. Davey, a former Massachusetts transportation secretary, will be the first permanent president of New York City Transit since the start of the pandemic.

**Body**

Richard A. Davey, a former Massachusetts transportation secretary, will be the first permanent president of New York City Transit since the start of the pandemic.

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Richard A. Davey, a former Massachusetts secretary of transportation who once led Boston’s transit system, was named on Wednesday as the next president of New York City Transit, the agency that runs the city’s subway and buses and is a division of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Mr. Davey, 48, who currently advises transit systems around the world as a partner at Boston Consulting Group, will take the reins at one of the most difficult moments in the subway’s 117-year history, as it faces an existential question: How many of its prepandemic riders will return, and when?

With New York continuing to take cautious steps toward post-pandemic normalcy, top officials, from the governor to the mayor to major corporate leaders, agree that a robust subway is crucial to the region’s economy and its recovery.

In an interview, Mr. Davey, who will take over the transit agency on May 2, acknowledged the challenges but said the central role that the subway and buses played in the city was something that drew him to the job.

“New York is a city that relies so heavily on its transit system,” he said. “And if the transit system doesn’t work, then New York isn’t working.”

His first priority, he added, will be to grow ridership and lure back riders whose fares are crucial to financing the subway’s operation.

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Though he has spent most of his life in Massachusetts, Mr. Davey is not inexperienced with New York’s transit system. He worked at a law firm in Manhattan from 1999 to 2002 and commuted daily by subway from the Upper East Side.

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PHOTOS: Richard A. Davey, left, takes on the city’s transit system at a difficult moment: Ridership on the subway is still under 60 percent of the prepandemic level of roughly 5.5 million weekday riders. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ERIK JACOBS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; GABBY JONES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 24, 2022

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[***Russians in Venezuela Find the Party Is Over***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:652D-HVV1-JBG3-64YC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 23, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 1388 words

**Byline:** By Anatoly Kurmanaev, Isayen Herrera and Adriana Loureiro Fernandez

**Body**

PLAYA PUERTO CRUZ, Venezuela -- They drank rum and danced to a boombox blasting Russian electro pop music in a scrappy airport waiting hall. Singing ''It's Not Enough,'' they enjoyed the last hours of their tropical holiday.

The travelers could have been mistaken for those on spring break. In fact, they were Russians waiting to board the last flights back to Moscow before sanctions cut off their route home -- their future and that of their hosts upturned by President Vladimir V. Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

Russian tourists had helped breathe an unlikely new life into Venezuela's idyllic island of Margarita, once a Caribbean tourist mecca that was devastated in recent years by economic crisis, international isolation and the pandemic. Under a deal approved by the two countries' allied governments, more than 10,000 Russians have visited Margarita since September on direct charter flights from Moscow, in what was the island's only international connection.

The deal gave jobs to hundreds of Margarita residents in 20 hotels, and compelled the central government to improve the island's shambolic supply of electricity, water and gasoline. Endemic crime was brought to heel; businesses began to reopen; residents who had emigrated began to return.

The recent surge of Russian visitors represented a tiny fraction of the three million tourists Margarita received annually at its peak in early 2010s. But the arrival of the first organized international tours in years gave the locals hope that they had turned the tide on misfortune.

''We want to hug any foreigner who comes here,'' said José Gregorio Rodríguez, the head of the Chamber of Commerce in Venezuela's archipelago state of Nueva Esparta, which includes Margarita. ''When you're at zero, any improvement is welcomed.''

The Russians were drawn to Margarita by cheap prices, exoticism, a lack of visa or pandemic restrictions and yearlong sun, said tourists interviewed on the island in February and early March. Tours started at $850 per person for 13 nights in an all-inclusive, three-star beach hotel, including return flights from Moscow, 15 hours each way.

''It's something new, something exciting,'' said Lucia Aleeva, a blogger from the city of Kazan. ''We're the first explorers, in a way.''

Some Russian tourists said they booked the tickets to Margarita just a day or two before the trip without knowing anything about Venezuela, attracted to the destination by its unusually low price. Most of those interviewed described themselves as small business owners or provincial public workers, with many coming from state capitals as far away as Chita, a Siberian town near Mongolia. Some had never been outside Russia; most had never been to Latin America.

Many of the older tourists began their holiday in a stereotypical Russian way: with heavy drinking.

Last month, Algis, who works for a construction company in Sochi, in southern Russia, was inebriated when he got off the plane wearing several layers of winter clothes in 90-degree heat. He held a bag of duty-free alcohol in one hand, and a crumbled pack of assorted dollar bills in another, saying he intended to invest them in a prospective marriage on the island.

Another tourist named Andrey, who leases heavy equipment in the mining city of Chelyabinsk, recounted over a dinner laden with copious bottles of cheap Chilean wine how, during a heavy drinking session that began in his hometown and carried onto the Moscow airport terminal and the flight to Margarita, he was startled by a voice announcing over the plane's loudspeaker that he had been selected to meet Venezuela's tourism minister on landing because he was the 10,000th Russian tourist to visit the island.

Andrey said he struggled to stand straight for the photograph.

In the sprawling Margarita resort of Sunsol Ecoland, Russians danced until the early hours at a beach disco alternating reggaeton with Russian hits from bands such as Leningrad, a foul-mouthed ska act that romanticized the hard-living and hard-drinking exploits of ***working-class*** underdogs.

In visits to Margarita's colonial towns during the day, many marveled at Venezuelans' ability to maintain good spirits despite the everyday economic hardships.

But then on Feb. 24, Russia invaded Ukraine and the war quickly reverberated in regions far removed from the battlefield.

As fighting escalated, Western nations and companies closed their airspace to Russian flights and halted leasing contracts and aviation parts supplies. In response, the Russia-focused tour operator Pegas Touristik told clients soaking up the sun on Margarita that they would have to evacuate.

Many started wondering what travails would now await them at home.

Inflation in Russia is spiking; fears of shortages and hoarding are growing; and the government is enforcing currency controls and threatening foreign companies, echoing life during Venezuela's eight-year economic depression, from which the South American country is just emerging.

''Thankfully, they have the sea and the sun,'' said Yulia, a ministry worker from Moscow. ''In a country like ours, surviving turmoil and poverty would be much harder and sadder.''

Like other Russians interviewed on Margarita since the start of the war, Yulia asked not to use her last name. None of the Russian tourists The Times spoke with would comment on the invasion itself, or on the early reports of civilian casualties in Ukraine. They often blamed a poor internet connection for not keeping up with the news. The Russian government has made even mentioning the war a criminal offense punished with up to 15 years of prison.

Yulia spent her last days in Margarita on the beach reading the dystopian novel ''1984,'' by George Orwell.

As the fighting and the international sanctions against Russia intensified, the mood at the resorts grew progressively somber. The Russians' purchasing power plummeted with the ruble, and their bank cards stopped working.

Sunsol's Russian guests ate their last dinner on the island in silence. The usual noise of a lively conversation and the shuffling and clinking of the wine glasses in the hotel's large buffet hall was gone, replaced by the distant sound of the rolling waves.

The beach disco was empty. A group of Venezuelan performers danced on the stage on their own, fruitlessly trying to cheer the somber guests contemplating their impending problems.

Russian currency has lost around 37 percent of its value since the start of the war, and hundreds of thousands of its citizens are facing unemployment, as sanctions shutter companies at a record pace.

A Russian association of tour operators said international bookings fell 70 percent in the week after the outbreak of the war.

The mood among the resort staff was equally grim.

The war has dealt a major blow to Margarita, which expected to receive 65,000 Russian visitors this year. Some business people remodeled their idle hotels to accommodate the expected visitors and hired new staff, hoping that Russian flights would open doors to other international tourists.

The salaries were paltry -- waiters earned as little as $1 a day -- but the jobs at least provided steady meals in a country where hunger remains rife. Since the war broke out, many people have already lost jobs or had their shifts cut.

The last flight out of Margarita for Moscow left on March 8. All major Russian airlines have since stoped flying west beyond neighboring Belarus.

Although Pegas continues advertising Margarita tours starting in April, those who own tourism businesses on the island say the route's future is uncertain.

During the last days of their vacation, some guests said they put their faith in Mr. Putin, who governed Russia for 22 years with the support of many Russians.

''We trust our president,'' said a tourist from Moscow, also named Yulia. ''I don't think he will lead us to collapse.'' Her husband Oleg quietly interjected, ''Well, it's already collapsed.''

Others tried enjoying the remainder of what they saw as their last view of the outside world.

''We decided to unwind, like it's the last time,'' said Ravil, a designer from Moscow. ''We don't understand if we will return to the same country from which we left.''

Ksenia Barakovskaya contributed reporting.Ksenia Barakovskaya contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/22/world/americas/russia-margarita-venezuela.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/22/world/americas/russia-margarita-venezuela.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Sunsol Ecoland, a resort popular among Russian tourists on Margarita, a Venezuelan island recovering from economic troubles.

Tourists arriving in Margarita from Russia boarded buses to take them from the airport on Feb. 1. Russians were drawn by low prices, yearlong sun and a lack of visa or pandemic restrictions. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***To This Group, Labor Is More Than a ‘White Man Who Works in a Factory’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8B-VWF1-JBG3-639T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 22, 2020 Saturday 17:03 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 988 words

**Byline:** Isabella Grullón Paz

**Highlight:** The National Domestic Workers Alliance is putting nannies, housekeepers and home care workers at the center of the labor and progressive political movement.

**Body**

The National Domestic Workers Alliance is putting nannies, housekeepers and home care workers at the center of the labor and progressive political movement.

LAS VEGAS — The three women knocking on doors around Las Vegas on Tuesday afternoon wanted to talk to people about the importance of voting, especially in a state with low voter turnout. They gave all the logistical details — where to go, what time to get there — and explained how early voting worked.

“Make it a family affair!,” Crystal Crawford, a social worker and a nanny in her early 30s, said at almost every house where she stopped. “My family always, always took us to vote,” she said, “So I always tell people to bring the kids.”

She is well versed in how the caucuses will go Saturday, but she and the women she was canvassing with won’t be caucusing themselves.

They are all domestic workers from Georgia who traveled here this week with the National Domestic Workers Alliance, a nonprofit organization working to raise labor standards for nannies, housekeepers, home health aides and others.

In recent years the group has worked to pass the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, which would include a minimum wage, paid time off and eligibility for overtime in nine states and two cities. And now through Care in Action, the advocacy branch of the group, it is focusing on harnessing the political power of the people — largely women of color — it represents.

The workers’ group brought its biannual assembly to Nevada this week, hosted a presidential forum and organized canvassing efforts.

“We want to tell folks their vote is worth it,” said Jess Morales Rocketto, executive director of Care in Action. One of the group’s goals, she said, is to help show domestic workers that the political system was “intentionally built to exclude the type of voters and workers that we organize.”

Ms. Morales Rocketto sees voting as a way domestic workers can have a more powerful role in the decisions that directly affect them.

Consuelo Perez, a nanny who is part of the Dominican Development Center, an affiliate of N.D.W.A. in Massachusetts, feels that her job is “dreaming for other people’s children.”

Ms. Perez, who was in Las Vegas for the group’s assembly, has a daughter with special needs whom she comes home to every day after taking care of another family’s children. “You grow to love this second family, but it hurts to know that those opportunities can’t come to your own.”

She supports Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, she said, not only because of his labor advocacy but also because “Medicare for All,” his signature policy proposal, would help her take care of her daughter.

“We are taking care of kids who could be the future senators and presidents of the United States. I can’t dream like that for my own daughter,” she said. “That’s why we have to do this work.”

Ahead of the 2020 election, the organization’s political arm has focused on garnering candidate support for a federal version of a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, a path to citizenship for domestic workers and their families, and universal child care.

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., Mr. Sanders, Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., have all said that they endorse the federal Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. Senator Kamala Harris of California, who dropped out last December, is one of the sponsors of the bill.

“Everything we’re doing in the policy arena to make jobs better is complemented by everything we’re doing to turn out voters and get people engaged, get people feeling like they have a voice in our democracy,” Ai-jen Poo, the founder and chief executive of the group said in an interview this week.

At the presidential forum hosted by Care in Action here on Tuesday morning, the room was filled with orange: The women in the crowd were all wearing Care in Action shirts. A mix of Spanish, Tagalog and other languages filled the room, with excited whispers about seeing the candidates. Ms. Warren and Tom Steyer attended in person and Mr. Sanders called in from Reno. The crowd cheered for Ms. Warren, and roared for Mr. Sanders when he appeared via conference call, a photo of him projected onstage.

Part of what Ms. Poo and her organization want to change — or correct, in their view — is what politicians picture when they talk about labor and American workers. Too often, Ms. Poo said, it’s the image of a “white man who works in a factory or is a coal worker,” not a diverse ***working class*** doing service or domestic jobs. One way to change that image: Get more domestic workers to vote.

“When we talk about building power in the economy, voting is a part of that,” said Alicia Garza, a co-founder of the Black Lives Matter movement and a special projects director for the domestic workers’ group.

Ms. Poo said that this is the first time presidential candidates have really been talking about domestic workers since the 1970s, but that she is eager for more discussion of what the ***working class*** means in 2020.

“We are writing the DNA of the new economy because really so much of the dynamics that face workers today, domestic workers have been dealing with forever,” she said.

June Barrett, a Jamaican immigrant and former home care nurse who now is involved full-time with the workers alliance, emphasized how valuable domestic labor is, and how undervalued it can be.

“Many of the people we work with wouldn’t be able to do basic things without us,” she said, describing the importance and intimacy of home care work. She spoke about a 90-something patient she would often find on the floor when she arrived at work.

“What we need to do is place value on the work” she said. “There is no value placed on women like myself who do this work.”

PHOTO: A presidential forum in Las Vegas this week hosted by Care in Action, which is pushing domestic workers to vote. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 23, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Asian American Student Success Isn’t a Problem; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65XK-FMH1-JBG3-60F8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 14, 2022 Thursday 14:39 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1949 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** White anxiety about student performance may be driving educational changes.

**Body**

Over the past three years, as universities across the country have [*abandoned standardized test requirements*](https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/college-admissions-test-sat-act-rcna23574) and moved toward more holistic models for admission, a persistent yet largely unexamined question has arisen: Would these changes be happening if white students were at the top of the academic food chain? The performance gap between Asian American and white high school students on standardized tests has grown over the past decade. In [*2018*](https://reports.collegeboard.org/media/pdf/2018-total-group-sat-suite-assessments-annual-report.pdf), for example, Asian American students, on average, scored 100 points higher on the SAT than white students. Just three years later, in 2021, that gap had risen by over 25 percent, to 127. Many of the universities that have dropped the SAT requirement have [*cited*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/opinion/sat-standardized-tests-ucs.html) a desire for diversity and equity and a de-emphasis on hard-core academic competition. (This has always struck me as errant and, frankly, self-serving reasoning. If elite colleges actually want economically and racially diverse campuses free from the academic stressors that plague high school students, they should take their own advice and stop competing so fiercely to prove that they are the most exclusive places of higher learning in the world.)

All this appears to be a noble enough goal. But is it possible instead that the move toward greater diversity and away from academic competition might also be a way to ensure that students from white, wealthy families can still compete with high-achieving Asian American students? In other words, how much of these changes should we attribute to an evolution in the way we think about equality in education and how much should be chalked up to white parents who are now worried that their children are being outcompeted?

[*Natasha Warikoo*](https://www.natashawarikoo.com/), a sociology professor at Tufts, has published a fascinating and worthwhile book about this phenomenon, titled “[*Race at the Top: Asian Americans and Whites in Pursuit of the American Dream in Suburban Schools*](https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/R/bo149570065.html).” Warikoo details her findings from a three-year ethnography of an anonymized suburb that she calls Woodcrest. Like many other suburbs around major cities, Woodcrest has seen a [*browning of its population*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/opinion/suburbs-poor-diverse.html) over the past 50 years. In 1970, the town was over 95 percent white, thanks to years of discriminatory zoning practices. Starting in the 1990s, well-educated Asian immigrants who came to the United States to work in the tech industry began to move to Woodcrest in search of better schools. Now roughly a third of Woodcrest’s population is Asian American.

So what happens when a big influx of wealthy Asian immigrants, mostly from China and India, come to a liberal, wealthy suburb that has always prided itself on its academic accomplishments? Warikoo correctly notes that for years, scholars and sociologists have simply assumed that these relatively privileged and upwardly mobile Asian Americans would simply melt into the upper middle class. What she found through her research is that the transition isn’t quite so smooth, in large part because many of the white families who live in these suburbs are worried that the new competition from Asian students will harm their own children’s chances of getting into elite colleges. As a result, some white parents in Woodcrest called for a de-emphasis on academics and a prioritization of mental health. Much like the moves away from the SAT, these changes sound worthwhile, but it’s worth examining the motives behind them.

I spoke to Dr. Warikoo about her book and the issues it explores, including her theories on why Asian American students in Woodcrest have done so well, the limits of assimilation, and what she thinks should be done about the scarcity mind-set that she believes drives all of this.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

First things first: We should acknowledge that Woodcrest is a pseudonym and you do not specify which state it’s in. But can you tell us where some of these upper middle class, Asian American and white suburbs are located?

To identify a site for this research, I looked at cities with median household income in the top 20 percent — above $100,000 in 2010 — and where the Asian American population was at least 20 percent by 2010 and had grown since 2000. There are 34 cities around the country that fit that description, including Cupertino and Saratoga in Northern California, Sugar Land in Texas (a Houston suburb), Syosset on Long Island and Lexington in Massachusetts. White and Asian parents alike move to many of these places to send their children to their top-rated public schools. Many are suburbs that grew during the era of school desegregation, as whites left cities in large numbers and passed laws designed to keep ***working-class*** people out, like minimum housing lot size requirements and bans on the building of multifamily homes.

Why are Asian families moving to these affluent, white suburbs?

For the same reason that white American families are moving to them — in pursuit of the public schools, because of the school system, strong reputation, high levels of achievement, and in part because the community is so well educated. Some of the Asian immigrant families are also drawn to this town because there is a quorum of people from their home country, particularly Indians and Chinese immigrants, so they like the diversity.

How are these families received by the people who already live there? You note in your book that a lot of these communities are like Woodcrest in that they’re filled with affluent, white progressives with Black Lives Matter signs in their yards.

On one hand, I think there’s appreciation for the diversity that these immigrant families bring. They enable those white families to say, “We live in a diverse town.” And they do. Some kinds of diversity are glaringly missing — for example, there are not very many Black or Latinx families — but it’s not an exclusively white town.

On the other hand, I think over time, as the Asian American population grows and their kids are doing quite well academically, there’s — among some white families — a little bit of unease about these new Asian families. Those white families might think, “These Asian families do things a little differently. They focus on academics more than a lot of the white families. They prioritize different things.” That brings concern about how the community is changing.

This only really happens when the immigrant population there reaches a certain number. When there’s only a few of them, the culture doesn’t really change, but as they grow, concerns start to emerge, like: Is the high school becoming too competitive? Are too many people putting their kids in extracurricular math classes so that now you can’t get into honors unless you do these classes? Or is it impossible for my child now to become class valedictorian?

In the book, you describe what some white parents in Woodcrest see as a loss of status. How does this manifest itself?

There’s two responses that I talked about in the book. One is that there’s a small minority of white families who pull their kids out of the public schools and send them to private school so they can have a less competitive, less intensive environment.

The other thing is that they push for policies to reduce academic competition. The school had already ended class rankings. They don’t name a valedictorian. That all had happened before I started this research. Then they reduced homework. And this was something that a lot of the white parents talked about is important to them. A lot of the Asian families didn’t agree with that. The district actually ended up ending homework in the elementary schools. And a lot of the Asian families didn’t agree with that, either.

Interestingly, there was never any talk of limiting how many extracurriculars kids can participate in or the number of hours on the field that sports can require, or anything like that.

How much of some of today’s educational policy shifts — whether it&#39;s getting rid of the SAT or the push to eliminate test-in magnet schools with large Asian populations — comes from this anxiety over a loss of status?

It’s true that Black activists have been talking for decades about how the SAT is problematic; the way that students are admitted to these exam schools is problematic. The N.A.A.C.P. has done a lot of work on this for decades and has not made much headway. And is it a coincidence that whites are listening now? I don’t think it’s entirely coincidental.

Still, I see that shift as positive. If we are going to have elite colleges and high schools, then they must be truly accessible to children of all races and from all neighborhoods. Currently, the exams seem to make elite colleges and especially exam schools much less accessible to Black and Latinx youth, especially those living in neighborhoods and attending middle schools from which very few students historically have attended the exam schools.

One of the questions the book raises is about how much we should ascribe Asian success to cultural differences. This is a very contentious topic for the understandable reason that if you say that there are Asian American cultural norms that help them to perform well academically, the question then turns to why other populations don’t do as well. What did your research find on this question?

What I reject is this idea that Asians value education any more than the white families or Black families. The school did a survey, and one of the questions they asked kids was to what extent your parents pressure you to get good grades. And the group that reported the highest level of pressure was the Black kids. Most of those kids are actually kids who are part of the busing program, so they’re coming from the urban center; they’re not living in Woodcrest.

So I think this idea that Asian parents pressure their kids and that’s why they’re doing well in school is not true. What I do see is this: I use this idea of “cultural repertoires” in the book. The idea is that we all have a tool kit for how to get ahead. We get these tools from our parents, from our neighbors, from our cousins and aunts and uncles.

So, the bulk of these immigrant parents went to school and did well in China and India. That’s how they ended up in Woodcrest. And almost all of these people would have gone to supplementary academic classes after school when they were children because that’s just what you do in those countries, right? And so that’s the tool kit they bring with them. And because they come from countries where these decisions are made by evaluating their scores on standardized tests, that’s what they prepare for. And then they impart that on their children.

The American-born, mostly white parents in this town also went to selective colleges. They get that those colleges want a more well-rounded student; they understand the pathway to sports through recruiting and having a talent that’s beyond academics. So that’s something that becomes important to them. Again, different tool kits.

When I think about families who are not in this community — mostly Black and Latinx families — they have their own strategies, and they are trying as well, but they may not have a supplementary education class center in their neighborhood. They may not have relatives who went to a residential four-year college who can explain: What does it take? What does that look like? What do you need?

And so it’s not that they want it any less, it’s just that those strategies are not there. For me, those cultural repertoires are a way to think about what people do that’s different.

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[***El Alfa, King of Dembow, Dazzles in New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63XV-WTR1-DXY4-X2MJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 26, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 6; CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1025 words

**Byline:** By Isabelia Herrera

**Body**

The sold-out show by the Dominican artist was a watershed moment for the dembow movement.

''Who said the Dominican Republic couldn't go global?'' El Alfa announced in Spanish from the stage halfway through his first concert at Madison Square Garden, as red and blue Dominican flags fluttered across the crowd of thousands. The 30-year-old performer, born Emanuel Herrera Batista, had good reason to celebrate: On Friday night, the global ambassador of dembow became the genre's first artist to sell out the storied venue.

It wasn't just a personal success, but a watershed moment for the dembow scene he has spearheaded for over a decade -- a street sound that contains the spiraling histories of the Caribbean. Dominican dembow is an Afro-diasporic music genre born in the Black and ***working-class*** neighborhoods outside of Santo Domingo in the late '90s and early '00s, reimagined from Jamaican dancehall riddims (from the Patois for ''rhythm''), which form its foundation. But rather than lingering in a slow liquid haze, dembow producers crank the tempo up to lightning speed, stitching and alternating different riddims while rappers deliver breakneck, electric bars. Then, beatmakers chop up and duplicate hooks in the chorus, yielding supreme quotability and catchiness.

Lyrically, dembow is a creative playground where artists are constantly inventing their own slang and vocabularies of becoming. The genre embraces the euphoria of everyday pleasures, like sex, dancing and partying. Unsurprisingly, it is often used as a scapegoat for Dominican social problems, a critique informed by racism and classism. Elites malign dembow as a breeding ground for crime, drugs and ''sexual deviance,'' characterizing it as pure vulgar expression -- like the history of most music genres born out of struggle. The Dominican government regularly censors dembow songs it deems ''explicit'' and ''obscene.'' Also like many genres, dembow must contend with its patriarchal past and present, but it's too simple, too narrow-minded to reduce it to plain raunch or misogyny. Dembow is also a gesture of defiance -- a refusal to submit to colonial, ''proper'' ways of being, speaking and living.

And honestly, it's also just a lot of fun. El Alfa is a maximally charismatic performer, a comedian whose charm can transcend the stage and saturate an arena. Over the course of the night, he repeatedly demanded audience members scream if they were proud to be Dominican, conducted thousands of concertgoers sitting on different sides of the venue in a competition of volume and jokingly dedicated a song to parents who buy Louis Vuitton and Gucci for their children. When he brought out the merengue icon Fernandito Villalona, who strolled onstage in a shimmering silver jacket encrusted with red and blue rhinestones in the shape of the Dominican flag, El Alfa got on his knees in a gesture of deference and referred to Villalona as his father.

Under El Alfa's command, the Garden, an already carnivalesque venue, became bacchanalian. At every turn, the artist reveled in excess and humor. He performed his laugh-out-loud summer hit ''La Mamá de la Mamá'' not once, but twice, a cabal of dancers in matching costumes gyrating behind him. Featured artists El Cherry Scom and CJ joined him onstage, a spectacle that ended in El Alfa climbing a monitor and the lime-haired Cherry taking his pants and shirt off, twerking passionately in his boxers in front of thousands. Before the show's end, El Alfa claimed that he and his team had been fined for having too much fun and letting the show run over time.

But focus too much on the wisecracking banter or the playful antics onstage, and you'll miss the artistry. El Alfa has staggering control of his voice. On ''Mueve La Cadera,'' he sculpted it into percussive babbling; on ''Tarzan,'' it was ululating yells; on ''Suave,'' high-pitched baby talk. During his rendition of ''Acuetate,'' El Alfa had his D.J. cut out the track so he could spit the lyrics a cappella in double-time, effortlessly showing off his dexterity as a rapper. On ''Sientate en Ese Deo,'' his D.J. slowed the tempo so the lyrics could land with decelerated precision. It was a sublime display of El Alfa's ability to stretch the boundaries of speech and language. For some, his voice might call to mind the falsettos of the Bee Gees; for others, the yelps of Atlanta rapper Young Thug. But let it be known: This is a distinctly Dominican way of speaking and manipulating language.

Detractors often dismiss dembow for being repetitive, but that critique fails to recognize the creativity embedded in iteration. Repetition is part of why El Alfa can turn anything into a hook, and make listeners cackle in the process; quotable, recurring punch lines are an essential part of his brand. ''La Mamá de la Mamá'' is a song rooted in double entendre about oral sex, a gag that fully reveals itself once the chorus hits. When El Alfa performed it on Friday, the lyrics flashed onscreen in neon colors: ''Dale cuchupla-pla-pla, cuchupla-pla-pla.'' To an unsuspecting ear, this sounds like gibberish. I paused briefly and giggled to myself, wondering how I would translate the cleverness of this addictive, onomatopoeic hook into English. I realized it was futile, and that was precisely where the ingenuity bloomed.

While the concert was a display of El Alfa's agility and showmanship, it will go down as a celebration of a movement. A few minutes into the show, he set the tone for the evening, declaring, ''This isn't my success; it's my country's success.'' He pointedly shared the spotlight, bringing out a parade of other Dominican artists (the pink-haired Kiko el Crazy, the playboy vocalist Mark B, the tough talking dembowsero Shelow Shaq) and a crew of non-Dominican collaborators who've helped him along the way (the Colombian pop star J Balvin, the New York radio personality Alex Sensation, the Puerto Rican reggaeton artist Farruko). Notably, none of the women who have helped push dembow forward were present. But the gesture still felt like a gleeful jab to those who said dembow would never travel beyond the borders of its birthplace.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/arts/music/el-alfa-dembow-madison-square-garden.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/arts/music/el-alfa-dembow-madison-square-garden.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: El Alfa at Madison Square Garden on Friday, in a show filled with wisecracking banter and playful antics. Our writer says his voice may bring to mind the falsettos of the Bee Gees, or the yelps of the rapper Young Thug. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AN RONG XU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Venezuelan Vacations Abruptly End as Tourists Return Home to a Different Russia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6527-T4M1-DXY4-X3TS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 22, 2022 Tuesday 00:30 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1436 words

**Byline:** Anatoly Kurmanaev, Isayen Herrera and Adriana Loureiro Fernandez

**Highlight:** While Russian tourists were visiting Margarita Island, their country invaded Ukraine. Many were left wondering what travails awaited them back at home.

**Body**

PLAYA PUERTO CRUZ, Venezuela — They drank rum and danced to a boombox blasting Russian electro pop music in a scrappy airport waiting hall. Singing “It’s Not Enough,” they enjoyed the last hours of their tropical holiday.

The travelers could have been mistaken for those on spring break. In fact, they were Russians waiting to board the last flights back to Moscow before sanctions cut off their route home — their future and that of their hosts upturned by President Vladimir V. Putin’s invasion of Ukraine.

Russian tourists had helped breathe an unlikely new life into Venezuela’s idyllic island of Margarita, once a Caribbean tourist mecca that was devastated in recent years by economic crisis, international isolation and the pandemic. Under a deal approved by the two countries’ allied governments, more than 10,000 Russians have visited Margarita since September on direct charter flights from Moscow, in what was the island’s only international connection.

The deal gave jobs to hundreds of Margarita residents in 20 hotels, and compelled the central government to improve the island’s shambolic supply of electricity, water and gasoline. Endemic crime was brought to heel; businesses began to reopen; residents who had emigrated began to return.

The recent surge of Russian visitors represented a tiny fraction of the three million tourists Margarita received annually at its peak in early 2010s. But the arrival of the first organized international tours in years gave the locals hope that they had turned the tide on misfortune.

“We want to hug any foreigner who comes here,” said José Gregorio Rodríguez, the head of the Chamber of Commerce in Venezuela’s archipelago state of Nueva Esparta, which includes Margarita. “When you’re at zero, any improvement is welcomed.”

The Russians were drawn to Margarita by cheap prices, exoticism, a lack of visa or pandemic restrictions and yearlong sun, said tourists interviewed on the island in February and early March. Tours started at $850 per person for 13 nights in an all-inclusive, three-star beach hotel, including return flights from Moscow, 15 hours each way.

“It’s something new, something exciting,” said Lucia Aleeva, a blogger from the city of Kazan. “We’re the first explorers, in a way.”

Some Russian tourists said they booked the tickets to Margarita just a day or two before the trip without knowing anything about Venezuela, attracted to the destination by its unusually low price. Most of those interviewed described themselves as small business owners or provincial public workers, with many coming from state capitals as far away as Chita, a Siberian town near Mongolia. Some had never been outside Russia; most had never been to Latin America.

Many of the older tourists began their holiday in a stereotypical Russian way: with heavy drinking.

Last month, Algis, who works for a construction company in Sochi, in southern Russia, was inebriated when he got off the plane wearing several layers of winter clothes in 90-degree heat. He held a bag of duty-free alcohol in one hand, and a crumbled pack of assorted dollar bills in another, saying he intended to invest them in a prospective marriage on the island.

Another tourist named Andrey, who leases heavy equipment in the mining city of Chelyabinsk, recounted over a dinner laden with copious bottles of cheap Chilean wine how, during a heavy drinking session that began in his hometown and carried onto the Moscow airport terminal and the flight to Margarita, he was startled by a voice announcing over the plane’s loudspeaker that he had been selected to meet Venezuela’s tourism minister on landing because he was the 10,000th Russian tourist to visit the island.

Andrey said he struggled to stand straight for the photograph.

In the sprawling Margarita resort of Sunsol Ecoland, Russians danced until the early hours at a beach disco alternating reggaeton with Russian hits from bands such as Leningrad, [*a foul-mouthed ska act*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/25/world/europe/shnurov-russia-leningrad.html) that romanticized the hard-living and hard-drinking exploits of ***working-class*** underdogs.

In visits to Margarita’s colonial towns during the day, many marveled at Venezuelans’ ability to maintain good spirits despite the everyday economic hardships.

But then on Feb. 24, Russia invaded Ukraine and the war quickly reverberated in regions far removed from the battlefield.

As fighting escalated, Western nations and companies closed their airspace to Russian flights and halted leasing contracts and aviation parts supplies. In response, the Russia-focused tour operator Pegas Touristik told clients soaking up the sun on Margarita that they would have to evacuate.

Many started wondering what travails would now await them at home.

Inflation in Russia is spiking; fears of shortages and hoarding are growing; and the government is enforcing currency controls and threatening foreign companies, echoing life during Venezuela’s eight-year economic depression, from which the South American country [*is just emerging.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/02/world/americas/venezuela-maduro-chavez.html?searchResultPosition=2)

“Thankfully, they have the sea and the sun,” said Yulia, a ministry worker from Moscow. “In a country like ours, surviving turmoil and poverty would be much harder and sadder.”

Like other Russians interviewed on Margarita since the start of the war, Yulia asked not to use her last name. None of the Russian tourists The Times spoke with would comment on the invasion itself, or on the early reports of civilian casualties in Ukraine. They often blamed a poor internet connection for not keeping up with the news. The Russian government has made even mentioning the war a criminal offense punished with up to 15 years of prison.

Yulia spent her last days in Margarita on the beach reading the dystopian novel “1984,” by George Orwell.

As the fighting and the international sanctions against Russia intensified, the mood at the resorts grew progressively somber. The Russians’ purchasing power plummeted with the ruble, and their bank cards stopped working.

Sunsol’s Russian guests ate their last dinner on the island in silence. The usual noise of a lively conversation and the shuffling and clinking of the wine glasses in the hotel’s large buffet hall was gone, replaced by the distant sound of the rolling waves.

The beach disco was empty. A group of Venezuelan performers danced on the stage on their own, fruitlessly trying to cheer the somber guests contemplating their impending problems.

Russian currency has lost around 37 percent of its value since the start of the war, and hundreds of thousands of its citizens are facing unemployment, as sanctions shutter companies at a record pace.

A Russian association of tour operators said international [*bookings fell 70 percent*](https://www.atorus.ru/news/press-centre/new/58947.html) in the week after the outbreak of the war.

The mood among the resort staff was equally grim.

The war has dealt a major blow to Margarita, which expected to receive 65,000 Russian visitors this year. Some business people remodeled their idle hotels to accommodate the expected visitors and hired new staff, hoping that Russian flights would open doors to other international tourists.

The salaries were paltry — waiters earned as little as $1 a day — but the jobs at least provided steady meals in a country where hunger remains rife. Since the war broke out, many people have already lost jobs or had their shifts cut.

The last flight out of Margarita for Moscow left on March 8. All major Russian airlines have since stoped flying west beyond neighboring Belarus.

Although Pegas continues advertising Margarita tours starting in April, those who own tourism businesses on the island say the route’s future is uncertain.

During the last days of their vacation, some guests said they put their faith in Mr. Putin, who governed Russia for 22 years with the support of many Russians.

“We trust our president,” said a tourist from Moscow, also named Yulia. “I don’t think he will lead us to collapse.” Her husband Oleg quietly interjected, “Well, it’s already collapsed.”

Others tried enjoying the remainder of what they saw as their last view of the outside world.

“We decided to unwind, like it’s the last time,” said Ravil, a designer from Moscow. “We don’t understand if we will return to the same country from which we left.”

Ksenia Barakovskaya contributed reporting.

Ksenia Barakovskaya contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Sunsol Ecoland, a resort popular among Russian tourists on Margarita, a Venezuelan island recovering from economic troubles.; Tourists arriving in Margarita from Russia boarded buses to take them from the airport on Feb. 1. Russians were drawn by low prices, yearlong sun and a lack of visa or pandemic restrictions. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***El Alfa, the King of Dembow, Dazzles at Madison Square Garden; Critic’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63XP-GF61-JBG3-60MH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 25, 2021 Monday 00:37 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1064 words

**Byline:** Isabelia Herrera

**Highlight:** The sold-out show by the Dominican artist was a watershed moment for the dembow movement.

**Body**

The sold-out show by the Dominican artist was a watershed moment for the dembow movement.

“Who said the Dominican Republic couldn’t go global?” [*El Alfa*](https://www.instagram.com/elalfaeljefe/) announced in Spanish from the stage halfway through his first concert at Madison Square Garden, as red and blue Dominican flags fluttered across the crowd of thousands. The 30-year-old performer, born Emanuel Herrera Batista, had good reason to celebrate: On Friday night, the global ambassador of dembow became the genre’s first artist to sell out the storied venue.

It wasn’t just a personal success, but a watershed moment for the dembow scene he has spearheaded for over a decade — a street sound that contains the spiraling histories of the Caribbean. Dominican dembow is an Afro-diasporic music genre born in the Black and ***working-class*** neighborhoods outside of Santo Domingo in the late ’90s and early ’00s, reimagined from Jamaican dancehall riddims (from the Patois for “rhythm”), which form its foundation. But rather than lingering in a slow liquid haze, dembow producers crank the tempo up to lightning speed, stitching and alternating different riddims while rappers deliver breakneck, electric bars. Then, beatmakers chop up and duplicate hooks in the chorus, yielding supreme quotability and catchiness.

Lyrically, dembow is a creative playground where artists are constantly inventing their own slang and vocabularies of becoming. The genre embraces the euphoria of everyday pleasures, like sex, dancing and partying. Unsurprisingly, it is often used as a scapegoat for Dominican social problems, a critique informed by racism and classism. Elites malign dembow as a breeding ground for crime, drugs and “sexual deviance,” characterizing it as pure vulgar expression — like the history of most music genres born out of struggle. The Dominican government [*regularly censors dembow songs*](https://www.diariolibre.com/revista/espectaculos-publicos-suspende-10-temas-mas-incluyen-al-lapiz-bad-bunny-y-bryant-myers-MG10168985) it [*deems “explicit”*](https://peopleenespanol.com/chica/dembow-from-jamaica-to-el-alfa/) and “obscene.” Also like many genres, dembow must contend with its patriarchal past and present, but it’s too simple, too narrow-minded to reduce it to plain raunch or misogyny. Dembow is also a gesture of defiance — a refusal to submit to colonial, “proper” ways of being, speaking and living.

And honestly, it’s also just a lot of fun. El Alfa is a maximally charismatic performer, a comedian whose charm can transcend the stage and saturate an arena. Over the course of the night, he repeatedly demanded audience members scream if they were proud to be Dominican, conducted thousands of concertgoers sitting on different sides of the venue in a competition of volume and jokingly dedicated a song to parents who buy Louis Vuitton and Gucci for their children. When he brought out the merengue icon Fernandito Villalona, who strolled onstage in a shimmering silver jacket encrusted with red and blue rhinestones in the shape of the Dominican flag, El Alfa got on his knees in a gesture of deference and referred to Villalona as his father.

Under El Alfa’s command, the Garden, an already carnivalesque venue, became bacchanalian. At every turn, the artist reveled in excess and humor. He performed his laugh-out-loud summer hit [*“La Mamá de la Mamá”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5yRZOQ3EWI) not once, but twice, a cabal of dancers in matching costumes gyrating behind him. Featured artists El Cherry Scom and CJ joined him onstage, a spectacle that ended in El Alfa climbing a monitor and the lime-haired Cherry taking his pants and shirt off, twerking passionately in his boxers in front of thousands. Before the show’s end, El Alfa claimed that he and his team had been fined for having too much fun and letting the show run over time.

But focus too much on the wisecracking banter or the playful antics onstage, and you’ll miss the artistry. El Alfa has staggering control of his voice. On [*“Mueve La Cadera,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRN_QIAzsUM)he sculpted it into percussive babbling; on [*“Tarzan,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p2vJSt0pQAY) it was ululating yells; on [*“Suave,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLFnQ8Z9tqc) high-pitched baby talk. During his rendition of [*“Acuetate,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-I0FjdwcSm0) El Alfa had his D.J. cut out the track so he could spit the lyrics a cappella in double-time, effortlessly showing off his dexterity as a rapper. On [*“Sientate en Ese Deo,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8u5TNQ6o9-U) his D.J. slowed the tempo so the lyrics could land with decelerated precision. It was a sublime display of El Alfa’s ability to stretch the boundaries of speech and language. For some, his voice might call to mind the falsettos of the Bee Gees; for others, the yelps of Atlanta rapper Young Thug. But let it be known: This is a distinctly Dominican way of speaking and manipulating language.

Detractors often dismiss dembow for being repetitive, but that critique fails to recognize the creativity embedded in iteration. Repetition is part of why El Alfa can turn anything into a hook, and make listeners cackle in the process; quotable, recurring punch lines are an essential part of his brand. “La Mamá de la Mamá” is a song rooted in double entendre about oral sex, a gag that fully reveals itself once the chorus hits. When El Alfa performed it on Friday, the lyrics flashed onscreen in neon colors: “Dale cuchupla-pla-pla, cuchupla-pla-pla.” To an unsuspecting ear, this sounds like gibberish. I paused briefly and giggled to myself, wondering how I would translate the cleverness of this addictive, onomatopoeic hook into English. I realized it was futile, and that was precisely where the ingenuity bloomed.

While the concert was a display of El Alfa’s agility and showmanship, it will go down as a celebration of a movement. A few minutes into the show, he set the tone for the evening, declaring, “This isn’t my success; it’s my country’s success.” He pointedly shared the spotlight, bringing out a parade of other Dominican artists (the pink-haired Kiko el Crazy, the playboy vocalist Mark B, the tough talking dembowsero Shelow Shaq) and a crew of non-Dominican collaborators who’ve helped him along the way (the Colombian pop star J Balvin, the New York radio personality Alex Sensation, the Puerto Rican reggaeton artist Farruko). Notably, none of the women who have helped push dembow forward were present. But the gesture still felt like a gleeful jab to those who said dembow would never travel beyond the borders of its birthplace.

PHOTOS: El Alfa at Madison Square Garden on Friday, in a show filled with wisecracking banter and playful antics. Our writer says his voice may bring to mind the falsettos of the Bee Gees, or the yelps of the rapper Young Thug. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY AN RONG XU FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 26, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Building a Potent Alliance Of Nannies and Caregivers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y8B-W251-DXY4-X00R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 22, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 974 words

**Byline:** By Isabella Grullón Paz

**Body**

The National Domestic Workers Alliance is putting nannies, housekeepers and home care workers at the center of the labor and progressive political movement.

LAS VEGAS -- The three women knocking on doors around Las Vegas on Tuesday afternoon wanted to talk to people about the importance of voting, especially in a state with low voter turnout. They gave all the logistical details -- where to go, what time to get there -- and explained how early voting worked.

''Make it a family affair!,'' Crystal Crawford, a social worker and a nanny in her early 30s, said at almost every house where she stopped. ''My family always, always took us to vote,'' she said, ''So I always tell people to bring the kids.''

She is well versed in how the caucuses will go Saturday, but she and the women she was canvassing with won't be caucusing themselves.

They are all domestic workers from Georgia who traveled here this week with the National Domestic Workers Alliance, a nonprofit organization working to raise labor standards for nannies, housekeepers, home health aides and others.

In recent years the group has worked to pass the Domestic Workers Bills of Rights, which would include a minimum wage, paid time off and eligibility for over time in nine states and two cities. And now through Care in Action, the advocacy branch of the group, it is focusing on harnessing the political power of the people -- largely women of color -- it represents.

The workers' group brought its biannual assembly to Nevada this week, hosted a presidential forum and organized canvassing efforts.

''We want to tell folks their vote is worth it,'' said Jess Morales Rocketto, executive director of Care in Action. One of the group's goals, she said, is to help show domestic workers that the political system was ''intentionally built to exclude the type of voters and workers that we organize.''

Ms. Morales Rocketto sees voting as a way domestic workers can have a more powerful role in the decisions that directly affect them.

Consuelo Perez, a nanny who is part of the Dominican Development Center, an affiliate of N.D.W.A. in Massachusetts, feels that her job is ''dreaming for other people's children.''

Ms. Perez, who was in Las Vegas for the group's assembly, has a daughter with special needs whom she comes home to every day after taking care of another family's children. ''You grow to love this second family, but it hurts to know that those opportunities can't come to your own.''

She supports Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, she said, not only because of his labor advocacy but also because ''Medicare for All,'' his signature policy proposal, would help her take care of her daughter.

''We are taking care of kids who could be the future senators and presidents of the United States. I can't dream like that for my own daughter,'' she said. ''That's why we have to do this work.''

Ahead of the 2020 election, the organization's political arm has focused on garnering candidate support for a federal version of a Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, a path to citizenship for domestic workers and their families, and universal child care.

Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., Mr. Sanders, Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., have all said that they endorse the federal Domestic Workers Bill of Rights. Senator Kamala Harris of California, who dropped out last December, is one of the sponsors of the bill.

''Everything we're doing in the policy arena to make jobs better is complemented by everything we're doing to turn out voters and get people engaged, get people feeling like they have a voice in our democracy,'' Ai-jen Poo, the founder and chief executive of the group said in an interview this week.

At the presidential forum hosted by Care in Action here on Tuesday morning, the room was filled with orange: The women in the crowd were all wearing Care in Action shirts. A mix of Spanish, Tagalog and other languages filled the room, with excited whispers about seeing the candidates. Ms. Warren and Tom Steyer attended in person and Mr. Sanders called in from Reno. The crowd cheered for Ms. Warren, and roared for Mr. Sanders when he appeared via conference call, a photo of him projected onstage.

Part of what Ms. Poo and her organization want to change -- or correct, in their view -- is what politicians picture when they talk about labor and American workers. Too often, Ms. Poo said, it's the image of a ''white man who works in a factory or is a coal worker,'' not a diverse ***working class*** doing service or domestic jobs. One way to change that image: Get more domestic workers to vote.

''When we talk about building power in the economy, voting is a part of that,'' said Alicia Garza, a co-founder of the Black Lives Matter movement and a special projects director for the domestic workers' group.

Ms. Poo said that this is the first time presidential candidates have really been talking about domestic workers since the 1970s, but that she is eager for more discussion of what the ***working class*** means in 2020.

''We are writing the DNA of the new economy because really so much of the dynamics that face workers today, domestic workers have been dealing with forever,'' she said.

June Barrett, a Jamaican immigrant and former home care nurse who now is involved full-time with the workers alliance, emphasized how valuable domestic labor is, and how undervalued it can be.

''Many of the people we work with wouldn't be able to do basic things without us,'' she said, describing the importance and intimacy of home care work. She spoke about a 90-something patient she would often find on the floor when she arrived at work.

''What we need to do is place value on the work'' she said. ''There is no value placed on women like myself who do this work.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/22/us/politics/domestic-workers-politics-2020.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/22/us/politics/domestic-workers-politics-2020.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A presidential forum in Las Vegas this week hosted by Care in Action, which is pushing domestic workers to vote. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***A Rent Is Too Damn High Party***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y84-WGV1-JBG3-60CJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 21, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 1; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 1021 words

**Byline:** By James Poniewozik

**Body**

A vibrant Netflix comedy-drama celebrates a community being upscaled out of existence.

When does a taco cease to be a taco? In Netflix's ''Gentefied,'' this is both a practical and an existential question.

It arises when Chris (Carlos Santos), an aspiring chef, wants to help his grandfather, Casimiro (Joaquín Cosío), save his struggling small restaurant by jazzing up the menu and drawing in new (richer) customers. One of his ideas, a tikka masala taco with curry, sounds to Casimiro like blasphemy. ''Do you want tradition or innovation?'' Chris asks, in English. His grandfather answers, in Spanish: ''What I want is a taco.''

The little question here is whether you can throw anything, however delicious, onto a tortilla and proclaim it a taco. (Roy Choi, the Korean-taco pioneer of Netflix's ''The Chef Show,'' has one answer, but that's another conversation and another binge.) The bigger question, propelling this feisty, funny and poignant comedy-drama arriving Friday, is how much its setting -- Boyle Heights, Los Angeles -- can be upscaled and ''discovered'' until it is no longer Boyle Heights.

Created by Marvin Lemus and Linda Yvette Chávez (the producers include America Ferrera), ''Gentefied'' is one of several recent programs to look at how money bulldozes ***working-class*** and minority neighborhoods, including Netflix's ''She's Gotta Have It'' and Starz's ''Vida,'' which is also set in Boyle Heights. (It is an irony of TV that some of its most acute examinations of income inequality have come from paid cable and streaming outlets.)

This big-picture issue gives ''Gentefied'' its title (a portmanteau for gentrification by upwardly mobile Latinos), its themes and many of its conflicts. But it's powered by its little-picture focus on family and neighbors.

In part, ''Gentefied'' is about the tension between those who stay and those who leave. While Chris apprentices in a fancy Los Angeles restaurant and dreams of culinary school, Casimiro runs the Mama Fina's Tacos with Chris's cousin Erik (J.J. Soria), who thinks Chris is a pretentious sellout. Their cousin Ana (Karrie Martin), is in between, an artist with a passion for the community (and a serious girlfriend tying her to home) but with ambitions pushing her beyond it.

The early episodes play up the cousins' conflicts; Chris, who's recently returned from Idaho, is a frequent punching bag for being overly assimilated into white hipster culture. But the 10-episode season eventually complicates their positions. Chris is dogged by the feeling that he's not Mexican enough for Boyle Heights but too Mexican for the likes of his racist boss. Erik wants nothing more than to be a family man rooted to his neighborhood, but his ambitious, progressive ex-girlfriend, Lidia (Annie Gonzalez), doesn't want him in her life.

Casimiro is the glue of the extended family, and Cosío is a magnetic, charismatic anchor of the ensemble. His character, still mourning his late wife, is proud but less hidebound than he first appears. Beneath his cowboy hat and gruff exterior, he's a dreamer -- something he shares not just with his chef and artist grandkids but also with Erik, who reveals a sensitive, bookish side.

''Gentefied'' makes its case for the present-day Boyle Heights as much through image as through character and dialogue. In its camera eye, the neighborhood radiates light and thrums with energy. It is neighbors sitting in lawn chairs on a sidewalk, the kaleidoscope of packaged selections at a bodega, a pepper being coaxed out of the earth in a backyard garden. The production feels connected to the place, sidewalk and soil.

The show's voice is distinctive and assured, both figuratively and literally. It slips naturally among English and Spanish and Spanglish the same way its stories slip among worlds -- from the Boyle Heights streets to the gallery world, from immigrant women sewing piecework to immigrant line cooks chiffonading herbs.

Its tone takes longer to establish. Sometimes it wants to be a sharp-elbowed satire, as in an episode that sends up ''food tours'' in which epicurean hipsters wander the neighborhood as if on safari. Sometimes -- more effectively -- it's a ***working-class*** family dramedy, conscious of the cascading effects of small financial setbacks and the code-switching involved in moving across cultures. (When Ana and Erik have a run-in with a white bank manager, she reminds him, ''Use your white voice!'')

Maybe most important for a show about neighborhood-building, ''Gentefied'' has a handle on even its smaller characters. A mariachi musician, introduced as comic relief, gets his own episode that reveals him as a soulful artist trying to keep his integrity; Ana's mother evolves from a hectoring nemesis to a toughened survivor.

In all these stories, the climate for immigrants in America is ever felt. A flashback to a scene in a jail waiting room, with Bill Clinton on TV celebrating a crime bill, segues into another waiting room today, with Donald Trump touting his proposed wall.

''Gentefied'' can be blunt. But just when you think it has stacked the deck for one argument, it reshuffles. In a standout episode, Ana paints a mural of two men kissing on the wall of a bodega, commissioned by the building's white art-dealer owner. She ends up in the middle of a battle between some of her neighbors, who are put off by the image (and thus her own gay identity), and the gentrifying industry in which she still wants somehow to succeed.

The episode and the series understand that gentrification isn't merely a brute force but an insidious one. A community that protests it can end up, through its resistance, seeming more authentic and thus desirable. Demanding that outsiders check their privilege can simply flatter their sense of self-awareness. Money still finds a way in and around. It's not a battering ram but an amoeba.

''Gentefied'' has a lot to say, and it can turn didactic in its urge to say all of it. But the show's likability carries it through its rougher patches. This series puts a lot on its plate, and somehow, it all comes together. GentefiedStreaming on Netflix

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/arts/television/gentefied-netflix-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/arts/television/gentefied-netflix-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, from left, Joaquín Cosío, J.J. Soria and Carlos Santos in ''Gentefied,'' a new Netflix comedy-drama set in Los Angeles. Karrie Martin, far left, and Julissa Calderon. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEVIN ESTRADA/NETFLIX) (C2)

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2020

**End of Document**



[***'How Lucky We Are to Have Found Each Other'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60GX-W3F1-DXY4-X406-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 2, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2020 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Society Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 520 words

**Byline:** By Louise Rafkin

**Body**

For a couple who met in a choir, Oliver Cacananta has a perfect description of the partnership between himself and Danny Wan. ''We harmonize,'' said Mr. Cacananta (left).

The two married on July 17 in an online service officiated by Homyrah Alocozy, a deputy marriage commissioner for Alameda County in California. Mr. Wan's mother, Jane Wan, and Mr. Cacananta's parents, Prudencio and Lilia Cacananta were the only ones present while several dozenfriends and family tuned in online.

The small gathering was far from the large summer event the couple had planned where their vows would be part of a benefit concert for the Gay Asian Pacific Alliance Men's Chorus, the group that brought them together and which they both cherish.

That plan met many obstacles. In November 2019, Mr. Wan began his job as the executive director at the Port of Oakland, a regional economic engine that includes the Oakland seaport, Oakland's international airport and the entertainment district Jack London Square. When the coronavirus pandemic hit in mid-March, the arrival of cruise ships with ill people aboard upped the pressure of an already demanding job.

Then, in April, Mr. Wan lost his father to cancer. The couple decided to focus on the challenges at hand and allow Mr. Wan time to grieve his father's passing.

Mr. Wan was born in Taiwan and grew up in Alberta, Canada. He attended the University of California, Berkeley where he graduated with a degree in rhetoric and a teaching credential. He then received a law degree from the University of California, Los Angeles. From 2000 to 2005, he served as Oakland's first openly gay City Council member.

The couple met in 2015 when Mr. Cacananta contacted the Gay Asian Pacific Alliance Men's Chorus. Founded in 1989 as a social and support group, the choir sings an Asia-Pacific Island centric repertoire. Mr. Wan, now 56, had been singing with the ensemble for years and was the group's membership contact.

In his inquiry about the choir, Mr. Cacananta admitted to a lack of musical training. ''We're all recreational singers, here for the friendships and harmonies,'' Mr. Wan wrote back, warmly adding a smiley emoji.

But their connection was put on pause. Mr. Cacananta, 45, was then traveling to the Philippines to present a paper on the Ilocano language; he had helped found the Ilocano version of Wikipedia in 2004. Mr. Cacananta was born in the Philippines and later moved with his family to Livermore, Calif. He received a biology degree from the California State University, East Bay and an M.B.A. from the University of Phoenix. He is now director of regulatory affairs at Ossium Health, a biotechnology company.

On his return from the Philippines a first date sprang into a relationship.

''Immediately Danny felt familiar,'' Mr. Cacananta said. ''I didn't have to explain why I spent so much time and money supporting my parents. He supported his. We understood each other on many levels.''

''We are both gay Asian men from ***working-class*** immigrant families who started with nothing in this country,'' Mr. Wan said. ''How lucky we are to have found each other.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/31/fashion/weddings/how-lucky-we-are-to-have-found-each-other.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/31/fashion/weddings/how-lucky-we-are-to-have-found-each-other.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Oliver Cacananta, Danny Wan

**Load-Date:** August 2, 2020

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[***Why Would John Eastman Want to Overturn an Election for Trump?; Ross Douthat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65HW-1MP1-JBG3-6002-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 25, 2022 Wednesday 12:28 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1783 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** Why he was so eager to foment a constitutional crisis.

**Body**

The figure of John Eastman, a constitutional theorist, former law professor and legal adviser to Donald Trump, [*looms increasingly large*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/20/us/politics/john-eastman-trump-jan-6.html) in retrospectives on the events of Jan. 6, and for good reason: Out of all the characters who floated through the White House in the aftermath of the 2020 election, only Eastman appears to have been fully serious about keeping Trump in office.

Other people certainly imagined themselves to be serious, figures like Sidney Powell and Mike Lindell of MyPillow fame, but really they inhabited a fantasy world and mostly just invited Trump to live there with them. Then another set of figures — including various White House advisers and United States senators — lived in reality while pretending to believe the fantasy, either in the hopes of managing the president’s moods until his term ended or for cynical political reasons of their own.

Only Eastman seemed to partly bridge the divide. True, his belief that Trump ought to remain in office depended on many of the same voter-fraud speculations — mutable, adaptable, an assumption in search of confirmation — that the outright fantasists embraced. But his legal plan of action was intended to be as plausible as possible, linked to interpretations of election law and the U.S. Constitution that were [*radical but not purely fanciful*](https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/the-two-faces-of-originalism/), and devised to exploit points of tension or contradiction where a constitutional crisis might genuinely be forced.

Trump didn’t have the cooperators or the capacities required to reach that destination. But Eastman, unlike the clowns and cynics, actually drew up a road map for getting there, devoting real legal and constitutional knowledge to the goal of throwing the American presidential succession into crisis.

In this, he embodied in the strongest form a tendency shared by others in his intellectual home base, the Claremont Institute — a conservative institution with many mansions, but one known lately for its hospitality to the [*reactionary*](https://americanmind.org/salvo/the-clear-pill-part-1-of-5-the-four-stroke-regime/) [*internet*](https://americanmind.org/salvo/americas-delusional-elite-is-done/) and its enthusiasm for a politics of crisis.

That enthusiasm first took shape in the “[*Flight 93 Election*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/digital/the-flight-93-election/)” essay, published in the Claremont Review of Books in 2016, in which the future Trump administration official Michael Anton made the case that the American Republic was in such dire shape that it would be preferable to elect a man who might literally crash the plane rather than to allow it to continue in its current course. Eastman’s eagerness for a constitutional crisis was a kind of bookend to that essay, infused with the same spirit but applied to a presidential transition rather than the presidential vote.

This tendency has made Claremont an object of special fascination to hostile interpreters of Trump-era conservatism. At this point, you can read a [*wide*](https://www.thebulwark.com/the-claremont-institute-harry-jaffa-and-the-temptation-of-theory/) [*range*](https://www.thebulwark.com/what-the-hell-happened-to-the-claremont-institute/) of critical [*essays*](https://johnganz.substack.com/p/the-plotters-against-america?s=r) trying to tease out how an institution formally devoted to the genius of the founding fathers and the ideals of Abraham Lincoln ended up harboring so much sympathy for a demagogue like Trump.

I have my own interpretation, which goes back to my personal experience as a youthful “Publius fellow” at Claremont 20 years ago, when along with a brace of other young right-of-center nerds I was given a summer crash course in the thought of Harry Jaffa, the Claremont eminence (then living, now deceased), and his various disciples.

The Jaffa school offered an interpretation of American history that might be described as Inception, Consummation and Corruption. Its Great Consummator was Lincoln, who restored the promise of the founding by fully establishing the “all men are created equal” absolutism of the Declaration of Independence. Its villains were John C. Calhoun and the progressives of the early 20th century, the former for defending slavery and inequality, the latter for replacing a constitutional republic with a bureaucratized administrative state, and both for displaying a philosophical and moral relativism that Jaffa despised (and that, as his intellectual feuds multiplied, he claimed to discern in many of his fellow conservatives as well).

But one thing you noticed hanging around with Claremont folks was that while they were obviously interested in the good and bad of each American regime change, from the original founding (great) to the Lincolnian re-founding (even better) to the progressive re-foundings of Woodrow Wilson (their great villain, the “Lost Cause” sympathizer turned arrogant technocrat) and Franklin Roosevelt, they were also just really interested in the idea of founding itself, when moments of crisis bring new orders out of old ones.

At one point, as a break from reading founding-era texts, we were treated to a screening of “The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance,” the great John Ford western whose theme is the Old West’s transition into political modernity, passing from the rule of the gun (embodied by John Wayne’s Tom Doniphon) to the rule of the lawbook (embodied by Jimmy Stewart’s Ransom Stoddard).

In the movie, the transition can’t happen without a dose of chaos, a mixture of violence and deception. Lee Marvin’s outlaw, Valance, challenges the peaceable lawyer Stoddard to a duel; Doniphon saves the lawyer by shooting the outlaw from the shadows — and then the killing is mistakenly attributed to Stewart’s character, who is lionized for it and goes on to be a great statesman of the New West while the cowboy and his vigilante code recede.

The not-so-subtle implication of the Claremont reading of American history is that this kind of fraught transition doesn’t happen once and for all; rather, it happens periodically within the life of any nation or society. Whenever change or crisis overwhelms one political order, one version of (in our case) the American republic, you get a period of instability and rough power politics, until the new era or the new settlement is forged.

But it doesn’t happen without moments like Doniphon shooting Valance — or Lincoln suspending habeas corpus, say, or Roosevelt threatening to pack the Supreme Court — when norms and niceties need to be suspended for the sake of the new system that’s waiting to be born.

When I try to understand what Eastman imagined himself doing in serving Donald Trump even unto constitutional crisis, this is where my speculations turn. I don’t think this is the necessary implication of Claremont thought; indeed, you can find in the latest issue of The Claremont Review of Books an [*essay*](https://claremontreviewofbooks.com/the-right-now/) by William Voegeli critiquing conservatives who seem “enthused about chaos” and overeager to re-found rather than conserve. But I think it’s an understandable place for the Claremont reading of American history to turn at a time when the American republic does appear sclerotic, stalemated, gridlocked and in need of some kind of conspicuous renewal.

Nor is it a coincidence that Claremont conservatives would turn this way at the same time that their adversaries on the American left nurture plans to expand the Supreme Court, add new states to the Union and abolish the Senate and the Electoral College. Both right and left are reacting, in different ways and with different prescriptions, to the sense of crisis and futility in our politics, the feeling that surely some kind of revolution or transformation is due to come around — that God in his wisdom is overdue to send us a Lincoln or a Roosevelt and that the existing norms of our politics probably won’t survive the change.

What makes this sentiment particularly understandable is that the Claremont history of America’s multiple regime changes is generally correct: Our country really has periodically transformed itself, for better or worse (sometimes both at once), through the actions of strong leaders and strong movements that risked crisis to overturn and transform and even, yes, re-found.

The problem — well, on the right, there are three problems.

First, the part of the right that imagines a re-founding can’t agree on what shape its imagined new American regime should take. (Are we demolishing the administrative state or turning it to conservative ends? Restoring lost liberties or pursuing the common good? Building a multiethnic ***working-class*** majority or closing the border against future Democratic voters?) Which is one reason the Trump presidency, infused by these conflicting impulses, ended up being such a shambolic mess.

The second obvious reason it was a mess was just the character of the president himself. It’s here that my attempt to imagine my way into Eastman’s crisis mind-set collapses: I just can’t fathom the idea that it could be worth pushing our constitutional system into chaos when your candidate to play the role of Lincoln or Roosevelt is Donald Trump.

To cast a vote for Trump as a defensive measure against Hillary Clinton is one thing. But to nominate yourself to play Tom Doniphon in a political shootout so that a decadent order can give way to something new, when your candidate to lead the new order is a sybaritic reality-television star who shambled through his first presidential term … no, there my attempt at imaginative sympathy fails.

But then finally, even deeper than the folly of risking so much for Trump himself is the folly of doing so without democratic legitimacy and real majority support. At past moments of American renewal or regime change the leaders of the emergent order have been able to claim a popular mandate for their project. Yes, Lincoln’s case is exceptional: He was a plurality president in 1860 and won a big majority in 1864 with the South still in rebellion. But he obviously won both elections, the outcomes weren’t particularly close, and the other transformative presidents in our history, from Andrew Jackson down through Roosevelt to Claremont’s own beloved Ronald Reagan, won a clear or resounding mandate for a second term.

No complaints about a rigged election can change the fact that Trump did not — that despite ample opportunities for statesmanship, he never persuaded a majority of Americans to support whatever his project was supposed to be.

And this is where the various indictments of Claremont Trumpism draw the most blood. If your intellectual project champions Lincoln over Calhoun, but you end up using constitutional legerdemain to preserve the power of a minority faction against an American majority, then whatever historical part you imagine yourself playing, you have betrayed yourself.

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**Load-Date:** May 25, 2022

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[***American Voters Haven’t Been Afraid Like This in a Long Time; Guest essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659F-X3X1-DXY4-X4FR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 25, 2022 Monday 23:35 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1551 words

**Byline:** Mark Penn

**Highlight:** Crime, inflation, Russia’s war in Ukraine and immigration are driving voter dissatisfaction ahead of the midterms.

**Body**

In a rare convergence, America’s voters are not merely unhappy with their political leadership, but awash in fears about economic security, border security, international security and even physical security. Without a U-turn by the Biden administration, these fears will generate a wave election like those in 1994 and 2010, setting off a chain reaction that could flip the House and the Senate to Republican control in November, and ultimately the presidency in 2024.

Take the economy, so often the harbinger of election results. From late 2017 until the pandemic, a majority of Americans [*believed*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/1609/consumer-views-economy.aspx) that the economy was strong, and from 2014 until the pandemic at least a plurality [*believed*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/1621/personal-financial-situation-index.aspx) their personal economic situation was improving. Covid-19 cut sharply into that feeling of well-being; this was initially seen as temporary, though, and trillions of dollars flowed into keeping people afloat. But then near-double-digit inflation hit consumers for the first time in 40 years; 60 percent of voters now see the economy as weak and 48 percent say their financial situation is worsening, according to [*a Harris poll conducted April 20-21*](https://harvardharrispoll.com/key-results-april/). Many Americans under 60 have relatively little experience with anything but comparatively low fuel costs, negligible interest rates and stable prices. Virtually overnight these assumptions have been shaken. Only 35 percent approve of President Biden’s handling of inflation.

These economic blows are just one element in a cascading set of problems all hitting at the same time. It combines the [*nuclear anxieties*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/13/us/nuclear-threat-retro-report.html) of the 1950s and ’60s with the inflation threat of the ’70s, the crime wave of the ’80s and ’90s and the tensions over illegal immigration in the 2000s and beyond. This electorate is not experiencing a malaise, as President Jimmy Carter was once apocryphally [*said to have proclaimed*](https://billofrightsinstitute.org/activities/jimmy-carter-malaise-speech-july-15-1979), but has instead formed into a deep national fissure ready to blow like a geyser in the next election if leadership does not move to relieve the pressure.

The return of fear about crime is especially worrisome for Democrats, who spent years trying to take over Republican ground on the issue. In 1991, the homicide rate was 9.71 per hundred thousand. Mr. Biden, when he was a senator, wrote the key federal bipartisan anti-crime bill widely credited then with reducing violence in America, but under criticism today by those who argue it led to inequitable rates of incarceration, particularly in communities of color. The homicide rate would decline to a low of 4.44 per 100,000 in 2014. Worries about walking the streets and riding the subway were less acute among new generations, and yet today those same streets and mass transit are once again hobbled by fear; even the head of the New York-area Metropolitan Transportation Authority argued that fear of crime and homelessness was behind a [*36 percent drop in ridership*](https://www.nydailynews.com/new-york/ny-transit-ridership-omicron-crime-homelessness-20220126-or6o2moypjbsxiih7jra3rmpwq-story.html) between December 2021 and January 2022.

Immigration was used effectively by President Donald Trump as a wedge issue to win ***working-class*** voters. According to the April Harris poll, under Mr. Biden, 59 percent of voters believe that we have “effectively” open borders and, looking back, many even support some of Mr. Trump’s immigration policies. Mr. Biden receives only 38 percent approval for his immigration policy, a troublingly low rating for a Democrat (President Barack Obama was at [*29 percent approval*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/141836/issues-obama-finds-majority-approval-elusive.aspx) on immigration policy before the 2010 midterm wipeout).

National security had become less salient for most Americans compared to the years of the Cold War and after 9/11. Foreign policy was barely discussed in the limited presidential debates of 2020. Today, fear of a great power conflict and nuclear weapons has emerged in ways not seen since the Cold War. With the invasion of Ukraine by Vladimir Putin, fresh ballistic missile tests, and Mr. Putin’s explicit reference to the use of nuclear weapons and “unpredictable” consequences of opposing him, fear of nuclear weapons has been thrust front and center, as [*a recent focus group of Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/21/opinion/ukraine-putin-biden.html) by Times Opinion found as well. Fear of nuclear weapons now ranks second in issues that worry voters, behind the effects of inflation.

To combat the drag that fear has on the electorate — what I call a “fear index” — Mr. Biden will have to move in some big and bold ways. Faced with runaway spending in the 1990s, President Bill Clinton proposed a balanced budget, a policy still favored by 80 percent of the electorate, according to April’s Harris poll, but he did it in a way that still managed to finance entitlements like Social Security. Pushing a big, seven-year policy plan like that would mean finding budget cuts elsewhere to pay for a permanent child tax credit, rather than raising taxes, and deficit spending, which would most likely cause costs to fall on the average American through inflation. Balancing the budget would change the conversation about the economy and show Americans that Mr. Biden was serious about getting our fiscal house in order.

Continuing to let gas prices surge will hurt Democrats on the ballot in the fall; the party needs a new, tempered energy policy that includes a more gradual transition to alternative fuels and an appreciation of energy independence. In the presidential debates, Mr. Biden [*promised*](https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-technology-climate-26908b855045d5ce7342fd01be8bcc10) a “transition” to “renewable energy over time,” though noting he would not attempt to ban fracking. But in his first flurry of executive orders, Mr. Biden gave the public the impression he was far more aggressive in favoring climate change policies, though he has since angered activists by [*reversing*](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/infuriating-climate-activists-biden-expands-oil-drilling-public/story?id=84148098) a promise to prevent new drilling on public lands. He will need to shift to an “all of the above” energy approach and green-light the Keystone pipeline, which 65 percent of the electorate says should move forward, according to the Harris poll.

The Biden administration is also losing in swing areas on immigration, as evidenced by the nine [*Senate Democrats*](https://www.npr.org/2022/04/20/1093529387/as-biden-plans-to-lift-title-42-democrats-want-details-on-how-hell-address-influ) and the House’s bipartisan [*Problem Solvers Caucus*](https://www.foxnews.com/politics/bipartisan-house-problem-solvers-caucus-bill-title-42) that have expressed reservations about [*its plan*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/04/22/biden-title-42-fallout-00027109) to lift Title 42, the Trump administration’s Covid-era policy of [*intercepting and returning*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/us/politics/cdc-immigration-title-42.html) migrants without due process. The answer is to keep in place the Covid-related border restrictions and revive trying to find a real compromise with at least 10 Republican senators on immigration that would adopt tougher barrier and enforcement measures to close the border, but also open up legal immigration and a path to citizenship for at least DACA recipients.

With rising crime as an issue, the favorable rating of the Department of Justice has sunk to just 51 percent under Merrick Garland, according to the Harris poll. Mr. Biden needs to shake up his top law-enforcement officials and back legislation that combines police reform with funding for hundreds of thousands of new community police officers, greater federal involvement in stopping violent crime syndicates and gangs, and wider discretion for judges to take violent criminals off the streets. The administration needs to consider interceding on behalf of victims in circumstances in which district attorneys are not prosecuting violent criminals to the full extent of the law, especially [*when they waive*](https://theappeal.org/san-francisco-da-to-announce-sweeping-changes-on-sentencing-policy-and-police-stops/) “enhancements” for gang-related crimes. One of our first [*campaign ads*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eo-giTWJq9s) in 1996 established President Clinton as both against assault weapons and for more cops and crime-fighting measures; he kept that message up during his re-election bid, and Republicans never effectively stoked fears about crime.

Finally, Mr. Biden cannot let Mr. Putin win in Ukraine, and needs to [*continue to send*](https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-war-biden-announces-new-military-aid-e78a7db76215a84f86586bb56122cd04) whatever weapons are necessary, including jets, to prevent such a victory. The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan precipitated a decline in his administration’s approval rates. Ukraine’s loss would compound the view among some voters that he is too weak.

According to reports, Mr. Biden now says he is running for re-election in 2024. But he is facing limited enthusiasm in his own party for a second run and loses even to Mr. Trump in hypothetical matchups, according to the Harris poll. Sticking to the high-priced Build Back Better legislation or variants of it on the basis of narrow party-line votes has not been successful.

People are afraid of being walloped financially, being injured or menaced by criminals, being in a country without strong borders or Covid protections for immigrants, and being under threat of nuclear weapons. If Mr. Biden and Democratic leaders cannot effectively address these fears, the wave election will hit them in November, and the president will then face a sobering choice of either passing the baton to another candidate in 2024 or finding the bold leadership necessary to reconcile his drive for more progressive policies with the realities of economics, politics and a more dangerous world.

Mark Penn was a pollster and adviser to President Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton from 1995 to 2008. He is chairman of the Harris Poll and chief executive of Stagwell Inc.

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**Load-Date:** April 27, 2022

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[***‘Gentefied’ Review: A Rent Is Too Damn High Party; Critic’s Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y80-JFB1-JBG3-64SF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 20, 2020 Thursday 15:16 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1049 words

**Byline:** James Poniewozik

**Highlight:** A vibrant Netflix comedy-drama celebrates a community being upscaled out of existence.

**Body**

A vibrant Netflix comedy-drama celebrates a community being upscaled out of existence.

When does a taco cease to be a taco? In Netflix’s [*“Gentefied,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/arts/television/gentefied-netflix.html) this is both a practical and an existential question.

It arises when Chris (Carlos Santos), an aspiring chef, wants to help his grandfather, Casimiro (Joaquín Cosío), save his struggling small restaurant by jazzing up the menu and drawing in new (richer) customers. One of his ideas, a tikka masala taco with curry, sounds to Casimiro like blasphemy. “Do you want tradition or innovation?” Chris asks, in English. His grandfather answers, in Spanish: “What I want is a taco.”

The little question here is whether you can throw anything, however delicious, onto a tortilla and proclaim it a taco. (Roy Choi, the Korean-taco pioneer of Netflix’s “The Chef Show,” has one answer, but that’s another conversation and another binge.) The bigger question, propelling this feisty, funny and poignant comedy-drama arriving Friday, is how much its setting — Boyle Heights, Los Angeles — can be upscaled and “discovered” until it is no longer Boyle Heights.

Created by Marvin Lemus and Linda Yvette Chávez (the producers include America Ferrera), “Gentefied” is one of several recent programs to look at how money bulldozes ***working-class*** and minority neighborhoods, including Netflix’s [*“She’s Gotta Have It”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/arts/television/gentefied-netflix.html) and Starz’s   [*“Vida,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/20/arts/television/gentefied-netflix.html) which is also set in Boyle Heights. (It is an irony of TV that some of its most acute examinations of income inequality have come from paid cable and streaming outlets.)

This big-picture issue gives “Gentefied” its title (a portmanteau for gentrification by upwardly mobile Latinos), its themes and many of its conflicts. But it’s powered by its little-picture focus on family and neighbors.

In part, “Gentefied” is about the tension between those who stay and those who leave. While Chris apprentices in a fancy Los Angeles restaurant and dreams of culinary school, Casimiro runs the Mama Fina’s Tacos with Chris’s cousin Erik (J.J. Soria), who thinks Chris is a pretentious sellout. Their cousin Ana (Karrie Martin), is in between, an artist with a passion for the community (and a serious girlfriend tying her to home) but with ambitions pushing her beyond it.

The early episodes play up the cousins’ conflicts; Chris, who’s recently returned from Idaho, is a frequent punching bag for being overly assimilated into white hipster culture. But the 10-episode season eventually complicates their positions. Chris is dogged by the feeling that he’s not Mexican enough for Boyle Heights but too Mexican for the likes of his racist boss. Erik wants nothing more than to be a family man rooted to his neighborhood, but his ambitious, progressive ex-girlfriend, Lidia (Annie Gonzalez), doesn’t want him in her life.

Casimiro is the glue of the extended family, and Cosío is a magnetic, charismatic anchor of the ensemble. His character, still mourning his late wife, is proud but less hidebound than he first appears. Beneath his cowboy hat and gruff exterior, he’s a dreamer — something he shares not just with his chef and artist grandkids but also with Erik, who reveals a sensitive, bookish side.

“Gentefied” makes its case for the present-day Boyle Heights as much through image as through character and dialogue. In its camera eye, the neighborhood radiates light and thrums with energy. It is neighbors sitting in lawn chairs on a sidewalk, the kaleidoscope of packaged selections at a bodega, a pepper being coaxed out of the earth in a backyard garden. The production feels connected to the place, sidewalk and soil.

The show’s voice is distinctive and assured, both figuratively and literally. It slips naturally among English and Spanish and Spanglish the same way its stories slip among worlds — from the Boyle Heights streets to the gallery world, from immigrant women sewing piecework to immigrant line cooks chiffonading herbs.

Its tone takes longer to establish. Sometimes it wants to be a sharp-elbowed satire, as in an episode that sends up “food tours” in which epicurean hipsters wander the neighborhood as if on safari. Sometimes — more effectively — it’s a ***working-class*** family dramedy, conscious of the cascading effects of small financial setbacks and the code-switching involved in moving across cultures. (When Ana and Erik have a run-in with a white bank manager, she reminds him, “Use your white voice!”)

Maybe most important for a show about neighborhood-building, “Gentefied” has a handle on even its smaller characters. A mariachi musician, introduced as comic relief, gets his own episode that reveals him as a soulful artist trying to keep his integrity; Ana’s mother evolves from a hectoring nemesis to a toughened survivor.

In all these stories, the climate for immigrants in America is ever felt. A flashback to a scene in a jail waiting room, with Bill Clinton on TV celebrating a crime bill, segues into another waiting room today, with Donald Trump touting his proposed wall.

“Gentefied” can be blunt. But just when you think it has stacked the deck for one argument, it reshuffles. In a standout episode, Ana paints a mural of two men kissing on the wall of a bodega, commissioned by the building’s white art-dealer owner. She ends up in the middle of a battle between some of her neighbors, who are put off by the image (and thus her own gay identity), and the gentrifying industry in which she still wants somehow to succeed.

The episode and the series understand that gentrification isn’t merely a brute force but an insidious one. A community that protests it can end up, through its resistance, seeming more authentic and thus desirable. Demanding that outsiders check their privilege can simply flatter their sense of self-awareness. Money still finds a way in and around. It’s not a battering ram but an amoeba.

“Gentefied” has a lot to say, and it can turn didactic in its urge to say all of it. But the show’s likability carries it through its rougher patches. This series puts a lot on its plate, and somehow, it all comes together.

Gentefied Streaming on Netflix

PHOTOS: Above, from left, Joaquín Cosío, J.J. Soria and Carlos Santos in “Gentefied,” a new Netflix comedy-drama set in Los Angeles. Karrie Martin, far left, and Julissa Calderon. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEVIN ESTRADA/NETFLIX) (C2)

**Load-Date:** February 21, 2020

**End of Document**



[***If You Think Republicans Are Overplaying Schools, You Aren’t Paying Attention; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6520-XP81-JBG3-61YH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 21, 2022 Monday 15:42 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1442 words

**Byline:** Jennifer C. Berkshire and Jack Schneider

**Highlight:** The culture wars over schools have produced an unlikely coalition: populists on the right and affluent, educated white parents on the left.

**Body**

The warning signs are everywhere. For 30 years, [*polls*](https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/21096128/210292-nbc-news-october-poll-10-31-21-release.pdf) showed that Americans trusted Democrats over Republicans to invest in public education and strengthen schools. Within the past year, however, Republicans have closed the gap; a [*recent poll*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2021/11/14/post-abc-poll-biden/) shows the two parties separated on the issue by less than the margin of error.

Since the Republican Glenn Youngkin scored an upset win in Virginia’s race for governor by making education a central campaign issue, Republicans in state after state have capitalized on anger over mask mandates, parental rights and teaching about race, and their strategy seems to be working. The culture wars now threatening to consume American schools have produced an unlikely coalition — one that includes populists on the right and a growing number of affluent, educated white parents on the left. Both groups are increasingly at odds with the Democratic Party.

For the party leaders tasked with crafting a midterm strategy, this development should set off alarms. Voters who feel looked down on by elites are now finding common cause with those elites, forming an alliance that could not only cost the Democrats the midterm elections but also fundamentally realign American politics.

The Democrats know they have a problem. One [*recent analysis*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/12/22/analysis-of-virginia-loss-democrats-2022/) conducted by the Democratic Governors Association put it bluntly: “We need to retake education as a winning issue.” But reclaiming their trustworthiness on education will require more than just savvier messaging. Democrats are going to need to rethink a core assumption: that education is the key to addressing economic inequality.

The party’s current education problem reflects a misguided policy shift made decades ago. Eager to reclaim the political center, Democratic politicians increasingly framed education, rather than labor unions or a progressive tax code, as the answer to many of our economic problems, embracing what Barack Obama would later call “[*ladders of opportunity*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/issues/urban-and-economic-mobility),” such as “good” public schools and college degrees, which would offer a “[*hand up*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/12/19/remarks-president-year-end-press-conference)” rather than a handout. Bill Clinton famously [*pronounced*](https://clintonwhitehouse6.archives.gov/1998/09/1998-09-29-statement-by-the-president-on-higher-education.html), “What you earn depends on what you learn.”

But this message has proved to be deeply alienating to the people who once made up the core of the party. As the philosopher Michael Sandel wrote in his recent book “The Tyranny of Merit,” Democrats often seemed to imply that people whose living standards were declining had only themselves to blame. Meanwhile, more affluent voters were congratulated for their smarts and hard work. Tired of being told to pick themselves up and go to college, working people increasingly turned against the Democrats.

Today, as the middle class falls further behind the wealthy, the belief in education as the sole remedy for economic inequality appears more and more misguided. And yet, because Democrats have spent the past 30 years framing schooling as the surest route to the good life, any attempt to make our education system fairer is met with fierce resistance from affluent liberals worried that Democratic reforms might threaten their carefully laid plans to help their children get ahead.

In California, plans to [*place less emphasis on calculus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/us/california-math-curriculum-guidelines.html) in an effort to address persistent racial and socioeconomic disparities in math achievement have spawned furious backlash. So, too, did the announcement last fall that [*New York City*](https://www.vox.com/22841191/gifted-and-talented-education-programs-new-york-city) schools would be winding down their gifted and talented program, which has been widely criticized for [*exacerbating segregation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/nyregion/gifted-talented-nyc-schools.html) — an announcement that Mayor Eric Adams has begun to walk back.

Mr. Youngkin was one of the first to recognize that these anxieties could be used for political gain, and he carefully tailored his messaging to parents from both affluent families and the conservative movement. In his appeals to the Republican base, he railed against critical race theory and [*claimed*](https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/578080-youngkin-under-fire-for-invoking-george-soros-in-school-board-debate) that allies of George Soros had inserted “operatives” on local school boards. To centrist parents, he [*pledged*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/youngkin-thomas-jefferson-high-admissions/2021/11/29/168fd9c8-48b3-11ec-95dc-5f2a96e00fa3_story.html) to undo admissions policy changes aimed at bolstering diversity at Virginia’s prestigious Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, where graduates regularly go on to attend Ivy League universities.

These promises seem to have worked. A [*recent focus group*](https://thirdway.imgix.net/pdfs/override/Qualitative-Research-Findings-%E2%80%93-Virginia-Post-Election-Research.pdf) conducted by a Democratic polling firm showed that education was the top issue cited by Joe Biden supporters who had voted or considered voting for Mr. Youngkin. Participants referred to an array of complaints about education, including a sense that the focus on race and social justice in Virginia’s schools had gone too far, eclipsing core academic subjects. Similar charges echoed through the San Francisco school board election last month as Asian American voters, furious over changes to the admissions process at a highly selective high school, galvanized a movement to [*oust*](https://sfstandard.com/education/lowell-high-school-neighborhood-was-key-to-the-school-board-recalls-smashing-success/) three school board members.

How can Democrats claw out of this bind? In the near term, they can remind voters that Republican efforts to limit what kids are taught in school will hurt students, no matter their background. The College Board’s Advanced Placement program, for example, recently [*warned*](https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/college-board-warns-against-censoring-its-ap-courses-for-college-bound-students/2022/03) that it would remove the A.P. designation from courses when required topics were banned. Whatever the limitations of the A.P. program, students from all class backgrounds still use it to earn college credit and demonstrate engagement in rigorous coursework. Democrats could also take a page from Mr. Youngkin’s playbook and [*pledge*](https://www.wric.com/news/politics/local-election-hq/youngkin-announces-major-education-plan-proposal-for-sweeping-tax-cuts/), as he did, to invest more “than has ever been invested in education,” an issue that resonates across party lines.

But if Democrats want to stop bleeding ***working-class*** votes, they need to begin telling a different story about education and what schools can and can’t do. For a generation, Democrats have framed a college degree as the main path to economic mobility, a foolproof way to [*expand the middle class*](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2012/07/25/fact-sheet-creating-pathways-middle-class-all-americans). But now kids regularly emerge from college burdened with [*crushing student debt*](https://educationdata.org/student-loan-debt-statistics) and struggling to find stable jobs. To these graduates and to their parents it is [*painfully obvious*](https://apnews.com/article/north-america-us-news-business-ap-top-news-0a3584abcadb4482974a19fbdc42bfff) that degrees do not necessarily guarantee success. A generation ago, Mr. Clinton may have been able to make a convincing case that education could solve all people’s problems, but today Democrats risk irrelevance — or worse — by sticking with that tired mantra.

So, yes, strong schools are essential for the health and well-being of young people: Schools are where they gain confidence in themselves and build relationships with adults and with one another, where they learn about the world and begin to imagine life beyond their neighborhoods. But schools can’t level a playing field marred by racial inequality and increasingly sharp class distinctions; to pretend otherwise is both bad policy and bad politics. Moreover, the idea that schools alone can foster equal opportunity is a dangerous form of magical thinking that not only justifies existing inequality but also exacerbates our political differences by pitting the winners in our economy against the losers.

Democrats can reclaim education as a winning issue. They might even be able to carve out some badly needed common ground, bridging the gap between those who have college degrees and those who don’t by telling a more compelling story about why we have public education in this country. But that story must go beyond the scramble for social mobility if the party is to win back some of the working people it has lost over the past few decades.

Schools may not be able to solve inequality. But they can give young people a common set of social and civic values, as well as the kind of education that is valuable in its own right and not merely as a means to an end. We don’t fund education with our tax dollars to wash our hands of whatever we might owe to the next generation. Instead, we do it to strengthen our communities — by preparing students for the wide range of roles they will inevitably play as equal members of a democratic society.

Jennifer Berkshire (@BisforBerkshire) is a freelance journalist, and Jack Schneider (@Edu\_Historian) is an associate professor of education at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. They are the authors of “A Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door: The Dismantling of Public Education and the Future of School” and the hosts of the education policy podcast “Have You Heard.”

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Kati Lacker FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In Filling Ranks, Adams Prizes One Special Skill, And It's Not on a Résumé.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64BK-D541-DXY4-X45F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 20, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1235 words

**Byline:** By Dana Rubinstein

**Body**

The mayor-elect of New York City wants his top officials to be emotionally intelligent, characterizing it as his ''No. 1 criteria.''

When Eric Adams was looking for someone to lead the nation's largest police force, he considered some of the typical credentials, like relevant work experience and educational attainment. But he ranked another trait high on that list: ''emotional intelligence.''

When he named David Banks as chancellor of the nation's largest school system, Mr. Adams suggested that Mr. Banks exemplified emotional intelligence, something he argued would gird the new schools chief for the ''battle'' ahead. And when he named someone on Thursday to run New York City's troubled jail system, he again said his pick, Louis Molina, was ''emotionally intelligent.''

Mr. Adams, the mayor-elect of New York City, says that attribute is a prerequisite to winning a job in the highest echelons of city government. It is a phrase that Mr. Adams said New Yorkers should get used to hearing -- a term that, divorced from its academic underpinnings, is something akin to ''people skills.''

With less than three weeks before he takes office, Mr. Adams must still fill the vast majority of his top administration posts. But he has been consistent in arguing that those ranks must be filled by the ''emotionally intelligent,'' deliberately downplaying more commonplace credentials, like academic achievement and government experience.

''No. 1 criteria, I say this over and over again and some people don't hear it: emotional intelligence,'' Mr. Adams said on Election Day, referring to his qualifications for first deputy mayor. ''We hire people based on their academics, we look at their degrees. We look at their prior experience. No one understands the impact of just being emotionally intelligent and really understanding the compassion of people and what they are going through.''

''If you don't understand going through Covid, losing your home, living in a shelter, maybe losing your job, going through a health care crisis, if you don't empathize with that person, you will never give them the services that they need,'' he added.

Emotional intelligence is a notion rooted in the academic work of psychologist Peter Salovey, now the president of Yale University, and John D. Mayer, now a professor of psychology at the University of New Hampshire. Professor Mayer has described emotional intelligence as the ''ability to accurately perceive your own and others' emotions; to understand the signals that emotions send about relationships; and to manage your own and others' emotions.''

But the phrase did not enter the realm of pop psychology until 1995, when the psychologist Daniel Goleman, then a New York Times science reporter, propagated the concept in his book ''Emotional Intelligence.'' That same year, Time magazine ran a cover story on the concept, arguing that ''emotional intelligence may be the best predictor of success in life.''

Mr. Adams has long evinced disdain for New York's establishment elite, which is predominantly white and centered in Manhattan and brownstone Brooklyn, and its definition of what success looks like. His reliance on the unconventional-for-government ''emotional intelligence'' metric reflects the outlook of a Black man who grew up in a ***working-class*** environment in Queens, rising from police captain to state senator, to Brooklyn borough president and then mayor-elect.

''Don't tell me about your Ivy League degrees,'' he said this month, when appointing Mr. Banks schools chancellor. ''Don't tell me about where you went to school and how important you think you are. Don't tell me about what you are going to do because of your philosophical theories on understanding children. I don't want to hear about your academic intelligence. I want to know about your emotional intelligence.''

The concept and importance of emotional intelligence has continued to spark serious academic study, even as it has influenced management theory. It has also spawned a cottage industry of consultants purporting to be experts in the measurement of a person's ''emotional quotient,'' a related concept. Some critics argue that the idea has devolved into a ''self-help doctrine.''

David R. Caruso, a psychologist who specializes in the study of emotional intelligence and has worked with Professors Mayer and Salovey, said it has gotten to the point where a person's definition of emotional intelligence has become a Rorschach test.

''When you ask people, 'What does that mean and how do you hire to that?' that's where folks slow down and either don't answer or really indicate what they mean,'' he said. ''And even if they say 'people skills,' what is that? In our work, we're pretty explicit.''

On Thursday, after highlighting the concept on Bloomberg TV, ''The Brian Lehrer Show'' and in The Daily News, Mr. Adams offered his own extended definition.

''My criteria for those who are coming into my office is that they must be able to manage their emotion, manage how they handle themselves, be able to interact with the very difficult environment that they are about to encounter,'' Mr. Adams said.

In an email, Mr. Caruso said Mr. Adams's response was ''one of the best lay definitions I've seen!''

But Mr. Caruso also cautioned that managing emotions does not mean repressing them, so much as channeling them into constructive behaviors.

''It can be helpful and productive to be sad at times so you focus on details or comfort those who have experienced a loss, unfortunately a part of being chief of police or mayor,'' he said. ''It can be helpful to have anxiety to motivate you.''

It is desirable for executives to hire individuals who exhibit evidence of emotional intelligence, according to Mr. Caruso and Mr. Goleman.

''There's now a large body of research showing that this skill set has positive impacts on a leader's ability to get the best performance, to keep people engaged, and to set a positive mood,'' Mr. Goleman said.

Evan Thies, a spokesman for Mr. Adams, declined to say how the incoming administration was screening for emotional intelligence.

Three people on Mr. Adams's transition team said they were unaware of the circulation of any particular materials about the concept.

There are assessment tools to measure emotional intelligence, Mr. Caruso said, though they are rarely used in hiring. More commonly, interviewers ask questions designed to elicit signs of emotional intelligence.

They might ask, for example, for people to describe a time they were surprised by someone else's reaction, or to consider a significant interpersonal conflict that they have experienced professionally, and to describe who was involved, how it made them feel, how others felt, and the like.

Since job applicants are primed to perform, Mr. Goleman recommended speaking confidentially to individuals who have worked with the person in the past.

On Thursday, at the news conference where he introduced Mr. Molina as his pick for correction commissioner, Mr. Adams suggested emotional intelligence might also mean anticipating the new mayor's own needs.

As he was speaking, one of his aides brought him a bottle of water.

''That was a very emotionally intelligent action you just did,'' Mr. Adams said to the aide, smiling. ''He saw that my voice was hoarse.''

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/18/nyregion/eric-adams-emotional-intelligence.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/18/nyregion/eric-adams-emotional-intelligence.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, left, said that Louis Molina, the next jails commissioner, had emotional intelligence.

In naming David Banks, center, the new schools chancellor, Eric Adams, praised his people skills. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Films So Real, They Felt Like a Revolution***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:604G-90G1-DXY4-X4KT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 12, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 3; GATEWAY MOVIES

**Length:** 1193 words

**Byline:** By Ben Kenigsberg

**Body**

Charles Burnett's ''Killer of Sheep'' and Billy Woodberry's ''Bless Their Little Hearts'' were part of a movement putting the lived experience of black ***working-class*** characters onscreen.

In the essay film ''Los Angeles Plays Itself,'' the filmmaker and academic Thom Andersen argues that as much as Hollywood loves to photograph Los Angeles, mainstream movies have erased the history and texture of the city. As an antidote, he favors lower-budget productions, reserving special affection for a group of independent directors who attended film school at the University of California, Los Angeles, and became collectively known as the L.A. Rebellion.

As U.C.L.A.'s own book on the movement explains, these directors -- who included Charles Burnett, Billy Woodberry, Julie Dash and Haile Gerima -- ''created a watershed body of work that strives to perform the revolutionary act of humanizing Black people on screen.'' While the book cautions against grouping the filmmakers together -- each has a distinct perspective, and they don't all subscribe to the L.A. Rebellion label, which wasn't their idea -- they did work on one another's movies in the 1970s and early '80s.

The links between Burnett's ''Killer of Sheep'' (1978) and Woodberry's ''Bless Their Little Hearts'' (1984), which Burnett wrote and photographed, make them a natural pair. They're stylistically different: ''Killer of Sheep'' unfolds in fragmented vignettes; ''Bless Their Little Hearts'' has a straightforward narrative. But the movies share a star (Kaycee Moore), a setting (the Watts neighborhood), black-and-white cinematography and central questions about work, manhood and what it means to provide for a family.

''Killer of Sheep'': Rent or buy it at milestonefilms.com.

''Bless Their Little Hearts'': Stream it on the Criterion Channel; rent or buy it at milestonefilms.com.

Despite years of being hailed as a landmark, ''Killer of Sheep'' was difficult to see until 2007, when a restoration from Milestone Films resolved longstanding issues with the music rights. When I interviewed Burnett at the time, he expressed surprise at how far the movie had reached, saying it was made for discussion and schools. He wanted to put questions to viewers: How would they improve the life of the protagonist, Stan (Henry G. Sanders), a slaughterhouse worker? And what could be done for the community, where Burnett grew up?

Such pragmatic goals belie the movie's obvious poetry: a skyward shot of children leaping from roof to roof as if defying gravity; the incongruously upbeat counterpoint of William Grant Still's ''Afro-American'' Symphony as Stan cleans the floor of the slaughterhouse; a preoccupied Stan and his wife (Moore) slowly swaying in the shadows to Dinah Washington. The movie opens with a boy (unidentified, though probably young Stan) being admonished by his father for standing by while his sibling was embroiled in a fight: ''If anything was to happen to me or your mother, you ain't got nobody except your brother.'' Devotion to family and home life is an ethic that the older Stan, introduced repairing a floor, has clearly taken to heart.

On the surface, ''Killer of Sheep'' can look so spontaneous that Burnett appears almost to have happened upon it. (Early on, as the boys throw rocks at each other in a rubble-filled lot, it's initially difficult to tell whether they're fighting or playing.) But the vérité veneer disguises the movie's pointed use of place and space. There is not much room in Stan's home: His wife, who is never given a name, is wearing a bathrobe when she walks in on him and a friend. Later, when the couple have an intimate conversation about his increasingly morose mood (''You never smile anymore. I used to think you was just tired''), their daughter fusses at the refrigerator in the background.

The smallest distances become challenging to navigate: Stan cashes a check at a liquor store to get $15 for a replacement motor. After the purchase, he and a friend carry the heavy motor down a tight stairway, then place it in a truck -- a truck that is, regrettably, parked on a hill. And the one time ''Killer of Sheep'' exits the neighborhood -- the characters pile into a car for an excursion -- a flat tire thwarts the effort.

The grind has worn Stan down, yet he keeps going, with an attitude somewhere between acceptance and resignation. Early in ''Killer of Sheep,'' Stan says he ''can't get no sleep at night, no peace of mind.'' A friend jokes that he is always awake counting sheep. If ''Killer of Sheep'' concerns the exhaustion of getting by, ''Bless Their Little Hearts'' is its counterpart -- a movie about the consequences of unemployment. Slumber is again a motif: The first words we hear from the protagonist, Charlie (Nate Hardman), are, ''You asleep?''

''Bless Their Little Hearts'' opens with Charlie in an unemployment office, where he spots a sign: ''Are you interested in a casual labor job?'' Casual is underlined twice, and the offer specifies that the jobs will last up to three days.

The precise origins of Charlie's unemployment are never specified, but in ''Los Angeles Plays Itself,'' Andersen notes a moment when Charlie rides by a ''reverse landmark, one of the closed industrial plants that had once provided jobs for the black ***working class***.'' Over the course of ''Bless Their Little Hearts,'' Charlie takes brief gigs painting over gang tags or clearing brush, but permanent work eludes him.

A friend suggests turning to robbery. ''If I didn't have a family that might be all right,'' Charlie replies. And as in ''Killer of Sheep,'' the family is a crowd. There's a long wait for the lone bathroom. When Charlie's daughter walks in on him shaving, he sends her out; when she gets her turn, the faucet knobs are shut so tight that, in a moment of levity, she fetches an industrial-size wrench to tap them loose.

Though it is not freely acknowledged until the end, when Charlie allows himself to cry in his wife's arms, joblessness clearly poses a challenge to his manhood, a deficit he takes out on his son, chiding his hygiene: ''Little boys don't run around with their fingernails long. Little girls run around with their fingernails long,'' he tells him. (It's hard not to hear echoes of the father warning young Stan about his brother in ''Killer of Sheep.'')

Charlie and his wife, Andais (Moore), don't even seem to keep the same hours. He is often awake while she is asleep. He lounges on a car hood or, after a hard day of labor, snores in the bathtub. Late in the film, a barber suggests that the key to success is being able to wake up early. As for Andais, she is shown in contrasting scenes riding the bus: in one, she nods off from fatigue; later, having discovered that Charlie is having an affair, she is wide awake. When the two finally fight about the fling, the scene, staged in a single take, feels utterly extemporaneous.

Like ''Killer of Sheep,'' this is a movie so real, so personal, it appears drawn completely from life.Killer of SheepRent or buy it at milestonefilms.com.Bless Their Little HeartsStream it on the Criterion Channel; rent or buy it at milestonefilms.com.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/11/movies/la-rebellion-charles-burnett.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/11/movies/la-rebellion-charles-burnett.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top center, a scene from the film ''Killer of Sheep.'' Top right, Henry G. Sanders in the movie, directed by Charles Burnett. Above, Kaycee Moore in ''Bless Their Little Hearts.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MILESTONE FILMS

CRITERION COLLECTION)

**Load-Date:** June 14, 2020

**End of Document**



[***‘How Lucky We Are to Have Found Each Other.’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60GG-HF81-JBG3-61JC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 31, 2020 Friday 01:35 EST

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**Section:** FASHION; weddings

**Length:** 520 words

**Byline:** Louise Rafkin

**Highlight:** Oliver Cacananta and Danny Wan met singing in the Gay Asian Pacific Alliance Men’s Chorus.

**Body**

For a couple who met in a choir, Oliver Cacananta has a perfect description of the partnership between himself and Danny Wan. “We harmonize,” said Mr. Cacananta (left).

The two married on July 17 in an online service officiated by Homyrah Alocozy, a deputy marriage commissioner for Alameda County in California. Mr. Wan’s mother, Jane Wan, and Mr. Cacananta’s parents, Prudencio and Lilia Cacananta were the only ones present while several dozenfriends and family tuned in online.

The small gathering was far from the large summer event the couple had planned where their vows would be part of a benefit concert for the Gay Asian Pacific Alliance Men’s Chorus, the group that brought them together and which they both cherish.

That plan met many obstacles. In November 2019, Mr. Wan began his job as the executive director at the Port of Oakland, a regional economic engine that includes the Oakland seaport, Oakland’s international airport and the entertainment district Jack London Square. When the coronavirus pandemic hit in mid-March, the arrival of cruise ships with ill people aboard upped the pressure of an already demanding job.

Then, in April, Mr. Wan lost his father to cancer. The couple decided to focus on the challenges at hand and allow Mr. Wan time to grieve his father’s passing.

Mr. Wan was born in Taiwan and grew up in Alberta, Canada. He attended the University of California, Berkeley where he graduated with a degree in rhetoric and a teaching credential. He then received a law degree from the University of California, Los Angeles. From 2000 to 2005, he served as Oakland’s first openly gay City Council member.

The couple met in 2015 when Mr. Cacananta contacted the Gay Asian Pacific Alliance Men’s Chorus. Founded in 1989 as a social and support group, the choir sings an Asia-Pacific Island centric repertoire. Mr. Wan, now 56, had been singing with the ensemble for years and was the group’s membership contact.

In his inquiry about the choir, Mr. Cacananta admitted to a lack of musical training. “We’re all recreational singers, here for the friendships and harmonies,” Mr. Wan wrote back, warmly adding a smiley emoji.

But their connection was put on pause. Mr. Cacananta, 45, was then traveling to the Philippines to present a paper on the Ilocano language; he had helped found the Ilocano version of Wikipedia in 2004. Mr. Cacananta was born in the Philippines and later moved with his family to Livermore, Calif. He received a biology degree from the California State University, East Bay and an M.B.A. from the University of Phoenix. He is now director of regulatory affairs at Ossium Health, a biotechnology company.

On his return from the Philippines a first date sprang into a relationship.

“Immediately Danny felt familiar,” Mr. Cacananta said. “I didn’t have to explain why I spent so much time and money supporting my parents. He supported his. We understood each other on many levels.”

“We are both gay Asian men from ***working-class*** immigrant families who started with nothing in this country,” Mr. Wan said. “How lucky we are to have found each other.”

PHOTO: Oliver Cacananta, Danny Wan

**Load-Date:** August 1, 2020

**End of Document**



[***French Reject Le Pen's Party in Regional Vote***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6318-BF71-JBG3-61F0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 28, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 838 words

**Byline:** By Roger Cohen

**Body**

The returns suggest the presidential election next year may be more wide open than it seemed.

PARIS -- It had seemed inevitable: another face-off in next year's French presidential election between President Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen, the leader of the rightist, anti-immigrant National Rally Party.

But after nationwide regional elections on Sunday, a rerun of the second round of the 2017 election appeared far less certain as both Mr. Macron's centrist party, La République en Marche, and Ms. Le Pen's party failed to win a single one of France's 13 mainland regions.

The defeat was particularly crushing for Ms. Le Pen. She had portrayed the regional elections as a bellwether of her rise to power.

In the southern region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the one region where the National Rally led in the first round of voting a week ago, a center-right candidate, Renaud Muselier, defeated the National Rally candidate by a comfortable margin, taking about 57 percent of the vote, according to preliminary results.

The National Rally has never governed a French region, and on Sunday, Ms. Le Pen accused every other party of forming ''unnatural alliances'' and ''doing everything to prevent us from showing the French people our capacity to run a regional executive.''

Stanislas Guerini, the director general of Mr. Macron's party, said the results were ''a disappointment for the presidential majority.''

They were also no surprise.

Since cobbling together his party as the vehicle for his ascent in 2017, Mr. Macron has shown little interest in its fortunes, relying instead on his personal authority and the aura of the presidency. The party, often known simply as En Marche, has never managed to establish itself on the regional or local level, despite controlling Parliament.

Turnout for the election was very low. Only about 33 percent of French people voted, compared with 55.6 percent as recently as 2015, a clear sign of disgruntlement with politics as usual and weariness after the country's long battle with the coronavirus pandemic.

This low participation, and the fact the presidential election is still 10 months away, makes extrapolating from the regional results hazardous. Still, it marked a shift. A headline in the left-wing Libération newspaper above an image of Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen said: ''2022: What if it wasn't them?''

If it is not them, it could be Xavier Bertrand, a center-right presidential candidate who emerged as the chief winner today.

A no-nonsense former insurance agent in the northern town of Saint-Quentin, Mr. Bertrand, who has already announced he will run for president next year, won the Hauts-de-France region handily, with about 53 percent of the vote.

His victory came despite strenuous efforts by Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen to make an impression in the region, which is Mr. Bertrand's stronghold.

''This result gives me the force to go out and meet all French people,'' Mr. Bertrand said. ''There is one necessary condition for the recovery of our country: the re-establishment of order and respect.''

Mr. Bertrand, who served as health and then labor minister in the government of Nicolas Sarkozy, did not go to one of France's elite schools and likes to portray himself as a man of the people sensitive to the concerns of the French ***working class***. He is widely seen as an effective politician of consuming ambition. Another former minister in the Sarkozy government, Rachida Dati, once said of Mr. Bertrand: ''He is the one with the most hunger.''

Although he left the main center-right party, Les Républicains, a few years ago, Mr. Bertrand remains part of their conservative family and has a visceral hatred for Ms. Le Pen's National Rally, which he insists on calling by its former name, the National Front.

In a sense the election marked the revival of traditional parties: Les Républicains on the right and the Socialists on the left. Left-wing coalitions, usually including the Socialists, hung onto power in five regions they already governed.

Security has emerged as a primary concern of French people ahead of next year's election, after a series of Islamist terrorist attacks over the past nine months. This has posed difficulties for a fragmented French left, which has appeared to have few answers to security concerns and no presidential candidate it can unite around. But the regional elections suggested it is far too early to dismiss the left entirely.

For Mr. Macron, who has embarked on a nationwide tour to reconnect with the French people after the worst of the pandemic, the results suggest that his recent focus on winning right-wing votes that might have gone to Ms. Le Pen may need to be reconsidered.

The presidential election is more wide open than it looked. The French people are more disgruntled than they appeared. More of the same -- and a 2022 contest between Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen would be just that -- may not be what they are looking for after all.

Aurelien Breeden and Daphné Anglès contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/27/world/europe/france-elections-macron-le-pen.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/27/world/europe/france-elections-macron-le-pen.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron voting on Sunday. His party, En Marche, did not win a regional race. (POOL PHOTO BY LUDOVIC MARIN)

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2021

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[***The Affluent Few***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64BD-B6B1-JBG3-64VD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 19, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 12; NONFICTION

**Length:** 1250 words

**Byline:** By Eyal Press

**Body**

THE 9.9 PERCENTThe New Aristocracy That Is Entrenching Inequality and Warping Our CultureBy Matthew Stewart

A decade ago, protesters enraged by corporate greed and the bailouts that followed the 2008 financial crisis coined a phrase -- ''We Are the 99 Percent!'' -- that quickly went viral. It was a captivating slogan that spoke to the anger many felt about rising inequality and an economic system that seemed blatantly unfair. It was also misleading, not because the slogan exaggerated the economic disparities in America but because it understated them.

As various studies have shown, much of the wealth in recent decades has flowed into the pockets not of the richest 1 percent of Americans but of the 0.1 percent, including a band of billionaires whose net worth has grown by a staggering $1.8 trillion since the start of the pandemic. In our new Gilded Age, wealth is even more concentrated at the top than the participants in the Occupy Wall Street protests imagined.

At the same time, the idea that the interests of all but the very rich -- that 99 percent -- are harmoniously aligned is a fantasy, glossing over the economic and racial divisions that cleave the rest of society. This was starkly apparent during the pandemic, when families in some neighborhoods gathered in bread lines while others fled to second homes and ordered gourmet meals online -- food delivered to their doors by ''essential workers'' paid a fraction of what the typical lawyer or software engineer earns.

In books like Matthew Desmond's ''Evicted'' and Sarah Smarsh's ''Heartland,'' the stories of poor people at the bottom of America's hourglass economy have been vividly documented. The literature on affluent citizens who, though not superrich, have nevertheless benefited from inequality is comparatively sparse. What kinds of stories do the better-off tell themselves about the advantages they possess? How do they justify their good fortune to themselves?

In his new book, ''The 9.9 Percent,'' Matthew Stewart focuses on the wealthiest one-tenth of Americans, a ''new aristocracy'' whose aggregate wealth is four times greater than that of everyone else. A minimum of $1.2 million in assets is required to enter this exclusive club and Stewart writes that the threshold will almost certainly rise by the time his book is published. It's a club to which white people are eight times more likely to belong than people of color.

But what ultimately unites its members is less the size of their bank accounts than a mind-set, Stewart contends. At its core lies ''the merit myth,'' a shared belief that the affluent owe their success not to the color of their skin or the advantages they've inherited but to their talent and intelligence. Under the spell of this conviction, Stewart argues, the privileged engage in practices -- segregating themselves in upscale neighborhoods, using their money and influence to get their children into elite colleges -- that entrench inequality even as they remain blithely unaware of their role in perpetuating it.

A former partner at a management consulting firm, Stewart is interested in tracing how the ''thoughts and desires'' of his own professional class exacerbate inequality, a welcome if not entirely original idea (in his 2017 book ''Dream Hoarders,'' the economist Richard Reeves made a similar argument about the upper middle class). Unfortunately, Stewart's portrait of the 9.9 percent draws on few firsthand interviews with members of this class. He relies instead on examples culled from sources like Slate and on made-up characters such as ''Ultramom,'' a cartoonish figure who deploys her knowledge of branding to promote the virtues of her ''Ultrachildren'' in the race for coveted spots at a hyper-selective preschool.

Such caricaturing may resonate with the popular anger at elites. But it fails to lend much insight into what Stewart calls ''the mind of the 9.9 percent,'' or for that matter, to demonstrate that such a uniform thing exists. Is it fair to place salaried professionals in fields like medicine and law in the same category as hedge-fund managers who pocket seven-figure bonuses? How might the aspirations and beliefs of the 9.9 percent vary by occupation, or by region and political affiliation? And how has the growing rage at financial elites -- nowadays, one is as likely to hear billionaires denounced by Fox News's Tucker Carlson as by Senator Bernie Sanders -- altered how affluent Americans see themselves?

The latter question was examined by the sociologist Rachel Sherman in another recent study of those reaping the benefits of our economic system, ''Uneasy Street,'' which drew on interviews with 50 well-to-do New Yorkers. Far from unaware of inequality, many of Sherman's subjects were acutely conscious of it, to the point that they refrained not only from showing off their wealth but from talking about it (money is ''more private than sex,'' one subject told her). Sherman interpreted the silence as a form of status anxiety, reflecting uncertainty about how to feel morally entitled to one's privilege.

''The fortunate man is seldom satisfied with the fact of being fortunate,'' observed the sociologist Max Weber. ''Beyond this, he needs to know that he has a right to his good fortune. He wants to be convinced that he 'deserves' it, and above all, that he deserves it in comparison with others.'' The comparison that wealthy people have often drawn to affirm their moral worth is with the lazy, undeserving poor. Some of the people Sherman interviewed compared themselves favorably to another class -- the undeserving rich, dilettantes who inherited their money rather than earning it and who ostentatiously displayed their wealth. Distinguishing themselves from these ''bad'' rich people did not mean Sherman's subjects were ready to give up their own material advantages. To the contrary, drawing such distinctions affirmed their self-image as ''good people'' who, by dint of certain character traits (self-sufficiency, restraint), could feel entitled to what they had. In an age of rising inequality, believing they possessed such traits could help assuage ''the anxieties of affluence,'' Sherman concluded.

These are, to be sure, anxieties that millions of adults who fear going broke because of a medical emergency or getting evicted from their homes would be happy to have. In ''The 9.9 Percent,'' Stewart notes that in 1963, the median household would have needed 10 times as much wealth to reach the middle of the 9.9 percent. Today, it would need 24 times as much wealth. In contemporary America, the lives of the wealthy bear increasingly little resemblance to those of ***working-class*** people, much less to those who are poor. Stewart is surely right to view this as a problem and to question why it has generated so much less outrage and concern than the obscene fortunes of the superrich. But the growing chasm between the 9.9 percent and the rest of society only underscores why pushing beyond reductive stereotypes to explain how affluent professionals think about, and justify, their wealth and privilege is important. Doing so can help illuminate both how deep the economic disparities in America have become and how inequality is validated and sustained.Eyal Press is the author of ''Dirty Work: Essential Jobs and the Hidden Toll of Inequality in America.''THE 9.9 PERCENTThe New Aristocracy That Is Entrenching Inequality and Warping Our CultureBy Matthew Stewart352 pp. Simon & Schuster. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/books/review/the-99-percent-matthew-stewart.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/18/books/review/the-99-percent-matthew-stewart.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Families enjoying the grassy expanses of Central Park. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 19, 2021

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[***Biden in Asia***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65HF-CB71-DXY4-X1JN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 23, 2022 Monday 18:58 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1695 words

**Byline:** David Leonhardt

**Highlight:** A new trade deal is based on two big ideas: moving away from neoliberalism and containing China.

**Body**

A new trade deal is based on two big ideas: moving away from neoliberalism and containing China.

The politics of trade policy have become toxic in the U.S.

For decades, the mainstream of both the Democratic and Republican parties favored expanding trade between the U.S. and other countries. Greater globalization, these politicians promised, would increase economic growth — and with the bounty from that growth, the country could compensate any workers who suffered from increased trade. But it didn’t work out that way.

Instead, trade has contributed to the stagnation of living standards for millions of ***working-class*** Americans, by shrinking the number of good-paying, blue-collar jobs here. The incomes of workers without a bachelor’s degree [*have grown only slowly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/24/opinion/income-inequality-upper-middle-class.html) over the past few decades. Many measures of well-being — even life expectancy — [*have declined*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/06/opinion/working-class-death-rate.html) in recent years.

All along, many politicians and experts continued to insist that trade was expanding the economic pie. And they were often right. But struggling workers understandably viewed those claims as either false or irrelevant, and they refused to support further expansions of trade.

After President Barack Obama negotiated a major new trade deal — the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or T.P.P. — members of both parties criticized it, and Congress declined to approve it. Donald Trump then won the presidency partly [*on an antitrade platform*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/29/us/politics/donald-trump-trade-speech.html), and he formally withdrew the U.S. from the T.P.P.

This morning, President Biden, on his first trip to Asia since taking office, [*has announced an agreement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/world/asia/biden-asian-pacific-bloc.html) that he hopes represents the future of trade policy. It’s known as the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and includes India, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea, Australia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Thailand and a handful of other countries.

Anti-neoliberalism

This framework is much less ambitious than Obama’s T.P.P. But the T.P.P. never became law in the U.S., so it is in some ways a meaningless comparison. Biden’s goal is to manage trade policy in a way that is both [*less bombastic and isolationist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/13/world/asia/trump-asia.html) than Trump’s approach but also [*less dismissive of voters’ concerns*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/17/business/economy/free-trade-biden-tai.html) than both parties tended to be before Trump’s presidency.

As one Biden adviser told me, the new framework is central to the Biden administration’s “post-neoliberal foreign policy.”

The crucial distinction between Biden’s framework and past trade deals is that this deal does not involve what economists call “market access” — the opening of one country’s markets to other countries’ goods, through reduced tariffs and regulations. The framework instead revolves around increased cooperation on areas like clean energy and internet policy. As a result, the deal does not require congressional approval.

A tangible example is the global supply chain. As part of the framework, the 13 countries agree to identify supply-chain problems early and solve them. If a Covid outbreak in one country forces a certain kind of factory to close, a backup factory in another country can quickly increase production and minimize shortages around the world.

The China factor

Officials in much of Asia remain disappointed that the U.S. [*abandoned the T.P.P.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/21/opinion/china-biden-australia-tpp.html) They rightly note that Biden’s framework is much narrower and will do less to help Asian economies increase their exports to the U.S. “You can sense the frustration for developing, trade-reliant countries,” Calvin Cheng, a senior analyst at Malaysia’s Institute of Strategic and International Studies, [*told Al Jazeera*](https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/5/20/difficult-to-believe-bidens-economic-bid-a-tough-sell-in-asia).

Still, the Biden administration persuaded virtually every country that it wanted to join the framework to do so. Officials in these countries recognize that Biden is trying to re-engage with Asian allies, in contrast to Trump’s [*“America first” approach*](https://time.com/4273812/america-first-donald-trump-history/), and many badly want the U.S. to play an active role in the Pacific. Otherwise, they fear, China may dominate the region.

U.S. officials have the same concern, and the new framework — vague as parts of it may be — offers a structure for economic cooperation that bypasses China. If the U.S. and other major Asian economies can agree to standards on the supply chain, internet policy, energy and more, China will be left to choose between playing by those rules or missing out on new trade opportunities.

Katherine Tai, the top U.S. trade official, who has joined Biden on his trip, [*told The Associated Press*](https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-biden-covid-health-620d26bf2babf56ba3c3a7f7b6a0aaa9) that the U.S. was “very, very focused on our competition with China.” The new framework, she added, is intended to counter China’s growing influence in the Pacific region.

For more

* Biden said the U.S. [*would defend Taiwan militarily*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/world/asia/biden-taiwan-defense.html) if China invaded.

1. [*David Ignatius, The Washington Post:*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/05/19/biden-trip-asia-china-russia-trade-ipec/)“Biden is traveling this week to Asia to project U.S. diplomatic and economic power in a region that has been rattled by the blunders of America’s two most powerful rivals, Russia and China.
2. [*Phelim Kine, Politico:*](https://www.politico.com/newsletters/politico-china-watcher/2022/05/19/why-chinas-freaking-out-over-bidens-asia-trip-00033666)“The Chinese government clearly senses a threat as the administration sharpens its focus on Asia.” China’s foreign minister, Wang Yi, warned South Korea of “the risk of a new Cold War.”
3. The framework includes both U.S. allies and “fence sitter” countries that want to maintain close ties with both China and the U.S., [*Kurt Tong explains in The Hill*](https://thehill.com/opinion/international/3484872-congress-should-get-creative-on-taiwan/). These fence sitters have insisted that Taiwan not be part of the deal.

THE LATEST NEWS

War in Ukraine

* Judges in Kyiv [*convicted a Russian soldier*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/23/world/russia-ukraine-war/4c0b9178-e4c8-5300-afef-7c718c543f9f?smid=url-share) of war crimes and sentenced him to life in prison.

1. Russia is trying to take [*a Ukrainian city*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/world/europe/russia-eastern-ukraine-battle.html) in the east, after struggling to make advances elsewhere.
2. The battles on the eastern front [*have not shifted the war’s momentum*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/23/world/russia-ukraine-war?name=styln-russia-ukraine&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=LegacyCollection&amp;variant=show&amp;is_new=false#grueling-battles-on-ukraines-eastern-front-fail-to-shift-the-wars-momentum).
3. When a Russian brigade arrived in the city of Bucha in March, it brought [*a new level of terror*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/world/europe/ukraine-bucha-war-crimes-russia.html).
4. The Times has started an [*archive of possible war crimes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/22/world/europe/ukraine-war-crimes.html).

Politics

* Mike Pence is laying the groundwork for a 2024 presidential run — and [*distancing himself from Donald Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/us/politics/pence-trump-republicans-2024.html).

1. Democrats have divergent views on immigration. A [*runoff in South Texas embodies the divide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/us/politics/texas-immigration.html).
2. Jared Kushner and Steven Mnuchin traveled to the Middle East weeks before the Trump administration ended. A Times examination questions [*whether they sought to exploit official relationships*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/business/jared-kushner-steven-mnuchin-gulf-investments.html) for private business interests.

Other Big Stories

* A [*gunman killed a 48-year-old man on a subway train*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/nyregion/nyc-subway-shooting.html) in New York City in an unprovoked attack.

1. Southern Baptist leaders [*mishandled sex abuse claims*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/us/southern-baptist-sex-abuse.html), according to an investigation.
2. Thunderstorms [*left at least six people dead*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/world/canada/ottawa-storms.html) in Quebec and Ontario.
3. Millions of people are homeless and more than 60 people have died [*after heavy rains in India and Bangladesh*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/world/asia/flooding-india-bangladesh.html).
4. The maker of Jif peanut butter has [*recalled several products*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/us/jif-recall-peanut-butter.html) because of potential salmonella contamination.
5. The killing of a 25-year-old woman in Texas has [*rattled the off-road biking community*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/us/cyclist-moriah-wilson-shooting-austin.html).

Opinions

Justice Samuel Alito insists the Supreme Court won’t overturn the right to contraception. But he has already [*outlined the means to challenge it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/opinion/birth-control-abortion-roe-v-wade.html), Melissa Murray writes.

We are in an [*era of constant deception*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/opinion/johnny-depp-george-w-bush.html), Maureen Dowd writes.

Bret Stephens and Gail Collins discuss [*the Johnny Depp-Amber Heard trial and more*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/opinion/heard-depp-trial.html).

MORNING READS

Smell good: Baseball is full of superstitions. [*That would explain the perfume*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/sports/baseball/cologne-perfume.html).

Metropolitan Diary: A first-time visitor from Canada gets a lesson in [*how to call a cab*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/22/nyregion/metropolitan-diary.html).

Quiz time: The average score on our latest news quiz was 9.3. [*See if you can beat it*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/20/briefing/news-quiz-pennsylvania-north-carolina-primary.html).

A Times classic: [*You don’t need to drink eight glasses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/upshot/no-you-do-not-have-to-drink-8-glasses-of-water-a-day.html) of water a day.

Advice from Wirecutter: Gifts [*for college grads*](https://www.nytimes.com/wirecutter/gifts/gifts-for-college-graduates/).

Lives Lived: Bob Neuwirth was a talented singer and songwriter, and he was perhaps best known for the roles he played in the careers of Bob Dylan and Janis Joplin. [*Neuwirth died at 82*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/19/arts/music/bob-neuwirth-dead.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

A Cannes recap

At the Cannes Film Festival, you can expect glamour, [*minutes-long standing ovations*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/13/movies/cannes-french-dispatch-standing-ovation.html) and passionate boos. The maximalist festival kicked off last week and will run until May 28. Here’s what you need to know.

Why do people care? Cannes has launched the careers of many filmmakers, like Quentin Tarantino for “Pulp Fiction.” Winning a prize can also help an art film secure wider distribution and awards recognition. “Parasite,” which won the top prize at Cannes in 2019, went on to win best picture at the Oscars.

Are any big movies premiering? Define big. For the cinephiles, films by David Cronenberg, Claire Denis and [*Park Chan-wook*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/16/t-magazine/park-chan-wook.html) are in the running for the top prize. As for potential blockbusters, “Top Gun: Maverick,” the sequel to Tom Cruise’s 1986 hit, and Baz Luhrmann’s Elvis biopic are also screening.

Any standouts so far? Our critic Manohla Dargis [*liked “Scarlet,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/19/movies/cannes-film-festival-2022-top-gun-maverick.html) which tells the story of a World War I veteran and his daughter and is “filled with lyrical beauty.”

Anything major happen so far? A screaming woman covered in body paint crashed the red carpet, [*protesting sexual violence*](https://variety.com/2022/film/news/screaming-woman-removed-cannes-red-carpet-1235273340/) in Ukraine. Days prior, at the opening ceremony, President Volodymyr Zelensky gave a virtual address in which he quoted Charlie Chaplin’s “The Great Dictator”: “The hate of men will pass, and dictators die, and the power they took from the people will return to the people.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Brighten up [*a roasted potato salad*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1023181-roasted-potato-salad-with-jalapeno-avocado-dressing?module=Recipe+of+The+Day&amp;pgType=homepage&amp;action=click) with jalapeño-avocado dressing.

What to Watch

Stream these [*action movies,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/20/movies/five-action-movies-to-stream-now.html) including a Polish heist flick.

Where to Go

Bike along Vancouver’s sea wall, [*snacking and spotting bald eagles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/travel/vancouver-biking.html).

Now Time to Play

The pangrams from yesterday’s Spelling Bee were bathing and inhabiting. Here is today’s puzzle — or you can [*play online*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

Here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html). Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini) and a clue: Snapshot (five letters).

If you’re in the mood to play more, find [*all our games here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

Thanks for spending part of your morning with The Times. See you tomorrow. — David

P.S. Times reporters will join Melanie Chisholm — the Spice Girl known as Mel C — for a live discussion about the group, [*today at 1:15 p.m. Eastern*](https://twitter.com/i/spaces/1kvKpAEyybVGE).

Here’s [*today’s front page*](https://static01.nyt.com/images/2022/05/23/nytfrontpage/scan.pdf).

“[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about Russia’s military. “[*Sway*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/23/opinion/sway-kara-swisher-roger-lynch.html)” features the C.E.O. of Condé Nast.

Claire Moses, Ian Prasad Philbrick, Tom Wright-Piersanti, Ashley Wu and Sanam Yar contributed to The Morning. You can reach the team at [*themorning@nytimes.com*](mailto:themorning@nytimes.com).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/morning-briefing).

PHOTO: President Biden in South Korea on Sunday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 23, 2022

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[***Most Democrats Don’t Want Biden in 2024, New Poll Shows***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65WW-B361-JBG3-63FY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 11, 2022 Monday 16:50 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1833 words

**Byline:** Shane Goldmacher

**Highlight:** With the country gripped by a pervasive sense of pessimism, the president is hemorrhaging support.

**Body**

With the country gripped by a pervasive sense of pessimism, the president is hemorrhaging support.

President Biden is facing an alarming level of doubt from inside his own party, with 64 percent of Democratic voters saying they would prefer a new standard-bearer in the 2024 presidential campaign, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll, as voters nationwide have soured on his leadership, giving him a meager 33 percent job-approval rating.

Widespread concerns about the economy and inflation have helped turn the national mood decidedly dark, both on Mr. Biden and the trajectory of the nation. More than three-quarters of registered voters see the United States moving in the wrong direction, a pervasive sense of pessimism that spans every corner of the country, every age range and racial group, cities, suburbs and rural areas, as well as both political parties.

Only 13 percent of American voters said the nation was on the right track — the lowest point in Times polling since the depths of the financial crisis more than a decade ago.

For Mr. Biden, that bleak national outlook has pushed his job approval rating to a perilously low point. Republican opposition is predictably overwhelming, but more than two-thirds of independents also now disapprove of the president’s performance, and nearly half disapprove strongly. Among fellow Democrats his approval rating stands at 70 percent, a relatively low figure for a president, especially heading into the 2022 midterms when Mr. Biden needs to rally Democrats to the polls to maintain control of Congress.

In a sign of deep vulnerability and of unease among what is supposed to be his political base, only 26 percent of Democratic voters said the party should renominate him in 2024.

Mr. Biden has said repeatedly that he intends to run for re-election in 2024. At 79, he is already the [*oldest president in American history*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/09/us/politics/biden-age-democrats.html), and concerns about his age ranked at the top of the list for Democratic voters who want the party to find an alternative.

The backlash against Mr. Biden and desire to move in a new direction were particularly acute among younger voters. In the survey, 94 percent of Democrats under the age of 30 said they would prefer a different presidential nominee.

“I’m just going to come out and say it: I want younger blood,” said Nicole Farrier, a 38-year-old preschool teacher in East Tawas, a small town in northern Michigan. “I am so tired of all old people running our country. I don’t want someone knocking on death’s door.”

Ms. Farrier, a Democrat who voted for Mr. Biden in 2020, said she had hoped he might have been able to do more to heal the nation’s divisions, but now, as a single mother, she is preoccupied with what she described as crippling increases in her cost of living. “I went from living a comfortable lifestyle to I can’t afford anything anymore,” she said.

Jobs and the economy were the most important problem facing the country according to 20 percent of voters, with inflation and the cost of living (15 percent) close behind as prices are rising at the fastest rate in a generation. One in 10 voters named the state of American democracy and political division as the most pressing issue, about the same share who named gun policies, after several high-profile mass shootings.

More than 75 percent of voters in the poll said the economy was “extremely important” to them. And yet only 1 percent rated economic conditions as excellent. Among those who are typically working age — voters 18 to 64 years old — only 6 percent said the economy was good or excellent, while 93 percent rated it poor or only fair.

The White House has tried to trumpet strong job growth, including on Friday when Mr. Biden declared that he had overseen “the fastest and strongest jobs recovery in American history.” But the Times/Siena poll showed a vast disconnect between those boasts, and the strength of some economic indicators, and the financial reality that most Americans feel they are confronting.

“We used to spend $200 a week just going out to have fun, or going and buying extra groceries if we needed it, and now we can’t even do that,” said Kelly King, a former factory worker in Greensburg, Ind., who is currently sidelined because of a back injury. “We’re barely able to buy what we need.”

Ms. King, 38, said she didn’t know if Mr. Biden was necessarily to blame for the spiking prices of gas and groceries but felt he should be doing more to help. “I feel like he hasn’t really spoken much about it,” Ms. King said. “He hasn’t done what I think he’s capable of doing as president to help the American people. As a Democrat, I figured he would really be on our side and put us back on the right track. And I just feel like he’s not.”

Now, she said, she is hoping Republicans take over Congress in November to course-correct.

One glimmer of good news for Mr. Biden is that the survey showed him with a narrow edge in a hypothetical rematch in 2024 with former President Donald J. Trump: 44 percent to 41 percent.

The result is a reminder of one of Mr. Biden’s favorite aphorisms: “Don’t compare me to the Almighty, compare me to the alternative.” The poll showed that Democratic misgivings about Mr. Biden seemed to mostly melt away when presented with a choice between him and Mr. Trump: 92 percent of Democrats said they would stick with Mr. Biden.

Randain Wright, a 41-year-old truck driver in Ocean Township, N.J., is typical of these voters. He said he talked frequently with friends about Mr. Biden’s shortcomings. “He’s just not aggressive enough in getting his agenda done,” Mr. Wright lamented. In contrast, he said, “Trump wasn’t afraid to get his people in line.”

But while he would prefer a different nominee in 2024, Mr. Wright said he still wouldn’t consider voting Republican in 2024 if faced with a Biden-Trump rematch.

On the whole, voters appeared to like Mr. Biden more than they like his performance as president, with 39 percent saying they have a favorable impression of him — six percentage points higher than his job approval.

In saying they wanted a different nominee in 2024, Democrats cited a variety of reasons, with the most in an open-ended question citing his age (33 percent), followed closely by unhappiness with how he is doing the job. About one in eight Democrats just said that they wanted someone new, and one in 10 said he was not progressive enough. Smaller fractions expressed doubts about his ability to win and his mental acuity.

The Times/Siena survey of 849 registered voters nationwide was conducted from July 5 to 7, in the aftermath of the Supreme Court’s June 24 decision to [*overturn Roe v. Wade*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/24/us/roe-wade-overturned-supreme-court.html), eliminating the constitutional right to an abortion, which had been protected for half a century. The ruling sent Democrats into the streets and unleashed an outpouring of political contributions.

Typically, voters aligned with the party in power — Democrats now hold the House, the Senate and the White House — are more upbeat about the nation’s direction. But only 27 percent of Democrats saw the country as on the right track. And with the fall of Roe, there was a notable gender gap among Democrats: Only 20 percent of Democratic women said the country was moving in the right direction, compared with 39 percent of Democratic men.

Overall, abortion rated as the most important issue for 5 percent of voters: 1 percent of men, 9 percent of women.

Gun policies, following mass shootings in Buffalo, the Texas town of Uvalde and elsewhere, and the Supreme Court’s June 23 ruling striking down a New York law that placed strict limits on carrying guns outside the home, were ranked as the top issue by 10 percent of voters — far higher than has been typical of nationwide polls in recent years. The issue was of even greater importance to Black and Hispanic voters, ranking roughly the same as inflation and the cost of living, the survey found.

The coronavirus pandemic, which so thoroughly disrupted life at the end of the Trump administration and over the first year of Mr. Biden’s presidency, has largely receded from voters’ minds, the survey found. In an open-ended question, fewer than one percent of voters named the virus as the nation’s most important problem.

When Mr. Biden won in 2020, he made a point of trying to make inroads among ***working-class*** white voters who had abandoned the Democratic Party in droves in the Trump era. But whatever crossover appeal Mr. Biden once had appears diminished. His job approval rating among white voters without college degrees was a stark 20 percent.

John Waldron, a 69-year-old registered Republican and retired machinist in Schenectady, N.Y., voted for Mr. Biden in 2020. Today, he said, he regrets it and plans to vote Republican in 2024. “I thought he was going to do something for this country, but now he’s doing nothing,” Mr. Waldron said.

Like others, he expressed worries about Mr. Biden’s age and verbal flubs. On Friday, a clip of Mr. Biden at an event announcing an executive order on abortion went viral when he stumbled into saying “terminate the presidency” instead of “pregnancy,” for instance.

“You ever see him on TV?” Mr. Waldron said, comparing the president to zombies. “That’s what he looks like.”

Mr. Biden’s base, in 2020 and now, remains Black voters. They delivered the president a 62 percent job-approval rating — higher marks than any other race or ethnicity, age group or education level. But even among that constituency, there are serious signs of weakening. On the question of renominating Mr. Biden in 2024, slightly more Black Democratic voters said they wanted a different candidate than said they preferred Mr. Biden.

“Anybody could be doing a better job than what they’re doing right now,” said Clifton Heard, a 44-year-old maintenance specialist in Foley, Ala.

An independent, he said he voted for Mr. Biden in 2020 but is disillusioned over the state of the economy and the spiraling price of gas, and is now reconsidering Mr. Trump.

“I understand that they’ve got a tough job,” he said of Mr. Biden’s administration. “He wasn’t prepared to do the job.”

The Times/Siena nationwide survey was conducted by telephone using live operators. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 4.1 percentage points. Cross-tabs and methodology are available [*here*](https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/us0722-crosstabs-all/6c241a3f5e5578a2/full.pdf).

Alyce McFadden contributed reporting.

The Times/Siena nationwide survey was conducted by telephone using live operators. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

PHOTOS: Nicole Farrier, a preschool teacher in Michigan, is frustrated by the rising cost of living and wants to see “younger blood.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY ELAINE CROMIE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); John Waldron, a retired machinist and registered Republican from Schenectady, N.Y., regrets that he voted for President Biden. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD BEAVEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Randain Wright, a New Jersey truck driver, says he frequently talks with friends about what he sees as Mr. Biden’s shortcomings. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18)

**Load-Date:** July 17, 2023

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[***For Sanders, Michigan Lifeline Gets Harder to Grab This Time***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YD0-RG91-JBG3-62V1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 9, 2020 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1713 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Martin and Astead W. Herndon

**Body**

Four years ago, Mr. Sanders drew support from some voters who didn't like Hillary Clinton. Joe Biden is poised to do well with black Democrats and college-educated white voters.

DETROIT -- Four years ago, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont scored an upset win over Hillary Clinton in the Michigan Democratic primary, reviving his insurgent candidacy one week after his political prospects dimmed because of Super Tuesday losses.

Now Mr. Sanders finds himself once again urgently in need of a bounce-back victory in Michigan's presidential primary after another disappointing Super Tuesday, this time against former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr.

Mr. Sanders has shaken up his schedule to hold three days of events and rallies in Michigan. He has intensified his attacks on Mr. Biden over trade, a major issue in the state; in remarks in Dearborn on Saturday, he recalled joining picket lines to protest ''disastrous'' trade deals. And his campaign arranged an event in Flint on Saturday night for the explicit purpose of Mr. Sanders making his case to black voters, who have largely favored Mr. Biden so far. The Flint event mostly drew white voters, though, and Mr. Sanders mostly reiterated his stump speech.

As Mr. Biden now attempts to leverage his Super Tuesday success and build momentum, Mr. Sanders may face even longer odds in Michigan than he did in 2016. The state that Mr. Sanders last week called ''very, very important'' suddenly looks forbidding for him.

Mr. Biden, despite having a thin operation in Michigan, appears likely to do well with black Democrats and college-educated white voters, two groups that handed him decisive margins in Virginia, North Carolina and several other states on Super Tuesday. And the exit polling and voting trends in some of those states indicate that Mr. Sanders has declined in strength with ***working-class*** white voters, who, uneasy with Mrs. Clinton in 2016, delivered him landslide wins across much of central and northern Michigan that year.

Michigan, with its 125 delegates, is the most populous state to vote on Tuesday, and it is the first of the big Midwestern battlegrounds to cast ballots -- a general election trophy that President Trump painfully pulled from the Democratic column in 2016 with a narrow win. But Michigan also could amount to a bellwether for the rest of the Democratic primary race this spring.

With Mr. Biden appearing strong in the South and Mr. Sanders winning in the West, the industrial Midwest could effectively determine the nomination. And if Mr. Sanders can't win in Michigan, he may struggle when Ohio and Illinois vote on March 17 and Wisconsin on April 7, while also undercutting his claims about expanding the electorate in some of the most pivotal general election swing states.

''Michigan is an important state to do well in because the issues facing residents here are issues we see across the country, so a strong message and showing here will be extremely helpful for the nomination,'' said Representative Rashida Tlaib, one of Mr. Sanders's most prominent supporters in the state.

Recognizing the stakes here, Mr. Sanders is assailing Mr. Biden for his support of what he called ''disastrous trade agreements like Nafta.'' And his campaign is airing a commercial in the manufacturing-heavy state that features a former autoworker highlighting the former vice president's lack of regret for supporting the pact while pointing out that Mr. Sanders has opposed free trade deals.

As he addressed supporters in Dearborn, Mr. Sanders devoted about a third of his stump speech to attacking Mr. Biden, lashing him not only on trade but also over entitlement programs, support for the war in Iraq and a willingness to take donations from wealthy donors.

''Our campaign and our administration is about representing the working families in the country,'' Mr. Sanders said.

Abdul El-Sayed, a Sanders supporter who ran for governor in 2018, said he believed that Michigan Democrats would see clear distinctions between the two candidates.

''Free trade helped decimate those manufacturing jobs -- Bernie has always been against it, Biden has been for it,'' he said.

But recent election trends in Michigan are not encouraging for Mr. Sanders. In 2018, Michigan Democrats rallied behind a number of moderates -- most notably Gretchen Whitmer in the governor's race, and Haley Stevens and Elissa Slotkin in congressional races -- and ended up winning Republican-held seats and loosening the G.O.P.'s grip on the state.

Mr. El-Sayed, who ran against Ms. Whitmer for governor on progressive issues like ''Medicare for all,'' enjoyed Mr. Sanders's support and a flood of news media attention in 2018, but did not capture a single county in that primary. Ms. Whitmer, a former Democratic leader of the State Senate whose most memorable vow was to ''fix the damn roads,'' beat him by nearly 22 points.

While the race was somewhat competitive in Detroit and around Ann Arbor, home of the University of Michigan, Ms. Whitmer ran up enormous margins across much of rural Michigan.

''The Whitmer primary victory over El-Sayed paints a clear road map for Biden over Bernie,'' said Eric Goldman, who ran Ms. Whitmer's campaign. ''Biden will excel where Whitmer won big plus he'll run up the score with black voters.''

Mr. Sanders's candidacy may in fact hinge on whether he's able to perform better with African-Americans in the Midwest than he has in the South -- and if he can replicate his strength with ***working-class*** white voters who abandoned Mrs. Clinton in the primary and general election. Mr. Biden's supporters, in turn, believe that he is better positioned than Mrs. Clinton was, including with union members who like the former vice president and don't want their health insurance to change under a Medicare for all system.

''The connection with the workers here is at a completely different level,'' said former Mayor Mike Duggan of Detroit, a Biden supporter, noting the former vice president's support for the auto industry during the Great Recession. ''We have a candidate who I think will bring the traditional Democratic coalition back together.''

Also lifting Mr. Biden in Michigan is some of what helped him going into the primary last Tuesday in Virginia, where many of the state's leading Democrats endorsed him in the run-up to the balloting. Ms. Whitmer, Ms. Slotkin and Ms. Stevens all threw their support behind Mr. Biden this past week.

In an acknowledgment that his campaign would be grievously wounded if he did not rebound in Michigan, Mr. Sanders canceled an event scheduled for Mississippi, which also votes Tuesday, to spend more time here. And he has abruptly started to attack Mr. Biden on abortion rights, not an issue the democratic socialist typically uses against his intraparty rivals.

It is clear why Mr. Sanders is scrambling -- the Super Tuesday results carried ominous signs for his candidacy. In next-door Minnesota, for example, Mr. Biden did not visit once but still defeated Mr. Sanders 44-32 among white voters without a college degree, according to exit polls.

Representative Dan Kildee, a longtime Michigan Democrat who has not endorsed a candidate in the presidential race, said Mr. Sanders was in a far weaker position going into Tuesday than he was four years ago. Voters then wanted to slow Mrs. Clinton's front-running campaign and did not feel the level of Trump-inspired alarm that they do now.

''Those factors conspired against Hillary much to the benefit of Bernie,'' Mr. Kildee said. ''The feeling that she was inevitable, and his supporters were much more animated. And there was just, among some, a lack of enthusiasm for her campaign.''

Now, Mr. Kildee said, Mr. Biden is experiencing a surge of enthusiasm because of ''the absolute commitment to beat Donald Trump.''

Brandon Dillon, a former chairman of the Michigan Democratic Party, said, ''I know people personally who voted for Bernie because they wanted to send a message to Hillary.''

Now, Mr. Dillon said, Mr. Sanders isn't ''a novelty anymore.''

''People just want to want to win because we know who our opponent is and what he can do if he gets another four years,'' he continued.

Some of the more Clinton-friendly precincts from 2016 may be even more hospitable to Mr. Biden now that Michael R. Bloomberg, the former mayor of New York, is out of the presidential race. Polls taken while Mr. Bloomberg was still running showed Mr. Biden leading but with the former mayor of New York, who poured tens of millions of dollars into the state, also receiving some votes.

Yet now that Mr. Bloomberg has withdrawn and endorsed Mr. Biden, some of his supporters appear poised to migrate to the former vice president; a Detroit News survey taken before Super Tuesday found 49 percent of Mr. Bloomberg's supporters indicating that Mr. Biden was their second choice, while just 18 percent said Mr. Sanders was their second choice.

These Bloomberg-to-Biden voters could prove especially crucial in the Detroit area, which was where Mrs. Clinton ran the strongest. In suburban Oakland County, for example, Mrs. Clinton won by about five points in 2016. But after Mr. Biden's commanding margins in similar upscale communities on Super Tuesday, many Michigan Democrats expect him to win by far more there.

''Those women are voting for Joe Biden against Bernie Sanders and they'll vote for him again against Donald Trump,'' State Senator Adam Hollier said of the suburban women who helped power the Democrats in the midterms, and who surged to the polls last Tuesday.

Just as worrisome for Mr. Sanders, the same Detroit News poll had Mr. Biden winning 40 percent of black voters while Mr. Sanders was taking just 16 percent.

Mr. Hollier, who initially supported former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., represents a legislative district in and around Detroit that includes a number of ***working-class*** black neighborhoods as well as some of the most affluent enclaves in the state. He said, ''everybody in my circle is coalescing around Joe Biden.''

At first, he said, black and white voters alike were ''looking for President Obama -- but instead we went with the one we've always felt comfortable with.''

Lisa Lerer contributed reporting from Dearborn, Mich.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/08/us/politics/michigan-primary-biden-sanders.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/08/us/politics/michigan-primary-biden-sanders.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A rally for Senator Bernie Sanders in Detroit in October. He won Michigan's Democratic primary in 2016 after Super Tuesday losses. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON FARRAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Democrats Sour on Biden, Citing Age and Economy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65WW-B4P1-JBG3-63J0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 11, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1758 words

**Byline:** By Shane Goldmacher

**Body**

With the country gripped by a pervasive sense of pessimism, the president is hemorrhaging support.

President Biden is facing an alarming level of doubt from inside his own party, with 64 percent of Democratic voters saying they would prefer a new standard-bearer in the 2024 presidential campaign, according to a New York Times/Siena College poll, as voters nationwide have soured on his leadership, giving him a meager 33 percent job-approval rating.

Widespread concerns about the economy and inflation have helped turn the national mood decidedly dark, both on Mr. Biden and the trajectory of the nation. More than three-quarters of registered voters see the United States moving in the wrong direction, a pervasive sense of pessimism that spans every corner of the country, every age range and racial group, cities, suburbs and rural areas, as well as both political parties.

Only 13 percent of American voters said the nation was on the right track -- the lowest point in Times polling since the depths of the financial crisis more than a decade ago.

For Mr. Biden, that bleak national outlook has pushed his job approval rating to a perilously low point. Republican opposition is predictably overwhelming, but more than two-thirds of independents also now disapprove of the president's performance, and nearly half disapprove strongly. Among fellow Democrats his approval rating stands at 70 percent, a relatively low figure for a president, especially heading into the 2022 midterms when Mr. Biden needs to rally Democrats to the polls to maintain control of Congress.

In a sign of deep vulnerability and of unease among what is supposed to be his political base, only 26 percent of Democratic voters said the party should renominate him in 2024.

Mr. Biden has said repeatedly that he intends to run for re-election in 2024. At 79, he is already the oldest president in American history, and concerns about his age ranked at the top of the list for Democratic voters who want the party to find an alternative.

The backlash against Mr. Biden and desire to move in a new direction were particularly acute among younger voters. In the survey, 94 percent of Democrats under the age of 30 said they would prefer a different presidential nominee.

''I'm just going to come out and say it: I want younger blood,'' said Nicole Farrier, a 38-year-old preschool teacher in East Tawas, a small town in northern Michigan. ''I am so tired of all old people running our country. I don't want someone knocking on death's door.''

Ms. Farrier, a Democrat who voted for Mr. Biden in 2020, said she had hoped he might have been able to do more to heal the nation's divisions, but now, as a single mother, she is preoccupied with what she described as crippling increases in her cost of living. ''I went from living a comfortable lifestyle to I can't afford anything anymore,'' she said.

Jobs and the economy were the most important problem facing the country according to 20 percent of voters, with inflation and the cost of living (15 percent) close behind as prices are rising at the fastest rate in a generation. One in 10 voters named the state of American democracy and political division as the most pressing issue, about the same share who named gun policies, after several high-profile mass shootings.

More than 75 percent of voters in the poll said the economy was ''extremely important'' to them. And yet only 1 percent rated economic conditions as excellent. Among those who are typically working age -- voters 18 to 64 years old -- only 6 percent said the economy was good or excellent, while 93 percent rated it poor or only fair.

The White House has tried to trumpet strong job growth, including on Friday when Mr. Biden declared that he had overseen ''the fastest and strongest jobs recovery in American history.'' But the Times/Siena poll showed a vast disconnect between those boasts, and the strength of some economic indicators, and the financial reality that most Americans feel they are confronting.

''We used to spend $200 a week just going out to have fun, or going and buying extra groceries if we needed it, and now we can't even do that,'' said Kelly King, a former factory worker in Greensburg, Ind., who is currently sidelined because of a back injury. ''We're barely able to buy what we need.''

Ms. King, 38, said she didn't know if Mr. Biden was necessarily to blame for the spiking prices of gas and groceries but felt he should be doing more to help. ''I feel like he hasn't really spoken much about it,'' Ms. King said. ''He hasn't done what I think he's capable of doing as president to help the American people. As a Democrat, I figured he would really be on our side and put us back on the right track. And I just feel like he's not.''

Now, she said, she is hoping Republicans take over Congress in November to course-correct.

One glimmer of good news for Mr. Biden is that the survey showed him with a narrow edge in a hypothetical rematch in 2024 with former President Donald J. Trump: 44 percent to 41 percent.

The result is a reminder of one of Mr. Biden's favorite aphorisms: ''Don't compare me to the Almighty, compare me to the alternative.'' The poll showed that Democratic misgivings about Mr. Biden seemed to mostly melt away when presented with a choice between him and Mr. Trump: 92 percent of Democrats said they would stick with Mr. Biden.

Randain Wright, a 41-year-old truck driver in Ocean Township, N.J., is typical of these voters. He said he talked frequently with friends about Mr. Biden's shortcomings. ''He's just not aggressive enough in getting his agenda done,'' Mr. Wright lamented. In contrast, he said, ''Trump wasn't afraid to get his people in line.''

But while he would prefer a different nominee in 2024, Mr. Wright said he still wouldn't consider voting Republican in 2024 if faced with a Biden-Trump rematch.

On the whole, voters appeared to like Mr. Biden more than they like his performance as president, with 39 percent saying they have a favorable impression of him -- six percentage points higher than his job approval.

In saying they wanted a different nominee in 2024, Democrats cited a variety of reasons, with the most in an open-ended question citing his age (33 percent), followed closely by unhappiness with how he is doing the job. About one in eight Democrats just said that they wanted someone new, and one in 10 said he was not progressive enough. Smaller fractions expressed doubts about his ability to win and his mental acuity.

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Typically, voters aligned with the party in power -- Democrats now hold the House, the Senate and the White House -- are more upbeat about the nation's direction. But only 27 percent of Democrats saw the country as on the right track. And with the fall of Roe, there was a notable gender gap among Democrats: Only 20 percent of Democratic women said the country was moving in the right direction, compared with 39 percent of Democratic men.

Overall, abortion rated as the most important issue for 5 percent of voters: 1 percent of men, 9 percent of women.

Gun policies, following mass shootings in Buffalo, Uvalde, Tex., and elsewhere, and the Supreme Court's June 23 ruling striking down a New York law that placed strict limits on carrying guns outside the home, were ranked as the top issue by 10 percent of voters -- far higher than has been typical of nationwide polls in recent years. The issue was of even greater importance to Black and Hispanic voters, ranking roughly the same as inflation and the cost of living, the survey found.

The coronavirus pandemic, which so thoroughly disrupted life at the end of the Trump administration and over the first year of Mr. Biden's presidency, has largely receded from voters' minds, the survey found. In an open-ended question, fewer than one percent of voters named the virus as the nation's most important problem.

When Mr. Biden won in 2020, he made a point of trying to make inroads among ***working-class*** white voters who had abandoned the Democratic Party in droves in the Trump era. But whatever crossover appeal Mr. Biden once had appears diminished. His job approval rating among white voters without college degrees was a stark 20 percent.

John Waldron, a 69-year-old registered Republican and retired machinist in Schenectady, N.Y., voted for Mr. Biden in 2020. Today, he said, he regrets it and plans to vote Republican in 2024. ''I thought he was going to do something for this country, but now he's doing nothing,'' Mr. Waldron said.

Like others, he expressed worries about Mr. Biden's age and verbal flubs. On Friday, a clip of Mr. Biden at an event announcing an executive order on abortion went viral when he stumbled into saying ''terminate the presidency'' instead of ''pregnancy,'' for instance.

''You ever see him on TV?'' Mr. Waldron said, comparing the president to zombies. ''That's what he looks like.''

Mr. Biden's base, in 2020 and now, remains Black voters. They delivered the president a 62 percent job-approval rating -- higher marks than any other race or ethnicity, age group or education level. But even among that constituency, there are serious signs of weakening. On the question of renominating Mr. Biden in 2024, slightly more Black Democratic voters said they wanted a different candidate than said they preferred Mr. Biden.

''Anybody could be doing a better job than what they're doing right now,'' said Clifton Heard, a 44-year-old maintenance specialist in Foley, Ala.

An independent, he said he voted for Mr. Biden in 2020 but is disillusioned over the state of the economy and the spiraling price of gas, and is now reconsidering Mr. Trump.

''I understand that they've got a tough job,'' he said of Mr. Biden's administration. ''He wasn't prepared to do the job.''

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Alyce McFadden contributed reporting.The Times/Siena nationwide survey was conducted by telephone using live operators. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 4.1 percentage points.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/us/politics/biden-approval-polling-2024.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/us/politics/biden-approval-polling-2024.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Nicole Farrier, a preschool teacher in Michigan, is frustrated by the rising cost of living and wants to see ''younger blood.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY ELAINE CROMIE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

John Waldron, a retired machinist and registered Republican from Schenectady, N.Y., regrets that he voted for President Biden. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD BEAVEN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Randain Wright, a New Jersey truck driver, says he frequently talks with friends about what he sees as Mr. Biden's shortcomings. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRYAN ANSELM FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A18)

**Load-Date:** July 11, 2022

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[***Macron and Le Pen Parties Both Battered in French Regional Elections***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6314-WGJ1-DXY4-X533-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 27, 2021 Sunday 15:29 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 850 words

**Byline:** Roger Cohen

**Highlight:** The returns suggest the presidential election next year may be more wide open than it seemed.

**Body**

The returns suggest the presidential election next year may be more wide open than it seemed.

PARIS — It had seemed inevitable: another face-off in next year’s French presidential election between [*President Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/14/world/europe/france-macron-vaccination-coercion.html) and [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html), the leader of the rightist, anti-immigrant National Rally Party.

But after nationwide regional elections on Sunday, a rerun of [*the second round*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/07/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-marine-le-pen.html) of the 2017 election appeared far less certain as both Mr. [*Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html)&#39;s centrist party, La République en Marche, and Ms. Le Pen’s party failed to win a single one of France’s 13 mainland regions.

The defeat was particularly crushing for Ms. Le Pen. She had portrayed the regional elections as a bellwether of her rise to power.

In the southern region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur, the one region where the National Rally led in[*the first round of voting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/20/world/europe/france-regional-elections.html) a week ago, a center-right candidate, Renaud Muselier, defeated the National Rally candidate by a comfortable margin, taking about 57 percent of the vote, according to preliminary results.

The National Rally has never governed a French region, and on Sunday, Ms. Le Pen accused every other party of forming “unnatural alliances” and “doing everything to prevent us from showing the French people our capacity to run a regional executive.”

Stanislas Guerini, the director general of Mr. Macron’s party, said the results were “a disappointment for the presidential majority.”

They were also no surprise.

Since cobbling together his party as the vehicle for his ascent in 2017, Mr. Macron has shown little interest in its fortunes, relying instead on his personal authority and the aura of the presidency. The party, often known simply as En Marche, has never managed to establish itself on the regional or local level, despite controlling Parliament.

Turnout for the election was very low. Only about 33 percent of French people voted, compared with 55.6 percent as recently as 2015, a clear sign of disgruntlement with politics as usual and weariness after the country’s long battle with the coronavirus pandemic.

This low participation, and the fact the presidential election is still 10 months away, makes extrapolating from the regional results hazardous. Still, it marked a shift. A headline in the left-wing Libération newspaper above an image of Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen said: “2022: What if it wasn’t them?”

If it is not them, it could be Xavier Bertrand, a center-right presidential candidate who emerged as the chief winner today.

A no-nonsense former insurance agent in the northern town of Saint-Quentin, Mr. Bertrand, who has already announced he will run for president next year, won the Hauts-de-France region handily, with about 53 percent of the vote.

His victory came despite strenuous efforts by Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen to make an impression in the region, which is Mr. Bertrand’s stronghold.

“This result gives me the force to go out and meet all French people,” Mr. Bertrand said. “There is one necessary condition for the recovery of our country: the re-establishment of order and respect.”

Mr. Bertrand, who served as health and then labor minister in the government of Nicolas Sarkozy, did not go to one of France’s elite schools and likes to portray himself as a man of the people sensitive to the concerns of the French ***working class***. He is widely seen as an effective politician of consuming ambition. Another former minister in the Sarkozy government, Rachida Dati, once said of Mr. Bertrand: “He is the one with the most hunger.”

Although he left the main center-right party, Les Républicains, a few years ago, Mr. Bertrand remains part of their conservative family and has a visceral hatred for Ms. Le Pen’s National Rally, which he insists on calling by its former name, the National Front.

In a sense the election marked the revival of traditional parties: Les Républicains on the right and the Socialists on the left. Left-wing coalitions, usually including the Socialists, hung onto power in five regions they already governed.

Security has emerged as a primary concern of French people ahead of next year’s election, after a series of Islamist terrorist attacks over the past nine months. This has posed difficulties for a fragmented French left, which has appeared to have few answers to security concerns and no presidential candidate it can unite around. But the regional elections suggested it is far too early to dismiss the left entirely.

For Mr. Macron, who has embarked on a nationwide tour to reconnect with the French people after the worst of the pandemic, the results suggest that his recent focus on winning right-wing votes that might have gone to Ms. Le Pen may need to be reconsidered.

The presidential election is more wide open than it looked. The French people are more disgruntled than they appeared. More of the same — and a 2022 contest between Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen would be just that — may not be what they are looking for after all.

Aurelien Breeden and Daphné Anglès contributed reporting.

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron voting on Sunday. His party, En Marche, did not win a regional race. (POOL PHOTO BY LUDOVIC MARIN)

**Load-Date:** October 12, 2021

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[***The No. 1 Skill Eric Adams Is Looking For (It’s Not on a Résumé)***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64B5-TB41-DXY4-X2HT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 18, 2021 Saturday 00:29 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1259 words

**Byline:** Dana Rubinstein

**Highlight:** The mayor-elect of New York City wants his top officials to be emotionally intelligent, characterizing it as his “No. 1 criteria.”

**Body**

The mayor-elect of New York City wants his top officials to be emotionally intelligent, characterizing it as his “No. 1 criteria.”

When Eric Adams was [*looking*](https://twitter.com/ericadamsfornyc/status/1471309036662538244) for someone to lead the nation’s largest police force, he considered some of the typical credentials, like relevant work experience and educational attainment. But he ranked another trait high on that list: “emotional intelligence.”

When he [*named*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/nyregion/david-banks-nyc-school-chancellor.html) David Banks as chancellor of the nation’s largest school system, Mr. Adams suggested that Mr. Banks exemplified emotional intelligence, something he argued would gird the new schools chief for the “battle” ahead. And when he named someone on Thursday to run New York City’s troubled jail system, he again [*said*](https://fb.watch/9Xchtk1i6e/) [*his pick, Louis Molina,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/16/nyregion/louis-molina-nyc-jails-commissioner.html) was “emotionally intelligent.”

Mr. Adams, the mayor-elect of New York City, says that attribute is a prerequisite to winning a job in the highest echelons of city government. It is a phrase that Mr. Adams said New Yorkers should get used to hearing — a term that, divorced from its academic underpinnings, is something akin to “people skills.”

With less than three weeks before he takes office, Mr. Adams must still fill the vast majority of his top administration posts. But he has been consistent in arguing that those ranks must be filled by the “emotionally intelligent,” deliberately downplaying more commonplace credentials, like academic achievement and government experience.

“No. 1 criteria, I say this over and over again and some people don’t hear it: emotional intelligence,” Mr. Adams said on Election Day, referring to his qualifications for first deputy mayor. “We hire people based on their academics, we look at their degrees. We look at their prior experience. No one understands the impact of just being emotionally intelligent and really understanding the compassion of people and what they are going through.”

“If you don’t understand going through Covid, losing your home, living in a shelter, maybe losing your job, going through a health care crisis, if you don’t empathize with that person, you will never give them the services that they need,” he added.

Emotional intelligence is a notion rooted in the academic work of psychologist Peter Salovey, now the president of Yale University, and John D. Mayer, now a professor of psychology at the University of New Hampshire. Professor Mayer has [*described emotional intelligence*](https://hbr.org/2004/01/leading-by-feel) as the “ability to accurately perceive your own and others’ emotions; to understand the signals that emotions send about relationships; and to manage your own and others’ emotions.”

But the phrase did not enter the realm of pop psychology until 1995, when the psychologist Daniel Goleman, then a New York Times science reporter, propagated the concept in his book “Emotional Intelligence.” That same year, Time magazine ran [*a cover story*](http://content.time.com/time/magazine/0,9263,7601951002,00.html) on the concept, arguing that “emotional intelligence may be the best predictor of success in life.”

Mr. Adams has long evinced disdain for New York’s establishment elite, which is predominantly white and centered in Manhattan and brownstone Brooklyn, and its definition of what success looks like. His reliance on the unconventional-for-government “emotional intelligence” metric reflects the outlook of a Black man who grew up in a ***working-class*** environment in Queens, rising from police captain to state senator, to Brooklyn borough president and then mayor-elect.

“Don’t tell me about your Ivy League degrees,” he said [*this month*](https://fb.watch/9Xb4bvG87S/), when appointing Mr. Banks schools chancellor. “Don’t tell me about where you went to school and how important you think you are. Don’t tell me about what you are going to do because of your philosophical theories on understanding children. I don’t want to hear about your academic intelligence. I want to know about your emotional intelligence.”

The concept and importance of emotional intelligence has continued to spark serious academic study, even as it has influenced management theory. It has also spawned a cottage industry of consultants purporting to be experts in the measurement of a person’s “emotional quotient,” a related concept. Some critics [*argue*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/04/19/the-repressive-politics-of-emotional-intelligence) that the idea has devolved into a “self-help doctrine.”

David R. Caruso, a psychologist who specializes in the study of emotional intelligence and has worked with Professors Mayer and Salovey, said it has gotten to the point where a person’s definition of emotional intelligence has become a Rorschach test.

“When you ask people, ‘What does that mean and how do you hire to that?’ that’s where folks slow down and either don’t answer or really indicate what they mean,” he said. “And even if they say ‘people skills,’ what is that? In our work, we’re pretty explicit.”

On Thursday, after highlighting the concept on [*Bloomberg TV,*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-03/mayor-elect-eric-adams-to-explore-nyc-coin-similar-to-miami-s) “[*The Brian Lehrer Show*](https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/bl/segments/mayor-elect-eric-adams)” and in [*The Daily News*](https://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/new-york-elections-government/ny-nyc-mayoral-race-eric-adams-nypd-police-commissioner-20211025-n66a2srzlbfyjh7u47fce3z2oi-story.html), Mr. Adams offered his own extended definition.

“My criteria for those who are coming into my office is that they must be able to manage their emotion, manage how they handle themselves, be able to interact with the very difficult environment that they are about to encounter,” Mr. Adams said.

In an email, Mr. Caruso said Mr. Adams’s response was “one of the best lay definitions I’ve seen!”

But Mr. Caruso also cautioned that managing emotions does not mean repressing them, so much as channeling them into constructive behaviors.

“It can be helpful and productive to be sad at times so you focus on details or comfort those who have experienced a loss, unfortunately a part of being chief of police or mayor,” he said. “It can be helpful to have anxiety to motivate you.”

It is desirable for executives to hire individuals who exhibit evidence of emotional intelligence, according to Mr. Caruso and Mr. Goleman.

“There’s now a large body of research showing that this skill set has positive impacts on a leader’s ability to get the best performance, to keep people engaged, and to set a positive mood,” Mr. Goleman said.

Evan Thies, a spokesman for Mr. Adams, declined to say how the incoming administration was screening for emotional intelligence.

Three people on Mr. Adams’s transition team said they were unaware of the circulation of any particular materials about the concept.

There are assessment tools to measure emotional intelligence, Mr. Caruso said, though they are rarely used in hiring. More commonly, interviewers ask questions designed to elicit signs of emotional intelligence.

They might ask, for example, for people to describe a time they were surprised by someone else’s reaction, or to consider a significant interpersonal conflict that they have experienced professionally, and to describe who was involved, how it made them feel, how others felt, and the like.

Since job applicants are primed to perform, Mr. Goleman recommended speaking confidentially to individuals who have worked with the person in the past.

On Thursday, at the news conference where he introduced Mr. Molina as his pick for correction commissioner, Mr. Adams suggested emotional intelligence might also mean anticipating the new mayor’s own needs.

As he was speaking, one of his aides brought him a bottle of water.

“That was a very emotionally intelligent action you just did,” Mr. Adams said to the aide, smiling. “He saw that my voice was hoarse.”

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

Nicholas Fandos contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Eric Adams, left, said that Louis Molina, the next jails commissioner, had emotional intelligence.; In naming David Banks, center, the new schools chancellor, Eric Adams, praised his people skills. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE SANDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Bernie Sanders Won Michigan in 2016. Tuesday’s Primary Looks Much Tougher.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YCK-4781-JBG3-64SH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2020 Sunday 18:25 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1728 words

**Byline:** Jonathan Martin and Astead W. Herndon

**Highlight:** Four years ago, Mr. Sanders drew support from some voters who didn’t like Hillary Clinton. Joe Biden is poised to do well with black Democrats and college-educated white voters.

**Body**

Four years ago, Mr. Sanders drew support from some voters who didn’t like Hillary Clinton. Joe Biden is poised to do well with black Democrats and college-educated white voters.

DETROIT — Four years ago, Senator [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) of Vermont scored   [*an upset win*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) over Hillary Clinton in the Michigan Democratic primary, reviving his insurgent candidacy one week after his political prospects dimmed because of Super Tuesday losses.

Now Mr. Sanders finds himself once again urgently in need of a bounce-back victory in Michigan’s presidential primary after [*another disappointing Super Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html), this time against former Vice President   [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html)

Mr. Sanders [*has shaken up*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) his schedule to hold three days of events and rallies in Michigan. He has intensified his attacks on Mr. Biden over trade, a major issue in the state; in remarks in Dearborn on Saturday, he recalled joining picket lines to protest “disastrous” trade deals. And his campaign arranged an event in Flint on Saturday night for the explicit purpose of Mr. Sanders making his case to black voters, who have largely favored Mr. Biden so far. The Flint event mostly drew white voters, though, and Mr. Sanders mostly reiterated his stump speech.

As Mr. Biden now attempts to leverage his Super Tuesday success and build momentum, Mr. Sanders may face even longer odds in Michigan than he did in 2016. The state that Mr. Sanders last week called “very, very important” suddenly looks forbidding for him.

Mr. Biden, despite having a thin operation in Michigan, appears likely to do well with black Democrats and college-educated white voters, two groups that handed him decisive margins in Virginia, North Carolina and several other states on Super Tuesday. And the exit polling and voting trends in some of those states indicate that Mr. Sanders has declined in strength with ***working-class*** white voters, who, uneasy with Mrs. Clinton in 2016, delivered him landslide wins across much of central and northern Michigan that year.

Michigan, with its 125 delegates, is the most populous state to vote on Tuesday, and it is the first of the big Midwestern battlegrounds to cast ballots — a general election trophy that President Trump painfully pulled from the Democratic column in 2016 with a narrow win. But Michigan also could amount to a bellwether for the rest of the Democratic primary race this spring.

With Mr. Biden appearing strong in the South and Mr. Sanders winning in the West, the industrial Midwest could effectively determine the nomination. And if Mr. Sanders can’t win in Michigan, he may struggle when Ohio and Illinois vote on March 17 and Wisconsin on April 7, while also undercutting his claims about expanding the electorate in some of the most pivotal general election swing states.

“Michigan is an important state to do well in because the issues facing residents here are issues we see across the country, so a strong message and showing here will be extremely helpful for the nomination,” said Representative Rashida Tlaib, one of Mr. Sanders’s most prominent supporters in the state.

Recognizing the stakes here, Mr. Sanders is assailing Mr. Biden for his support of what he called “disastrous trade agreements like Nafta.” And his campaign is airing a commercial in the manufacturing-heavy state that features a former autoworker highlighting the former vice president’s lack of regret for supporting the pact while pointing out that Mr. Sanders has opposed free trade deals.

As he addressed supporters in Dearborn, Mr. Sanders devoted about a third of his stump speech to attacking Mr. Biden, lashing him not only on trade but also over entitlement programs, support for the war in Iraq and a willingness to take donations from wealthy donors.

“Our campaign and our administration is about representing the working families in the country,” Mr. Sanders said.

Abdul El-Sayed, a Sanders supporter who ran for governor in 2018, said he believed that Michigan Democrats would see clear distinctions between the two candidates.

“Free trade helped decimate those manufacturing jobs — Bernie has always been against it, Biden has been for it,” he said.

But recent election trends in Michigan are not encouraging for Mr. Sanders. In 2018, Michigan Democrats rallied behind a number of moderates — most notably Gretchen Whitmer in the governor’s race, and Haley Stevens and Elissa Slotkin in congressional races — and ended up winning Republican-held seats and loosening the G.O.P.’s grip on the state.

Mr. El-Sayed, who ran against Ms. Whitmer for governor on progressive issues like “Medicare for all,” enjoyed Mr. Sanders’s support and a flood of news media attention in 2018, but did not capture a single county in that primary. Ms. Whitmer, a former Democratic leader of the State Senate whose most memorable vow was to “fix the damn roads,” beat him by nearly 22 points.

While the race was somewhat competitive in Detroit and around Ann Arbor, home of the University of Michigan, Ms. Whitmer ran up enormous margins across much of rural Michigan.

“The Whitmer primary victory over El-Sayed paints a clear road map for Biden over Bernie,” said Eric Goldman, who ran Ms. Whitmer’s campaign. “Biden will excel where Whitmer won big plus he’ll run up the score with black voters.”

Mr. Sanders’s candidacy may in fact hinge on whether he’s able to perform better with African-Americans in the Midwest than he has in the South — and if he can replicate his strength with ***working-class*** white voters who abandoned Mrs. Clinton in the primary and general election. Mr. Biden’s supporters, in turn, believe that he is better positioned than Mrs. Clinton was, including with union members who like the former vice president and don’t want their health insurance to change under a Medicare for all system.

“The connection with the workers here is at a completely different level,” said Mayor Mike Duggan of Detroit, a Biden supporter, noting the former vice president’s support for the auto industry during the Great Recession. “We have a candidate who I think will bring the traditional Democratic coalition back together.”

Also lifting Mr. Biden in Michigan is some of what helped him going into the primary last Tuesday in Virginia, where many of the state’s leading Democrats endorsed him in the run-up to the balloting. Ms. Whitmer, Ms. Slotkin and Ms. Stevens all threw their support behind Mr. Biden this past week.

In an acknowledgment that his campaign would be grievously wounded if he did not rebound in Michigan, Mr. Sanders canceled an event scheduled for Mississippi, which also votes Tuesday, to spend more time here. And he has abruptly started to attack Mr. Biden on abortion rights, not an issue the democratic socialist typically uses against his intraparty rivals.

It is clear why Mr. Sanders is scrambling — the Super Tuesday results carried ominous signs for his candidacy. In next-door Minnesota, for example, Mr. Biden did not visit once but still defeated Mr. Sanders 44-32 among white voters without a college degree, according to exit polls.

Representative Dan Kildee, a longtime Michigan Democrat who has not endorsed a candidate in the presidential race, said Mr. Sanders was in a far weaker position going into Tuesday than he was four years ago. Voters then wanted to slow Mrs. Clinton’s front-running campaign and did not feel the level of Trump-inspired alarm that they do now.

“Those factors conspired against Hillary much to the benefit of Bernie,” Mr. Kildee said. “The feeling that she was inevitable, and his supporters were much more animated. And there was just, among some, a lack of enthusiasm for her campaign.”

Now, Mr. Kildee said, Mr. Biden is experiencing a surge of enthusiasm because of “the absolute commitment to beat Donald Trump.”

Brandon Dillon, a former chairman of the Michigan Democratic Party, said, “I know people personally who voted for Bernie because they wanted to send a message to Hillary.”

Now, Mr. Dillon said, Mr. Sanders isn’t “a novelty anymore.”

“People just want to want to win because we know who our opponent is and what he can do if he gets another four years,” he continued.

Some of the more Clinton-friendly precincts from 2016 may be even more hospitable to Mr. Biden now that Michael R. Bloomberg, the former mayor of New York, is out of the presidential race. Polls taken while Mr. Bloomberg was still running showed Mr. Biden leading but with the former mayor of New York, who poured tens of millions of dollars into the state, also receiving some votes.

Yet now that Mr. Bloomberg has withdrawn and endorsed Mr. Biden, some of his supporters appear poised to migrate to the former vice president; a Detroit News survey taken before Super Tuesday found 49 percent of Mr. Bloomberg’s supporters indicating that Mr. Biden was their second choice, while just 18 percent said Mr. Sanders was their second choice.

These Bloomberg-to-Biden voters could prove especially crucial in the Detroit area, which was where Mrs. Clinton ran the strongest. In suburban Oakland County, for example, Mrs. Clinton won by about five points in 2016. But after Mr. Biden’s commanding margins in similar upscale communities on Super Tuesday, many Michigan Democrats expect him to win by far more there.

“Those women are voting for Joe Biden against Bernie Sanders and they’ll vote for him again against Donald Trump,” State Senator Adam Hollier said of the suburban women who helped power the Democrats in the midterms, and who surged to the polls last Tuesday.

Just as worrisome for Mr. Sanders, the same Detroit News poll had Mr. Biden winning 40 percent of black voters while Mr. Sanders was taking just 16 percent.

Mr. Hollier, who initially supported former Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Ind., represents a legislative district in and around Detroit that includes a number of ***working-class*** black neighborhoods as well as some of the most affluent enclaves in the state. He said, “everybody in my circle is coalescing around Joe Biden.”

At first, he said, black and white voters alike were “looking for President Obama — but instead we went with the one we’ve always felt comfortable with.”

Lisa Lerer contributed reporting from Dearborn, Mich.

PHOTO: A rally for Senator Bernie Sanders in Detroit in October. He won Michigan’s Democratic primary in 2016 after Super Tuesday losses. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALLISON FARRAND FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** March 10, 2020

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[***There’s a Reason Trump Loves the Truckers; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64T0-27S1-DXY4-X3S6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 16, 2022 Wednesday 10:39 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3059 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** Populist nationalism may emphasize the importance of borders, but it still transcends them.

**Body**

The truckers’ protest in Ottawa is the latest barrage from the world’s disaffected in the revolt that found expression in the 2016 election of Donald Trump; the 2017 Unite the Right march on Charlottesville, Va.; the rise of QAnon; and the Jan. 6 insurrection in the halls of Congress.

One thing that stands out in the Canadian truckers’ protests against vaccination requirements specifically and the Trudeau government generally is the strong support they are getting from conservative political leaders and media figures in this country.

“We want those great Canadian truckers to know that we are with them all the way,” Trump told rallygoers in Conroe, Texas, on Jan. 29.

“I see they have Trump signs all over the place and I’m proud that they do,” he added.

On Feb. 12, Trump brought it home to America [*during a Fox News*](https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/trump-called-us-tinderbox-said-162911696.html) appearance, “That’s what happens, you can push people so far and our country is a tinderbox too, don’t kid yourself.”

The former president is not alone.

“I hope the truckers do come to America,” Senator Rand Paul, Republican of Kentucky, [*told The Daily Signal*](https://www.dailysignal.com/2022/02/10/exclusive-rand-paul-encourages-truckers-to-come-to-america-and-clog-cities-up/), a conservative website. “Civil disobedience is a time-honored tradition in our country, from slavery to civil rights, you name it. Peaceful protest, clog things up, make people think about the mandates.”

Nor was all this confined to North America. “Ottawa truckers’ convoy galvanizes far right worldwide,” an article in Politico on Feb. 6 declared. “Leading Republicans, right-wing influencers and white supremacist groups have jumped at the chance to promote the standoff in Ottawa to a global audience.”

In “[*Bowling for Fascism*](https://www.zora.uzh.ch/id/eprint/97265/1/ubscenterwp007.pdf): Social Capital and the Rise of the Nazi Party,” a 2017 paper in the Journal of Political Economy, [*Shanker Satyanath*](https://as.nyu.edu/faculty/shanker-satyanath.html) of N.Y.U., [*Nico Voigtländer*](https://www.anderson.ucla.edu/faculty_pages/nico.v/) of U.C.L.A. and [*Hans-Joachim Voth*](http://www.jvoth.com/) of the University of Zurich offer a counterintuitive perspective on the [*spread*](https://qz.com/1774201/the-global-state-of-right-wing-populism-in-2019/) of right-wing organizing in Canada, Hungary, Brazil, India, Poland, Austria and in the United States.

The three authors argue that in the 1930s in Europe:

dense networks of civic associations such as bowling clubs, choirs, and animal breeders went hand in hand with a more rapid rise of the Nazi Party. Towns with one standard deviation higher association density saw at least one-third faster entry. All types of associations — veteran associations and nonmilitary clubs, “bridging” and “bonding” associations — positively predict National Socialist Party entry. Party membership, in turn, predicts electoral success. These results suggest that social capital aided the rise of the Nazi movement that ultimately destroyed Germany’s first democracy.

[*Andrés Rodríguez-Pose*](https://personal.lse.ac.uk/rodrigu1/), [*Neil Lee*](https://www.lse.ac.uk/geography-and-environment/people/academic-staff/neil-lee) and [*Cornelius Lipp*](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Cornelius-Lipp), all of the London School of Economics, pick up this argument in a [*November 2021 paper*](https://academic.oup.com/cjres/article/14/3/457/6375185) on the paradoxical role of social capital in fostering far-right movements. Noting that the “positive view of social capital has, more recently, been challenged,” the three economic geographers write:

The rise in votes for Trump was the result of long-term economic and population decline in areas with strong social capital. This hypothesis is confirmed by the econometric analysis conducted for U.S. counties. Long-term declines in employment and population — rather than in earnings, salaries, or wages — in places with relatively strong social capital propelled Donald Trump to the presidency and almost secured his re-election.

It is, the three authors continue,

precisely the long-term economic and demographic decline of the places that still rely on a relatively strong social capital that is behind the rise of populism in the U.S. Strong but declining communities in parts of the American Rust Belt, the Great Plains and elsewhere reacted at the ballot box to being ignored, neglected and being left behind.

Translated to the present, in economic and culturally besieged communities, the remnants of social capital have been crucial to the mobilization of men and women — mostly men — who chanted, “you will not replace us” and “blood and soil” in Charlottesville, who shot bear spray at police officers on Jan. 6 and who brought Ottawa to its knees for more than two weeks.

In a separate paper, “[*The Rise of Populism and the Revenge of the Places*](https://ppr.lse.ac.uk/articles/10.31389/lseppr.4/),” Rodríguez-Pose argued, “Populism is not the result of persistent poverty. Places that have been chronically poor are not the ones rebelling.” Instead, he continued,

the rise of populism is a tale of how the long-term decline of formerly prosperous places, disadvantaged by processes that have rendered them exposed and almost expendable, has triggered frustration and anger. In turn, voters in these so-called “places that don’t matter” have sought their revenge at the ballot box.

In an email, Rodríguez-Pose wrote:

Social capital in the U.S. has been declining for a long time. Associationism and the feeling of community are no longer what they used to be, and this has been documented many times. What my co-authors and I are saying is that in those places (counties) where social capital has declined less, long-term demographic and employment decline triggered a switch to Donald Trump. These communities have said “enough is enough” of a system that they feel bypasses them and voted for an anti-system candidate, who is willing to shake the foundations of the system.

In a separate email, Lee noted that while most analysts view higher social capital as a healthy development in communities, it can also foster negative ethnic and racial solidarity: “Social capital can be a great thing when it is open and inclusive. But when everyone knows each other, this can result in in-group dynamics — particularly when people are led to be concerned about other groups.”

The [*accompanying graphic*](https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/republicans/2018/4/the-geography-of-social-capital-in-america), produced by the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress, shows the geographic distribution of social capital by county in the United States as of 2018. Social capital is highest in yellow areas and lowest in dark blue regions. The variables used to measure social capital included levels of family unity, collective efficacy, institutional health and community health.

Social capital correlated positively with the volunteer rate, the share of adults who made charitable contributions, the share married and the share who trust their neighbors. It correlated negatively with heavy television watching by children, the share of children living with a single parent and the share of births that were to unwed mothers.

[*Regina Anne Bateson*](https://www.reginabateson.com/), a professor of public and international affairs at the University of Ottawa, wrote to me in a Feb. 14 email: “The situation in Canada is often described as a truckers’ protest. However, it’s not just truckers who are participating, and this is not just a protest.”

The situation in Ottawa quickly devolved, Bateson argues,

into an illegal occupation, with heavy elements of extortion. Many people here describe it as a hostage situation. The convoy has deployed tactics intended to harm local residents, such as deafening horn-blowing, in an attempt to extract concessions from the government. More than 400 hate incidents have been reported to police, and there have been coordinated attacks on the 9-1-1 system, flooding it with calls so residents cannot get through.

The occupation of Ottawa has become a “militia-like activity,” Bateson writes. “The convoy has resupply bases on the outskirts of town, as well as mobile squads of pickup trucks that rove around the city, delivering supplies and harassing local residents.” The protest organizers have “even been experimenting with governance, including providing services like snow and trash removal. Remarkably, they recently inaugurated a cohort of ‘peace officers,’ who are authorized to detain people if needed. Justin Ling, a journalist, reports that some of the convoy’s peace officers have subsequently tried to arrest Ottawa police.”

Perhaps most important, Bateson described the

significant international involvement, including political support, media coverage, and crowdfunding dollars from the United States. We are also seeing evidence of social media manipulation designed to increase polarization. This includes the use of fake and hijacked social media accounts, troll farms and bots, and inflammatory photos and messages being pumped out en masse.

Asked what the potential consequences of the protests are, Bateson replied:

There are many medium- and long-term consequences, including emboldened populist and extremist movements within Canada, increased international visibility for those groups (particularly in U.S. media outlets), new recruits to those movements and the use of crowdfunding as a new form of grass-roots foreign intervention. In areas directly affected by the convoy, such as Ottawa, there is also a profound sense of abandonment and loss of trust in the authorities, particularly the police. The convoy has undermined the rule of law in Canada, and they have upended the norms that govern social and political life here.

In this context, I asked Rodríguez-Pose whether the truck protests in Canada are a harbinger of future right-wing populist protests, and he pointed to developments in France in his emailed reply:

In France, the phenomenon of the “gilets jaunes” (or yellow vests) is clearly an example of the “revenge of the places that don’t matter.” This is a movement that emerged as a result of a severe hike in diesel taxes in order to pay for the green transition. But this was a decision that many people in small town and rural France felt imposed significant costs on them. These are people who had been encouraged just over a decade before to buy diesel cars and, in the meantime, had seen their public transport — mainly buses and rail lines — decline and/or disappear. Most of them felt this was a decision taken by what they consider an aloof Parisian elite that is, on average, far wealthier than they were and enjoys a world-class public transport system.

The pitting of a populist rural America against a cosmopolitan urban America has deep economic and cultural roots, and this divide has become a staple of contemporary polarization.

“Urban residents are much more likely to have progressive values. This result applies across three categories of values: family values, gender equality and immigration attitudes,” [*Davide Luca*](https://davideluca.com/) of Cambridge University; [*Javier Terrero-Davila*](https://www.lse.ac.uk/International-Inequalities/People/Javier-Terrero) and [*Neil Lee*](https://www.lse.ac.uk/geography-and-environment/people/academic-staff/neil-lee), both of the London School of Economics; and [*Jonas Stein*](https://en.uit.no/ansatte/person?p_document_id=448042) of the Arctic University of Norway write in their January 2022 article “[*Progressive Cities*](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/113458/1/III_WPS_progressive_cities_paper_74.pdf): Urban-Rural Polarization of Social Values and Economic Development Around the World.”

Luca and his colleagues emphasize the divisive role of what [*Ronald Inglehart*](https://lsa.umich.edu/polisci/people/emeriti/rfi.html), a political scientist at the University of Michigan who [*died last year*](https://cps.isr.umich.edu/news/ronald-inglehart-obituary/), called the “[*silent revolution*](https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691641515/the-silent-revolution)” and what [*Ron Lesthaeghe*](http://www.nasonline.org/member-directory/members/44654.html) of the Free University of Brussels describes as the “[*second demographic transition.*](https://genus.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s41118-020-00077-4)”

Citing Inglehart, Luca and his co-authors write:

when people are secure, they focus on postmaterialist goals such as “belonging, esteem and free choice.” The possibility of taking survival for granted “brings cultural changes that make individual autonomy, gender equality and democracy increasingly likely, giving rise to a new type of society that promotes human emancipation on many fronts.”

The urban-rural conflict between postmaterialistic values (shorthand for autonomy, environmental protection, sexual freedom, gender equality) and more traditional values (family obligation, sexual restraint, church, community) is most acute in “high income countries,” they write. This suggests, they continue, “that only more advanced economies can provide cities with the material comfort, and probably the right institutional environment, to make progressive values relevant.”

In an email, Luca elaborated:

There is a strong correlation between my analyses (and similar lines of research) and trends highlighted in [*second demographic transition*](https://www.pnas.org/content/111/51/18112) theories. Some of the factors driving the second demographic transition are definitely linked to the development of “self-expression” values, especially among women.

Cities, Luca argued, “are the catalysts for these changes to occur. In other words, cities are the loci where self-expression values can develop, in turn affecting reproductive behaviors and, hence, demographic patterns.”

Social capital is by no means the only glue that holds right-wing movements together.

The Rodríguez-Pose and Luca papers suggest that cultural conflict and regional economic discrepancies also generate powerful political momentum for those seeking to build a “coalition of resentment.” Since the 2016 election of Trump, the Republican Party has focused on that just that kind of Election Day alliance.

[*Shannon M. Monnat*](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/soc/cpr/Monnat,_Shannon/) and [*David L. Brown*](https://cals.cornell.edu/david-louis-brown), sociologists at Syracuse and Cornell, have analyzed the economic and demographic characteristics of counties that sharply increased their vote for Trump in 2016 compared with their support for Mitt Romney in 2012.

In their October 2017 paper “[*More Than a Rural Revolt: Landscapes of Despair and the 2016 Presidential Election*](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0743016717307386#!),” Monnat and Brown found that “Trump performed better in counties with more economic distress, worse health, higher drug, alcohol and suicide mortality rates, lower educational attainment and higher marital separation/divorce rates.”

The accompanying graphic demonstrates the pattern of Trump’s strength compared with Romney’s. The red bars show characteristics of areas that voted more for Trump than Romney; the blue bars show the characteristics of communities that cast more votes for Romney than for Trump.

Trump’s populist message, Monnat and Brown write in their conclusion,

may have been attractive to many long-term Democratic voters in these places who felt abandoned by a Democratic Party that has failed to articulate a strong pro-***working-class*** message, whose agendas often emphasize policies and programs to help the poor at what seems like the expense of the ***working class***, and who evidently believed it did not have to work very hard to earn votes from behind the “big blue wall.”

In “[*Social Capital, Religion, Wal-Mart, and Hate Groups in America*](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1540-6237.2012.00854.x),” a 2012 paper, [*Stephan J. Goetz*](https://aese.psu.edu/directory/sjg16) of Penn State; [*Anil Rupasingha*](https://www.ers.usda.gov/authors/ers-staff-directory/anil-rupasingha/), a research economist at the Department of Agriculture; and [*Scott Loveridge*](https://www.canr.msu.edu/people/scott_loveridge) of Michigan State University found that “higher incomes, more income inequality, higher crime rates and the presence of more Wal-Mart stores and foreign-born populations are each associated with a more likely presence of one or more hate groups in the county.”

The Walmart effect, they wrote, likely results from the “economic turmoil” as communities “experience steep decline in their traditional downtown shopping districts.”

Two factors work to lower the likelihood of hate group formation, they write: “A higher stock of social capital is associated with fewer hate groups,” and “a greater share of mainline Protestant adherents is associated with fewer hate groups.”

The opposite is true, Goetz, Rupasingha and Loveridge found, “for evangelical Protestant adherents,” writing that “for every 10 percent additional evangelicals in a county, the number of hate groups in that county increases by 17 percent.”

Regardless of the sources of discontent and regardless of the characteristics of those leading the assault on the liberal democratic state, there is no question that the truckers’ insurgency in Canada is catching fire abroad — currently in France, Britain, Belgium, New Zealand and Australia.

“[*Canada’s ‘Freedom Convoy’ Protests Go Global: Australia to Austria Witness Anti-Covid Vaccine Agitations*](https://www.firstpost.com/world/canadas-freedom-convoy-protests-go-global-australia-to-austria-witness-anti-covid-vaccine-agitations-10367141.html)” is the headline on a Feb. 11 [*FirstPost*](https://www.firstpost.com/) article that describes developments in several countries: “Police and anti-vaccine protesters clashed on the grounds of New Zealand’s Parliament, with dozens arrested after demonstrators who laid siege to the legislature for three days were ordered to move on.”

And: “Brussels authorities have banned an upcoming ‘freedom convoy’ protest from entering the Belgian capital.”

And: “French police warned Thursday they would prevent so-called ‘freedom convoys’ from blockading Paris, as protesters against Covid rules began to drive towards the capital.”

And: “Austria also announced a ban on any motor protests as several hundred vehicles were set to converge Friday in central Vienna, as well as near a major public park in the Austrian capital.”

There will also be a test of the vitality of the trucker protest movement in the United States. The People’s Convoy has [*issued a call*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/2711696262309046/permalink/2719771414834864) to “truckers and all freedom loving Americans” to join at a rally on March 4 and 5 at Coachella Valley in Indio, Calif., which is expected to then [*aim*](https://www.politico.com/news/2022/02/09/u-s-trucker-convoy-to-washington-gathers-steam-00007135) for Washington, D.C.

The organizers claim they will provide “fuel reimbursement upon arrival for all attending this event,” adding: “the convoy will roll out of California following the rally. Convoy details will be forthcoming.”

There are risks and opportunities on both sides. For President Biden, a protest that brings traffic and commerce to a standstill in the nation’s capital would test his skill as the country’s chief executive, a test that could restore his faltering public image or send him on the road to defeat in 2024. For Trump and his allies on the right, such a protest could mobilize core voters going into the coming elections, or it could reinforce the Jan. 6 image of unconstrained chaos, severely damaging Republican prospects.

Non-college-educated white people in the United States, like the protesting truckers in Canada, continue to face grim prospects, subordinated by meritocratic competition that rewards what they lack — advanced education and [*top scores*](https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0182276) on aptitude tests — accomplishments that feed the resource allocation, the status contests and the employment hierarchies that dominate contemporary life and leave those who cannot prevail out in the cold.

As long as these voters remain on a downward trajectory, they will continue to be a disruptive force not only in the political arena but also in society at large.

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**Load-Date:** February 17, 2022

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[***The Democrats Need to Start Playing Offense; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65WY-GY61-JBG3-64D3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 11, 2022 Monday 13:16 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1964 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** Declaring a national day for abortion rights would send a strong message.

**Body**

Over the past few weeks, I’ve received several messages from readers and friends about the need for hopeful alternatives in my work. This request, I believe, is a response to my main preoccupations in this space: homelessness, nursing homes, protests and the increasing failure of Democrats to reach ***working-class*** voters, especially immigrants. It’s true that my forecast for each of these issues is rather bleak, but I understand why readers might want some alternatives.

In response, I am establishing a recurring feature in this space called “The Magic Wand,” dedicated to a proposal of mine. The idea is that if I could wave a magic wand and make something happen — within reason — this is what I would do. These will either be entire columns or even just an addendum at the end of a piece, much like the “Consumables” section, where I share some of what I’m watching and reading.

This is meant to be a running conversation between me and you, the subscribers to this newsletter, so please send any thoughts to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Here’s the idea: Democratic leadership should declare a day dedicated to abortion rights, on which rallies can be held throughout the country. The messaging should be broad and inclusive, and serve as a way for the party to communicate its plans not just for the immediate future but also for upcoming elections. Democratic elected officials would announce this day together and deliver speeches to their constituencies in a show that could hopefully close up some of the internal divides within the party. If Democratic politicians want their base to show up to vote in the midterms and in 2024, they need to provide a clear vision of what they will do, identify the battlegrounds and communicate with their constituents that they are on their side.

And here’s why it’s needed: This past Friday, the Biden administration signed [*an executive order*](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/07/08/fact-sheet-president-biden-to-sign-executive-order-protecting-access-to-reproductive-health-care-services/) to expand access to abortion pills, “launch outreach and public education efforts” and create a team of pro bono lawyers to defend “patients, providers, and third parties lawfully seeking or offering reproductive health care services throughout the country.”

The news came on the same day that Shira Stein of [*Bloomberg*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-07-08/biden-team-rejected-emergency-declaration-over-roe-decision) reported that the Biden administration had been considering the declaration of a “public health emergency,” which would have expanded the powers of the Department of Health and Human Services. The concern, according to Stein’s reporting, was that the administration was a bit unclear on what, exactly, the state of emergency would accomplish, and worried about the possibility of lawsuits in return.

The Biden administration’s response to the overturning of Roe v. Wade by the Supreme Court has been marked with these types of calculations. The president, of course, should try to make prudent and thoughtful decisions, and resist getting pulled into a reflexive position that will end up doing more harm than good down the line, but he has mostly failed to send a clear or even particularly reassuring message to the [*88 percent of Democrats*](https://maristpoll.marist.edu/polls/npr-pbs-newshour-marist-national-poll-the-overturning-of-roe-v-wade-june-2022/) who oppose overturning Roe. It feels at times like he’s almost thinking out loud about what to do.

Of all the scenes of protest in the past three weeks, perhaps none got more attention than Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s [*appearance*](https://twitter.com/TeamAOC/status/1540423353625985026?s=20&amp;t=JF7fKRl3Vhi2ikImIwGIXA) at a rally in front of the Supreme Court. Surrounded by protesters and speaking through a bullhorn, Ocasio-Cortez said, “We need to fill the streets. Right now, elections are not enough.” She noted that while people need to show up at the ballot box, that is the “bare minimum.” Perhaps channeling Mario Savio’s [*address*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xz7KLSOJaTE&amp;ab_channel=IndridCold) during the free speech movement of the 1960s, Ocasio-Cortez said, “We need sand in every damn gear.”

Whatever you think about the feasibility or potential popularity of Ocasio-Cortez’s ideas, which included a call [*to open abortion clinics on federal lands*](https://truthout.org/articles/aoc-and-warren-advocate-opening-abortion-clinics-on-federal-land-in-red-states/) (one that [*Elizabeth Warren*](https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/06/24/metro/senator-elizabeth-warren-calls-biden-use-federal-lands-protect-abortion-access/) publicly supported), there should be no question that she rose to the urgency of the moment and channeled the desperation and anger of millions of Americans. Sometimes voters just want a politician to reflect their own emotions and stand beside them on the picket lines.

The White House, in its defense, is trying to be realistic about some of the legal and legislative limits of the presidency. (Vice President Kamala Harris, for her part, announced that the White House is not discussing the federal lands proposal from Ocasio-Cortez and Warren.) But what’s particularly distressing is that the White House seems more interested in playing defense against the left wing of the Democratic Party than actually confronting the activist agenda of the current Supreme Court.

It’s unclear what the White House’s political strategy might be at this point. This past weekend, an official [*said*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/07/09/biden-democrats-abortion-dobbs/), “Joe Biden’s goal in responding to Dobbs is not to satisfy some activists who have been consistently out of step with the mainstream of the Democratic Party. It’s to deliver help to women who are in danger and assemble a broad-based coalition to defend a woman’s right to choose now, just as he assembled such a coalition to win during the 2020 campaign.”

For the sake of argument, let’s assume all of the Biden administration’s concerns are real. Let’s say there is a significant number of moderates in crucial states who will be scared away by a Democratic Party that takes any bold action on any of its core issues; let’s say any losses in the House, the Senate or the presidency will lead to full minority rule in this country and the passage of a broad raft of policies that will wipe away everything from environmental regulation to gay marriage and any public dissent that might impinge on a very narrowly defined and nativist vision of patriotism. And let’s even say that on many issues, like police funding and student loan forgiveness, progressives are delusional about the popularity of their proposals, which, in turn, makes them unaware of the potential political harm. Even if all those things are true, abortion rights are the one issue that Democrats should fight on — [*poll*](https://www.npr.org/2022/05/19/1099844097/abortion-polling-roe-v-wade-supreme-court-draft-opinion) after [*poll*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/393275/steady-americans-not-roe-wade-overturned.aspx) shows that a significant majority of Americans, especially [*women*](https://www.newsweek.com/supreme-court-overturning-roe-met-67-disapproval-among-women-poll-1719267), oppose overturning Roe. This is the perfect moment for the administration to climb out of its defensive position.

If the Biden administration continues to throw its hands up and say there’s nothing to be done and that the only people who demand action are “out of step” activists, they will be sending a message that this current political situation — a Democrat president, a Democrat House, the narrowest possible edge in the Senate, and a right-wing-activist Supreme Court — cannot yield any action on anything, really, for fear of alienating swing voters.

Given the grim [*outlook*](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-republicans-are-favored-to-win-the-house-but-not-the-senate/) for the Democrats in the midterms, when the House will likely be lost and control over the Senate remains a toss-up, there’s no clear forecast for when Democrats will free themselves from this situation. There’s also no indication that the Supreme Court will end what many see as a right-wing-activist streak. What could possibly break this stasis? What is the Democratic leadership’s theory of change other than holding on for dear life while their president&#39;s approval rating sits at [*33 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/us/politics/biden-approval-polling-2024.html) with 64 percent of Democratic voters saying they would “prefer a new standard-bearer,” according to a recent New York Times/Siena College poll?

This proposal, I admit, goes against a lot of my political instincts. Protest, by definition, should be oppositional and mostly aimed at the state, which in this case still includes the president and the Democratic leaders who now run the House and the Senate. Huge rallies, especially ones rubber-stamped by what some might call “the authorities,” oftentimes don’t do much to change policy or even push politicians toward passing legislation. The Women’s March of 2017, which drew somewhere between an estimated[*three million to five million people*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/02/07/this-is-what-we-learned-by-counting-the-womens-marches/) in the United States out into the streets in a massive if somewhat vague repudiation of Donald Trump, was also bogged down by [*infighting*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/16/us/womens-march-anti-semitism.html) among its organizers and failed to capitalize on its impressive turnout.

A lot of my thinking about public dissent has been influenced by the[*political scientist*](https://stanfordmag.org/contents/politics-scholar-omar-wasow-on-protests-violence-and-the-media) Omar Wasow, who has spent his career studying protests. A summation of some of Wasow’s conclusions can be found in this interview, [*here*](https://stanfordmag.org/contents/politics-scholar-omar-wasow-on-protests-violence-and-the-media):

The core question of the work was what kinds of tactics are most effective for protesters. What I found in the 1960s is that when protesters engaged in nonviolent resistance, particularly when they were the object of police violence — a classic example being protesters on Bloody Sunday getting attacked by state troopers and vigilantes in front of a national audience — those kinds of protests built urgency and sympathy for the cause of civil rights. Inversely, when protesters engaged in more aggressive resistance to white supremacy, using violent tactics as a form of resistance, whether or not the state engaged in repression, that tended to generate much more negative press that was more focused on issues of crime and riots and that tended to reinforce the coalition intent on maintaining the status quo.

Wasow also goes on to say that when there are large peaceful protests that the state does not violently repress — like the one I am envisioning or, say, the March on Washington — results can be mixed, but they tend to not draw the same media attention as, say, the beating of nonviolent protesters during the Bloody Sunday march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala.

I agree with much of Wasow’s analysis, but the repeal of Roe and the revanchist forecast for this Supreme Court may have cleared away many of the preconditions for effective mass rallies that have meaningful effects on public opinion. There is no real need to garner media attention at this point: Abortion rights will be front-page news for the near future. I agree that scenes of the state doing harm to peaceful citizens are still the most powerful tool of protest that activists have at their disposal, but as I suggested [*in May*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/05/opinion/roe-abortion-protest.html), the infrastructure for the types of targeted and organized nonviolent resistance that produce those types of scenes is usually created within big-tent protests. Effective activism, in other words, requires the cover of a larger movement, even if that movement isn’t much more than a series of political parades.

Here’s a final thought: I believe that the Democratic electorate has grown beyond tired of infighting within the party. Biden, Harris and Democratic leadership cannot just define themselves as the sensible foil to the “radical” wing of their party, especially if Ocasio-Cortez, Warren and other progressive Democrats continue to show up at actions and ask why their president has not done more.

A nationwide day of rallies for abortion rights would be a vital first step in restoring the faith of the electorate and ending the petty infighting within the party. On Saturday, protesters gathered in the [*streets*](https://twitter.com/byaliceyin/status/1545849052440543235?s=20&amp;t=KV8YlIpXQWoYIUwdzeqKKA) of American [*cities*](https://twitter.com/davenewworld_2/status/1545860780117168142?s=20&amp;t=KV8YlIpXQWoYIUwdzeqKKA), including outside of the [*White House*](https://www.npr.org/sections/pictureshow/2022/07/09/1110710067/photos-abortion-rights-activists-protest-outside-the-white-house). These demonstrations will continue with or without the president’s approval. Wasow is fundamentally correct: Scenes of peaceful protest [*do sway public opinion*](https://paw.princeton.edu/article/research-how-protest-movements-can-shape-election), and they dominate the media in a way that can turn a president’s executive order, for example, into page two news. If Democratic leadership wants to reap the political rewards on an issue that almost nine out of 10 Democrats largely agree upon, they should stop punching left and make sure they are in a position to deserve the political rewards of what promises to be another summer of protest.

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 12, 2022

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[***Disdain for the Less Educated?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60TW-MSY1-DXY4-X03P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 13, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 10; LETTERS

**Length:** 1386 words

**Body**

Readers respond to an Op-Ed arguing that the contributions of those without a diploma have been devalued.

To the Editor:

Re ''The Consequences of the Diploma Divide,'' by Michael J. Sandel (Sunday Review, Sept. 6):

I grew up the son of Danish immigrants. My father managed a thoroughbred breeding farm in Lexington, Ky. Through this unique circumstance I was able to go to cocktail parties with very wealthy, well-educated people. But I also worked on the farm with the hillbillies from eastern Kentucky who had little or no education, some completely illiterate.

Thankfully my parents instilled in me the belief that you respect everyone, not just for what they have, but who they are. I learned a lot from those poor uneducated hillbillies.

Now that I live in the liberal bastion of Amherst, Mass., I clearly see that not everybody learned that lesson of respect for everyone. Many liberal elites completely miss the point that Mr. Sandel is making in his piece and therefore cannot fully understand the Trump phenomenon. Thanks, Mr. Sandel, for articulating the need for understanding and respect, even in a meritocracy.

Niels la CourAmherst, Mass.

To the Editor:

Let me get out my tiny violin. Only an entitled white man would try to argue that the ''less educated'' have had it worse than women and people of color. Women and people of color cannot change biology. The ''less educated'' can obtain more education.

Coming from a family of eight kids, I paid for my own tuition. I received neither government nor parental aid. Was it Harvard? No. It was far from it. It was a midsize state school that provided me the opportunity to jump economic classes and make enough money to be able to send my daughter to Princeton. Many other Americans have done the same with aid, scholarships, military benefits, community resources and the like.

Please do not minimize gender and racial discrimination. That is dismissive. Instead do something positive and show the ''uneducated'' how to become ''educated.''

Margaret GottliebWashingtonThe writer is career director at the Graduate School of Political Management at the George Washington University.

To the Editor:

Michael Sandel rightly calls for a shift in our American values to reward and respect workers across our country, many of whom have traditionally been demeaned and mistreated both financially and in spirit. But such a cultural change first requires an internal shift in values among the people with whom we live.

When I left the practice of law to become a high school English teacher, even my own mother struggled with what she perceived as my loss in status (and a salary cut in half), trying to call me ''professor.'' I told her she didn't need to gussy it up -- I was proud to be a secondary school teacher. And many of my friends thought I had left the law because I didn't like the pressure; they failed to understand that teaching scores of 15-year-olds day in and day out could be more pressured than making an argument in front of a federal judge.

So clearly if even my own loving mother and friends struggled to accept my new working status, just think what others assume about ''mere'' teachers. Or custodians. Or truck drivers. Or blue-collar factory workers, sanitation workers, hospital orderlies, day care workers, grocery clerks and home care providers.

We are seeing in this pandemic the innate value to our society of frontline workers like these, and it is high time that we reward and respect all of our workers.

Such a reframing of our cultural values must begin with very private conversations in each of our homes ... with our own mothers.

James BerkmanBoston

To the Editor:

Michael Sandel's suspicion of meritocracy is misplaced. The ***working class*** in fact prizes success, wealth, status and fame. They want it for themselves and, more important, for their children and their children's children.

What many members of the ***working class*** and increasingly also the middle class are furious about, and what politicians like Donald Trump have tapped into, is the broken promise of the American dream. Forty years of deeply unfair economic policy have made American social mobility among the worst of high-income countries. Many other high-income countries -- such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Japan and Portugal -- also celebrate merit, have conspicuously higher social mobility than the United States and have not been roiled by a populist backlash.

Mr. Sandel persuasively accuses liberal politicians of treating the legitimate economic grievances of voters with great disdain. The problem, however, is not the celebration of merit, but profound economic unfairness that fails to live up to the ideals of meritocracy.

Economic unfairness -- symptoms of which include low social mobility and a broken meritocracy -- explains the global wave of populism. Blaming merit will only make the problem worse.

Eric ProtzerPaul SummervilleThe writers are the co-authors of ''Reclaiming Populism.''

To the Editor:

I read with interest Michael Sandel's excellent piece on credentialism. Although surely many readers were struck by the irony of a Harvard professor publishing a piece opposing credentialism on the Op-Ed page of The New York Times.

Sam I. HillGosport, Ind.

To the Editor:

I appreciate most of what Michael Sandel says. One thing we have learned from the pandemic is that the most essential workers in our economy, the people we need and should value the most, are often those who are paid the least and accorded the least respect.

I do reject Professor Sandel's notion that we should look beyond the elite in choosing our political leaders. But I define ''the elite'' broadly as those who stand out by virtue of superior knowledge, skill, intelligence, experience, wisdom, maturity, courage, humility, compassion, honesty. (Today's most powerful leader in the world possesses the opposite of all of these qualities.)

We want leaders who are better than ourselves, men and women we and our children can look up to (though not uncritically). But just as important, we want leaders who will not look down on any of us. Our challenge as citizens in a democracy -- one we sometimes fail -- is to recognize excellence and select leaders of that caliber.

Michael P. BaconWestbrook, Maine

To the Editor:

Michael J. Sandel writes near the end of his essay: ''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.''

Professor Sandel, non-degreed individuals often choose their occupations as deliberately as you chose your own. To imply that these choices are accidents of birth, grace or the result of some cosmic influence is to imply that these non-degreed individuals are victims of circumstance.

My father had an eighth-grade education but loved his work in machine repair in an auto plant. His brother graduated from college and had a successful career at a major newspaper. Thanks to my father's union-negotiated pension and my uncle's blue chip stock, they both lived comfortably in their retirement. Your remark is demeaning.

Joan EvangelistiRacine, Wis.

To the Editor:

America has been the ''land of opportunity'' because anyone willing to put talent and ability to work can succeed. The American dream is fundamentally meritocratic. Regardless of what degree we have (or not) and from where, we believe that people should go as far and high as their character and capability take them.

Intelligence, wisdom and judgment don't require -- and aren't magically transmitted through -- a diploma. Nor does a diploma guarantee success.

The article claims that those with degrees from prestigious universities look down with disdain on those who are less educated. That is a false generalization. I for one reserve my disdain for those who have position and status without merit. Who refuse to learn and who deny truth, science and history. Who exploit and appeal to fear and anger rather than logic and reason. And who feel aggrieved and entitled to anything more than the opportunity to earn success.

Jay MarkowitzPound Ridge, N.Y.

To the Editor:

Mr. Sandel is obviously not overweight if he thinks being undereducated is ''the last acceptable prejudice.''

Elaine LutherOakmont, Pa.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/12/opinion/letters/education-prejudice.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/12/opinion/letters/education-prejudice.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by Elena Scotti

photographs by Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 13, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Drugs and Midwestern Values***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62MC-V4R1-JBG3-616N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 8, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 726 words

**Byline:** By Mike Hale

**Body**

The story of Lori Arnold, drug queenpin and sister to Tom Arnold, is a complicated lesson in Midwestern values.

I saw myself on television this week, in the modern sense of seeing someone with whom I identified. It was not a matter of color or gender, neither of which matched. But we were both from Iowa, both born in 1960, both got A's and B's, both had a parent with a problematic relationship to a local watering hole (Elks Club for her, V.F.W. for me).

Oh, and you can date both of us by the way we refer to speed or methamphetamine as ''crank.''

The stories of small-town Iowans of my age are not plentiful on TV, and I watched this one with rapt attention, even though our lives diverged significantly after childhood. I left the state, went to college and got a job at a newspaper. She stayed, opened a biker bar and started her own business cooking and selling meth. When I was making $800 a week, she was sometimes grossing $800,000. That went a long way in Iowa in the early 1990s.

This soul sister of mine is Lori Arnold, the subject of ''Queen of Meth,'' a three-part profile that premiered Friday on the streaming service Discovery+. True-crime documentaries arrive by the pallet-load these days -- Arnold could stack them in her post-criminal job as a forklift operator -- and I took the time to watch this one purely for the Iowa connection.

I might have enjoyed ''Queen of Meth'' even if it were set in Ohio or Idaho, though. A modest production, it relies on the no-nonsense narration of Arnold, who turns out to be a fine companion for three hours and an engaging and lucid guide to the hows and whys of methamphetamine in the Midwest. She has a matter-of-fact charisma and a ready laugh, and you can see how those qualities would have made it easy for her to sell drugs in the depressed, ***working-class*** town of Ottumwa, Iowa.

''Queen of Meth'' is a story of Arnold's rise, fall and qualified redemption, structured around a trip back to Ottumwa, which she moved away from after her second stint in prison. (Arnold served nine years on drug and gun charges, started dealing again and served another six years.)

Visually it tends toward the melancholy, as Arnold revisits her now-shuttered bar and the farm she once owned where she and her husband, who later died in federal prison, built their own meth lab, like upper Midwestern Walter Whites. The filmmakers like to pose Arnold and other interview subjects in front of tractors or in long shot against drab warehouses or faded downtowns.

But the tone is rarely funereal, thanks to the resolute levelheadedness of Arnold and to the liveliness of the Greek chorus of friends and neighbors -- most of whom dealt for Arnold, or bought from her, or both -- who attest to her generosity and to how much fun she was to be around.

''Queen of Meth'' is also the story of what a catastrophe meth has been for the Midwest and of the damage it did to many of those friends of Arnold's, and to their children. The show doesn't play that down, though a significant portion of Ottumwa may feel that it's a more sympathetic showcase than she deserves.

Gathered in lawn chairs around a fire pit, Arnold and her former associates talk about the old days, and about the harm done to lives and communities, though they seem less angry than bemused, like survivors of a hurricane.

The person who expresses the most open anger is Arnold's brother Tom, the actor and former husband of Roseanne Barr, who pushes her to acknowledge what he sees as their own mother's damaging neglect of them. (This is the place to mention that without this celebrity connection, Lori Arnold's drug-dealing would not have been news outside of Wapello County.)

In scenes with the son who was forced to grow up without her, Lori Arnold is clearly emotional, but grief and guilt don't come naturally to her. She's cleareyed about her choices, but her approach to introspection is as businesslike as her approach to meth. ''I'm more embarrassed about my past than I used to be,'' she allows.

I would not want to have lived Arnold's life, or have had the effect she did on others' lives, but the Iowan in me can't help identifying with, and admiring, her get-on-with-it approach. I'd like to think that if the feds had broken down my door and hauled me to jail, I would have used my one phone call to order a pizza, too.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/arts/television/review-queen-of-meth.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/07/arts/television/review-queen-of-meth.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: In ''Queen of Meth,'' Lori Arnold and her friends reflect on her time as a high-volume drug dealer. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DISCOVERY+)

**Load-Date:** May 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***This Senate Plan Is Just Another Tax***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:630F-5F21-JBG3-63GY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 24, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 21; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 911 words

**Byline:** By Brian Highsmith

**Body**

Twenty-one senators, led by Rob Portman of Ohio, a Republican, announced a new outline agreement for an infrastructure package last week. Disagreement over tax changes derailed previous talks, but this bipartisan group claimed to have identified a set of proposed financing sources that could pay for new spending ''without raising taxes.'' Reportedly, the largest among those was $315 billion from alternative financing schemes known as public-private partnerships.

The legislators are jumping through these hoops in the first place because for the past three decades, the Republican Party has organized its agenda around an absolutist principle: no new taxes, ever. But despite the senators' insistence, these arrangements do not actually avoid extractive charges on residents. They just launder the new fees through private investors.

Rather than the government financing the rebuilding of roads and bridges that get you across town, you pay a private company operating in contract with the government -- while policymakers pretend that they have avoided imposing new costs.

Chief among these schemes that Republicans have identified are so-called user fees, like road tolls and a new fee on vehicle miles traveled. The White House rejected such proposals as violating its own tax pledge: a promise not to increase taxes on families earning under $400,000 annually. As President Biden observed, ''If everything is paid for by a user fee, the burden falls on ***working-class*** folks, who are having trouble.''

In recent decades, state and local governments increasingly have turned to these funding arrangements. And unlike progressive taxes, user fees -- whether assessed by public entities or by private firms contracted with the state -- are not generally varied by ability to pay. They are imposed at a flat rate, on the poorest and wealthiest alike, assessed in proportion to their use of public infrastructure. These extractive revenue models condition access to critical goods and services on families' available resources. And unlike with consumer goods, people often have no choice but to use these spaces.

In 2008, to avoid raising property taxes, Chicago famously leased its parking meter infrastructure to a group of private investors. Shortly after the asset sale, residents parking downtown were paying more than double the prior rates. The privatization of local public services can be observed in soaring school lunch debt, exorbitant charges for prison phone calls and revenue-driven overpolicing.

The endpoint of this shift can be observed in rural Tennessee, where several jurisdictions instructed firefighters not to respond to emergencies without first confirming that occupants have paid an annual service fee; if they have not, city responders stand aside and let the homes burn to the ground. The lesson is clear: Flat-rate user-funded structures privatize social risks while shielding wealth from productive public use. This underlying dynamic does not change when such fees are imposed by unaccountable private investors rather than the state.

Some particular fees -- including those for street parking, and congestion pricing schemes -- are often justified as internalizing public costs of socially deleterious behavior, analogous to ''sin taxes'' assessed on alcohol and tobacco. But if the primary motivation is to shape individual decisions, this goal arguably is undermined by the flat-rate design of most fees, which may be debilitating for poor families but are hardly noticed by the wealthy.

It should not be overlooked that transportation fees recently helped catalyze powerful social movements for tax fairness in several other countries.

In Chile, for example, a 4 percent increase in subway fares inspired large-scale street protests in 2019 -- prompting the president to cancel the hike, call for a new higher tax bracket for top incomes and initiate a referendum on the country's antidemocratic Constitution. About the same time, a fuel increase proposed by President Emmanuel Macron of France spurred the Yellow Vest (Gilets Jaunes) protests that called for the reintroduction of a recently repealed wealth tax.

A better alternative to funding mechanisms that burden consumers is to make public goods available to all who wish to use them, funded through progressive taxes and provided free at the point of consumption. This vision lives in a proposal from a Boston City Council member, Michelle Wu, to create a completely free city transit system. It also is reflected in the current organizing, led in California by the Debt Free Justice coalition, to abolish fees assessed on people who have contact with the criminal justice system.

As negotiations continue, we can learn from the harmful consequences brought about by the privatization of local public goods -- and opt instead for an inclusive public infrastructure that is available, and affordable, to everyone.

Brian Highsmith is a Ph.D. student in government and social policy at Harvard and a senior researcher at Yale Law School's Arthur Liman Center for Public Interest Law. He was a tax policy adviser on President Barack Obama's National Economic Council.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Meinzahn, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

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[***Peru and Refinery Trade Blame for Miles of Fouled Beaches***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PD-2K21-JBG3-62KJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 4, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1256 words

**Byline:** By Mitra Taj

**Body**

A leak at a refinery tarred miles of Pacific Coast beaches. The company blames waves caused by a distant volcano eruption, but the Peruvian government has vowed to ''defend the sea.''

LIMA, Peru -- More than two weeks after a botched tanker delivery sent thousands of barrels of crude oil spilling into the sea off Peru, black waves are still fouling beaches and fingers are still being pointed.

The explanation for what went wrong seems no closer to an end than the cleanup itself.

The oil has washed across some 27 miles of Pacific coastline, pushed north by the wind to beaches along Peru's desert coast, leaving in its wake countless dead fish and marine animals coated in oil, including locally endangered sea otters and penguins that live on rocky islands in two protected marine reserves.

''For the ecosystem to fully recover, we're talking 10, maybe 20 years,'' said Deyvis Huamán, a biologist with Peru's national park system.

The spill was at the Pampilla refinery, operated by the Spanish company Repsol near the Peruvian capital, Lima. Its scope has grown far beyond early expectations, as the company initially reported only a tiny leak amounting to about seven gallons.

That was off by a factor of tens of thousands. Once the true extent of the disaster was known, the president of Peru stood on an oil-stained beach and denounced what he said was ''one of the biggest ecocides on our coast.''

The question now is: Who is responsible?

Repsol says the Jan. 15 spill was caused by strong ocean swells set off by an unusually powerful volcano that erupted thousands of miles away, off the island nation of Tonga. It says the event damaged an underwater system of pipes and hoses from which moored oil tankers pump crude into its refinery, and notes that while neighboring nations issued a tsunami warning, Peru did not.

''We didn't cause the ecological disaster,'' a spokeswoman for the company told Peruvian TV in the days after the spill.

But this week, the government announced that it was suspending all operations at the Repsol refinery, an action the company called ''disproportionate and unreasonable.'' A state prosecutor had already begun looking into whether the company properly maintained its underwater system of pipes and tubes. And four high-ranking Repsol officials have been legally barred from leaving the country.

''We're going to hold it responsible,'' President Pedro Castillo declared at a rally. ''We're going to defend the sea, and we're going to condemn and sanction the company that's been polluting our sea.''

Still, Peruvian investigators say they will also look into the claim that the Peruvian Navy did not meet its duty to issue a tsunami alert. The Navy, which has come under criticism from other quarters for not issuing an alert, says it is conducting its own investigation as well.

Even some of the most basic facts are under dispute -- among them the conditions of the waters off the refinery that day.

While the company cited unusual waves, the captain of the Italian tanker that was delivering Brazilian crude to the refinery said that the water had not been particularly rough and that the vessel had not collided with any part of the terminal's infrastructure. The head of a local boating association has also said the sea was fairly calm, as have Navy officials.

The tanker, the Mare Doricum, which is owned by La Fratelli d'Amico Armatori, has been seized by the authorities. The company said it is cooperating with the Peruvian authorities, and noted that no accusations had been leveled against its crew.

Though the conditions that day are in dispute, there is little question that parts of Peru, like other nations far from the volcano, were battered by the tsunami.

In the north, two women were swept away by waves attributed to the eruption. And in the bay of Callao, where the refinery is, waves of about 1.5 meters, or about five feet, were registered by sea-level monitoring stations around the time when Repsol reports the spill occurred, said Francisco Hernandez of the Flanders Marine Institute. That may have ''shaken up'' the waters or caused strong underwater currents, he said.

In a statement to The New York Times, Repsol stood its ground.

''This accident was caused by an unforeseen maritime event to the best of our knowledge,'' it said. ''The ship's moorings broke as a result of abnormal swell, as reported by the captain of Mare Doricum. Speculation that the sea was calm conflicts with publicly available empirical data from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, not to mention hundreds of social media posts that afternoon.''

The waves were abnormal. Unforeseen is another matter.

While Peru did not issue a warning, there were multiple international tsunami alerts issued for the region, but neither the Navy nor Repsol restricted activities.

And though the company has publicized the development of its early-warning system for oil leaks, Repsol deployed a team of divers to inspect conditions underwater only the next day. The company says conditions weren't safe for divers earlier.

''It's clear there's been a series of big mistakes,'' said Gustavo Navarro, a former manager of La Pampilla who is now an energy consultant.

It is not Repsol's first spill in Peru. A leak in 2013 attributed to a corroded pipeline released an estimated 196 barrels. The fines against the company then totaled less than $200,000, but the leftist government of President Castillo says this time will be different. Government ministers have promised ''drastic'' penalties, perhaps more than $50 million, with the aim of setting an example.

After operations at the refinery were suspended on Monday, the company said it would work with the government to reopen as quickly as possible. It noted that it supplies almost half of Peru's fuel and said it would ''do its best'' to avoid shortages.

The company has also come under fire over its cleanup efforts.

Repsol has offered to hire fishermen and others left jobless because of the spill to help, but local news media have reported that the workers are being paid little and that some have passed out from breathing the fumes on crude-soaked beaches.

But with the spill having taken away their livelihood, at least for now, many have little choice.

The spill struck at the height of summer beach season, and ***working-class*** coastal communities that depend on fishing and tourism have been hit the hardest after a prolonged downturn tied to the pandemic.

''The restaurants, the cevicherías -- no one is eating at them anymore,'' said Roberto Zamora, 45, a fisherman in the district of Ventanilla, where the refinery is. ''No one wants to buy fish, even fish from the high sea.''

Peruvian tourism officials put the losses at some $52 million, a figure that does not include the impact on fishermen.

Mr. Zamora said he had not worked a day since the spill first washed ''black lava'' across local fishing grounds, depriving him not just of his income but also of his family's main source of protein.

He wants an explanation for what happened, a serious plan for remediation and compensation -- and something even more important.

''What we want is respect,'' Mr. Zamora said. ''And this has been a lack of respect for our ocean. It hasn't just affected me. It hasn't just affected fellow fishermen. It's an offense to the whole world.''

''They've poisoned the sea,'' he said.

Raphael Minder and Gaia Pianigiani contributed reporting.Raphael Minder and Gaia Pianigiani contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/world/americas/peru-oil-spill.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/world/americas/peru-oil-spill.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top and above left: Workers in Ancon, Peru, cleaning up an oil spill after an underwater volcanic eruption in Tonga set off powerful ocean swells. Right, a fish killed in the spill. ''We're going to hold it responsible,'' Peru's president, Pedro Castillo, said of the energy company Repsol.

The cleanup operation in Ancon. ''We didn't cause the ecological disaster,'' a spokeswoman for Repsol said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGELA PONCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 4, 2022

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[***How Hispanics Became Swing Voters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:649R-HH21-DXY4-X4X5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 16, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26; ROSS DOUTHAT

**Length:** 1315 words

**Byline:** By Ross Douthat

**Body**

The chart that should frighten Democratic strategists appears in the 23rd slide of a newly released report from Equis Research, which tries to explain the Hispanic shift toward the Republican Party in the 2020 election. It shows how favorably Hispanic voters responded to a variety of Donald Trump's positions and policies, on Covid and the economy and immigration -- more favorably, in many cases, than many liberals would have expected.

Some responses aren't all that surprising: 77 percent favorability for pandemic stimulus, 74 percent favorability for ''rapid vaccine development,'' 69 percent for middle-class tax cuts (who could be against middle-class tax cuts?). Some of them offer interesting evidence that Trump's Covid insouciance, his attempt to prioritize economic reopening over precaution, was popular with Hispanic voters: ''reopen economy'' at 66 percent, ''Covid policy set by states'' at 62 percent, ''living without fear of Covid'' at 55 percent.

But it's the numbers on immigration and border policy that are particularly notable. Trump's family-separation policy, not surprisingly, polls at 28 percent. But ''more border spending'' gets 55 percent approval, ''limiting refugees/asylum'' receives 51 percent and even ''reducing legal immigration'' gets 49 percent.

At the same time, ''more deportations'' and ''build the wall'' poll lower, at 42 percent and 39 percent. But then recall that Trump got only 38 percent of the Hispanic vote overall. Which means that in an important sense, despite overperforming expectations, he arguably underperformed his potential with Hispanics. He didn't even consolidate the full share of voters who favored building his border wall, let alone the share that supported other forms of immigration restriction, let alone the share that agreed with his Covid response.

Or as the report puts it, ''Absent any context, the numbers might even suggest that the incumbent should have done better than he did.''

This is just one survey, but it's congruent with a lot of different data sources suggesting that Trump's improvement with Hispanics in 2020, rather than an outlier that other Republicans won't hit, represents a foundation on which the G.O.P. could potentially build further gains. Ruy Teixeira, the analyst whose famous ''emerging Democratic majority'' thesis (shared with John Judis) was welcomed and then misinterpreted by Democrats banking on the inevitable march of demographic change, has been particularly aggressive in warning about this scenario. In a recent post, he rattled off several polling results suggesting that Republicans could be moving close to parity in the Hispanic vote -- a true political earthquake if it ever happened.

In the long-ago days of the George W. Bush presidency there was a lot of talk from pro-immigration Republicans about how Hispanics were ''natural Republicans'' -- meaning family-oriented, religious, hardworking, in love with the American dream. But as the political parties were aligned in those days Hispanics fit pretty comfortably in the Democratic coalition. Even if they were more culturally conservative than white Democrats, they prioritized issues like health care and jobs and education and generally trusted the Democratic Party more on a range of domestic policy questions.

The Republican elites who imagined that they could make inroads with Hispanics by passing a comprehensive immigration reform bill weren't completely out of touch, since there was often strong Hispanic support for that kind of measure. But the Republican Party's core obstacle was always economic policy. Bush's ''compassionate conservatism'' probably helped him to a relatively strong showing with Hispanics in 2004, although one overstated by flawed exit polls (he probably got about 39 percent, not the oft-quoted 44 percent). But thereafter the party moved right on economics, and the sequence of Bush's push for Social Security privatization, the Tea Party's anti-spending zeal and then the Romney-Ryan ticket's promise of entitlement cuts all made the Republicans too economically libertarian to appeal to most Hispanics.

Since then, though, three crucial things have changed. First, the shape of immigration is different: Both legal and illegal immigration have become less Latin American and more global, and there has been a new pattern of rushes to the border by asylum-seekers who are more likely to come from Central America than Mexico. A simple story in which American Hispanics effectively saw themselves in every subsequent wave of migrants never quite fit reality, but for, say, a second-generation Mexican American in Texas, it fits the reality of 2021 less than the reality of 15 years ago.

As this shift was happening, the Democrats were moving leftward on most fronts, following public opinion at first (on same-sex marriage, for instance) but then arguably outpacing it. On economic policy, what counts as centrism from Joe Manchin today would have placed him to the left of Barack Obama in 2010; on cultural and racial issues, the radicalization of white Democrats has moved them to the left of many Hispanic voters; on social issues, the kind of anti-abortion Democrat who once held the balance of power in the House of Representatives has mostly gone extinct.

Then Trump's ascent in 2016 suspended the Republican commitment to austerity, entitlement cuts and other features of its Tea Party-era agenda. That didn't help Republicans make gains with Hispanics in 2016 because Trumpian bigotry was front and center -- though keen observers noted that he did no worse than Romney in 2012.

But the subsequent strength of the Trump economy, the sidelining of his party's deficit hawks and his administration's willingness to spend money in the face of the pandemic all created an opening for Republicans to cast themselves as pro-capitalism moderates and to portray the leftward-moving, Bernie Sanders-influenced Democrats as socialists. That frame was effective -- the apparent potency of the ''socialism'' charge is discussed in the Equis Research report -- and much more to the G.O.P.'s advantage than a clash between stringent government cutters and moderate-welfare-state liberals, which was how the parties often appeared in the Obama era.

Its emerging opportunity with Hispanic voters, then, crystallizes the larger Republican Party opportunity right now -- where it's clear enough that a party that was genuinely moderate on economics, Trumpishly populist without being Trumpishly toxic, could lay claim to a lot of swing voters, and all without making the sweeping moves leftward on issues like immigration that were urged on Republicans 10 or 15 years ago.

The question, as always, is how much of the party's core of donors and activists and voters wants to be economically moderate or wants to be nontoxic; I still think the answer is ''not enough.''

The Democrats' Hispanic challenge likewise distills their larger political problem: How to recreate some version of their early Obama-era messaging, which presented a moderate liberalism that appealed more effectively to ***working-class*** voters of all races, in a very different social and economic landscape, in a party with a much more powerful and demanding progressive wing.

One way or another, that adaptation will be fraught and painful. But this is the moment when the Democrats need to do it -- when the Hispanic realignment is still more hypothetical than real, still more visible in issue surveys than electoral results, still only a harbinger of an epic political defeat rather than the thing itself.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CALLAGHAN O'HARE/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** December 16, 2021

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[***Who Is Responsible for the 27-Mile Oil Spill in Peru?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P7-B351-DXY4-X4JS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 3, 2022 Thursday 11:19 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1313 words

**Byline:** Mitra Taj

**Highlight:** A leak at a refinery tarred miles of Pacific Coast beaches. The company blames waves caused by a distant volcano eruption, but the Peruvian government has vowed to “defend the sea.”

**Body**

A leak at a refinery tarred miles of Pacific Coast beaches. The company blames waves caused by a distant volcano eruption, but the Peruvian government has vowed to “defend the sea.”

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Repsol says the Jan. 15 spill was caused by strong ocean swells set off by an unusually powerful volcano that erupted thousands of miles away, off the island nation of Tonga. It says the event damaged an underwater system of pipes and hoses from which moored oil tankers pump crude into its refinery, and notes that while neighboring nations issued a tsunami warning, Peru did not.

“We didn’t cause the ecological disaster,” a spokeswoman for the company told Peruvian TV in the days after the spill.

But this week, the government announced that it was suspending all operations at the Repsol refinery, an action the company called “disproportionate and unreasonable.” A state prosecutor had already begun looking into whether the company properly maintained its underwater system of pipes and tubes. And four high-ranking Repsol officials have been legally barred from leaving the country.

“We’re going to hold it responsible,” President Pedro Castillo declared at a rally. “We’re going to defend the sea, and we’re going to condemn and sanction the company that’s been polluting our sea.”

Still, Peruvian investigators say they will also look into the claim that the Peruvian Navy did not meet its duty to issue a tsunami alert. The Navy, which has come under criticism from other quarters for not issuing an alert, says it is conducting its own investigation as well.

Even some of the most basic facts are under dispute — among them the conditions of the waters off the refinery that day.

While the company cited unusual waves, the captain of the Italian tanker that was delivering Brazilian crude to the refinery said that the water had not been particularly rough and that the vessel had not collided with any part of the terminal’s infrastructure. The head of a local boating association has also said the sea was fairly calm, as have Navy officials.

The tanker, the Mare Doricum, which is owned by La Fratelli d’Amico Armatori, has been seized by the authorities. The company said it is cooperating with the Peruvian authorities, and noted that no accusations had been leveled against its crew.

Though the conditions that day are in dispute, there is little question that parts of Peru, like other nations far from the volcano, were battered by the tsunami.

In the north, two women were swept away by waves attributed to the eruption. And in the bay of Callao, where the refinery is, waves of about 1.5 meters, or about five feet, were registered by sea-level monitoring stations around the time when Repsol reports the spill occurred, said Francisco Hernandez of the Flanders Marine Institute. That may have “shaken up” the waters or caused strong underwater currents, he said.

In a statement to The New York Times, Repsol stood its ground.

“This accident was caused by an unforeseen maritime event to the best of our knowledge,” it said. “The ship’s moorings broke as a result of abnormal swell, as reported by the captain of Mare Doricum. Speculation that the sea was calm conflicts with publicly available empirical data from the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, not to mention hundreds of social media posts that afternoon.”

The waves were abnormal. Unforeseen is another matter.

While Peru did not issue a warning, there were multiple international tsunami alerts issued for the region, but neither the Navy nor Repsol restricted activities.

And though the company has [*publicized the development*](https://imagenes.repsol.com/es_en/Heads_Repsol_Indra_eng_tcm11-675858.pdf)of its early-warning system for oil leaks, Repsol deployed a team of divers to inspect conditions underwater only the next day. The company says conditions weren’t safe for divers earlier.

“It’s clear there’s been a series of big mistakes,” said Gustavo Navarro, a former manager of La Pampilla who is now an energy consultant.

It is not Repsol’s first spill in Peru. A leak in 2013 attributed to a corroded pipeline released an estimated 196 barrels. The fines against the company then totaled less than $200,000, but the leftist government of President Castillo says this time will be different. Government ministers have promised “drastic” penalties, perhaps more than $50 million, with the aim of setting an example.

After operations at the refinery were suspended on Monday, the company said it would work with the government to reopen as quickly as possible. It noted that it supplies almost half of Peru’s fuel and said it would “do its best” to avoid shortages.

The company has also come under fire over its cleanup efforts.

Repsol has offered to hire fishermen and others left jobless because of the spill to help, but local news media have reported that the workers are being paid little and that some have passed out from breathing the fumes on crude-soaked beaches.

But with the spill having taken away their livelihood, at least for now, many have little choice.

The spill struck at the height of summer beach season, and ***working-class*** coastal communities that depend on fishing and tourism have been hit the hardest after a prolonged downturn tied to the pandemic.

“The restaurants, the cevicherías — no one is eating at them anymore,” said Roberto Zamora, 45, a fisherman in the district of Ventanilla, where the refinery is. “No one wants to buy fish, even fish from the high sea.”

Peruvian tourism officials put the losses at some $52 million, a figure that does not include the impact on fishermen.

Mr. Zamora said he had not worked a day since the spill first washed “black lava” across local fishing grounds, depriving him not just of his income but also of his family’s main source of protein.

He wants an explanation for what happened, a serious plan for remediation and compensation — and something even more important.

“What we want is respect,” Mr. Zamora said. “And this has been a lack of respect for our ocean. It hasn’t just affected me. It hasn’t just affected fellow fishermen. It’s an offense to the whole world.”

“They’ve poisoned the sea,” he said.

Raphael Minder and Gaia Pianigiani contributed reporting.

Raphael Minder and Gaia Pianigiani contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Top and above left: Workers in Ancon, Peru, cleaning up an oil spill after an underwater volcanic eruption in Tonga set off powerful ocean swells. Right, a fish killed in the spill. “We’re going to hold it responsible,” Peru’s president, Pedro Castillo, said of the energy company Repsol.; The cleanup operation in Ancon. “We didn’t cause the ecological disaster,” a spokeswoman for Repsol said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANGELA PONCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 4, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Republicans Want You (Not the Rich) to Pay for Infrastructure; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6308-FXJ1-JBG3-62BH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 23, 2021 Wednesday 10:06 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 917 words

**Byline:** Brian Highsmith

**Highlight:** The privatization of local public services that conservatives are pushing is a tax on all working people.

**Body**

Twenty-one senators, led by Rob Portman of Ohio, a Republican, announced a new outline agreement for an infrastructure package last week. Disagreement over tax changes derailed previous talks, but this bipartisan group claimed to have identified a set of [*proposed financing sources*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) that could pay for new spending “[*without raising taxes*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf).” Reportedly, the largest among those was [*$315 billion*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) from alternative financing schemes known as public-private partnerships.

The legislators are jumping through these hoops in the first place because for the past three decades, the Republican Party has organized its agenda around an absolutist principle: no new taxes, ever. But despite the senators’ insistence, these arrangements do not actually avoid extractive charges on residents. They just launder the new fees through private investors.

Rather than the government financing the rebuilding of roads and bridges that get you across town, you pay a private company operating in contract with the government — while policymakers pretend that they have avoided imposing new costs.

Chief among these schemes that Republicans have [*identified*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) are so-called user fees, like [*road tolls*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) and a new fee on [*vehicle miles*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) traveled. The White House [*rejected*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) such proposals as violating its own tax pledge: a promise not to increase taxes on families earning under $400,000 annually. As President Biden [*observed*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf), “If everything is paid for by a user fee, the burden falls on ***working-class*** folks, who are having trouble.”

In recent decades, state and local governments increasingly have turned to these funding arrangements. And unlike progressive taxes, user fees — whether assessed by public entities or by private firms contracted with the state — are not generally varied by ability to pay. They are imposed at a flat rate, on the poorest and wealthiest alike, assessed in proportion to their use of public infrastructure. These extractive revenue models condition access to critical goods and services on families’ available resources. And unlike with consumer goods, people often have no choice but to use these spaces.

In 2008, to avoid raising property taxes, Chicago famously [*leased*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) its parking meter infrastructure to a group of private investors. Shortly after the asset sale, residents parking downtown were paying more than [*double*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) the prior rates. The privatization of local public services can be observed in soaring [*school lunch debt*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf), exorbitant charges for [*prison phone calls*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) and [*revenue-driven overpolicing*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf).

The endpoint of this shift can be observed in rural Tennessee, where [*several jurisdictions*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) instructed firefighters not to respond to emergencies without first confirming that occupants have paid an annual service fee; if they have not, city responders stand aside and let the homes burn to the ground. The lesson is clear: Flat-rate user-funded structures privatize social risks while shielding wealth from productive public use. This underlying dynamic does not change when such fees are imposed by unaccountable private investors rather than the state.

Some particular fees — including those for street parking, and congestion pricing schemes — are often justified as internalizing public costs of socially deleterious behavior, analogous to “sin taxes” assessed on alcohol and tobacco. But if the primary motivation is to shape individual decisions, this goal arguably is undermined by the flat-rate design of most fees, which may be debilitating for poor families but are hardly noticed by the wealthy.

It should not be overlooked that transportation fees recently helped catalyze powerful social movements for tax fairness in several other countries.

In Chile, for example, a 4 percent increase in [*subway fares*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) inspired large-scale street protests in 2019 — prompting the president to cancel the hike, call for a new higher tax bracket for top incomes and initiate a [*referendum*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) on the country’s antidemocratic Constitution. About the same time, a fuel increase proposed by President Emmanuel Macron of France spurred the [*Yellow Vest*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) (Gilets Jaunes) protests that called for the reintroduction of a recently repealed wealth tax.

A better alternative to funding mechanisms that burden consumers is to make public goods available to all who wish to use them, funded through progressive taxes and provided free at the point of consumption. This vision lives in a proposal from a Boston City Council member, Michelle Wu, to create a completely free city transit system. It also is reflected in the current organizing, led in California by the [*Debt Free Justice*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) coalition, to abolish fees assessed on people who have contact with the criminal justice system.

As negotiations continue, we can learn from the harmful consequences brought about by the privatization of local public goods — and opt instead for an inclusive public infrastructure that is available, and affordable, to everyone.

Brian Highsmith is a Ph.D. student in government and social policy at Harvard and a senior researcher at Yale Law School’s Arthur Liman Center for Public Interest Law. He was a tax policy adviser on President Barack Obama’s National Economic Council.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://static.politico.com/0a/08/398515524e38ab4807521dcfbd92/bipartisan-infrastructure-framework-two-pager-final-7.pdf).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Meinzahn, via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Is Oklahoma OK With Hollywood?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:639C-KRD1-JBG3-60D4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 5, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 846 words

**Byline:** By Mekado Murphy

**Body**

The Matt Damon film ''Stillwater'' is one of the rare times that the state gets some degree of a movie spotlight.

There's a moment early in the new Matt Damon drama ''Stillwater'' that made me both proud and a little disappointed.

Damon's character, Bill, is an unemployed Oklahoma oil-rig worker interviewing for a new job when he mentions my little-known hometown, Shawnee. Exciting! But then he mispronounces it.

It's a subtle difference that perhaps only an Oklahoman would take issue with. He puts the emphasis on the first syllable (SHAW-nee), but we put the emphasis on both syllables. It's a whole thing how various towns in the state are pronounced in ways you might not expect: Miami, Okla., sounds like the Florida city until you get to the last syllable, which isn't ''mee'' but ''muh.'' The town of Prague rhymes with Craig.

My feelings are assuredly mixed about my Oklahoma roots. Growing up there, I was deeply involved but not always invested, knowing even then that it wasn't going to be the right place for my future. The state has plenty of space (maybe too much) and it was certainly easy to make friends. But I wanted more beyond its plains. Creative career options, like movie journalism gigs, were limited to say the least. I moved away a year after graduating from college and haven't lived there since, although most of my family still does. Nonetheless, there's something about Oklahoma I can't shake, and I do get a little protective of it when it comes up in movies.

Probably your first cultural experience with the state was the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical that bears its name. Oklahomans breathe that show, and the 1955 film version, as easily as air. For many theater kids there, performing in a production of it is a rite of passage. I was in two, one in junior high, another in high school. The tendency for Oklahomans to stage ''Oklahoma!'' comes up in the 2020 Charlie Kaufman drama ''I'm Thinking of Ending Things,'' which is set in Oklahoma but explores the location and the musical more as a state of mind, rather than as an actual state.

Even though ''Oklahoma!'' extols the wonderful smells of ''waving wheat'' and the joys of hawk-watching, a closer read of those lyrics might leave you with the perception of a place where there's not much to do. Hollywood probably sensed this as well.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

When I started watching movies regularly as a kid, few took place in Oklahoma. Tulsa was home to the characters in ''The Outsiders'' (1983), which ran a lot on cable. Though the location itself was eclipsed by the cast (Tom Cruise, Patrick Swayze, Matt Dillon) in a stream of career-launching performances. And there's a scene from the 1988 comedy ''Dirty Rotten Scoundrels'' that stands out in my memory: Steve Martin, playing a con man pretending to be mentally impaired, shouts the name of the state passionately and repeatedly while banging a pot. Even if it was a ruse, it was the most enthusiasm I'd ever heard drummed up for Oklahoma. Later came the 1996 blockbuster ''Twister,'' about tornado chasers, which really couldn't be set in too many other places. And yet, the state was still overshadowed by the digital tornado effects (and those cows).

More recent productions have focused on shameful episodes in history. The HBO limited series ''Watchmen'' made the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre a central, sobering presence. And Martin Scorsese's forthcoming movie, ''Killers of the Flower Moon,'' also set in the 1920s, looks at the murders of members of the Osage Nation just as the oil boom was increasing their wealth.

''Stillwater'' gets its name from the north-central home to Oklahoma State University and the popular restaurant Eskimo Joe's. The title has a nice double meaning for a contemplative thriller (still waters running deep and all). While the movie spends much of its time in Marseille, France, where Bill tries to figure out how to get his daughter out of prison, the moments in Oklahoma capture a kind of ***working-class***, no-frills milieu with an accurate familiarity. And, town pronunciations aside, Damon does a good job with an Oklahoma accent, much more so than, say, Benedict Cumberbatch in ''August: Osage County.'' Damon most definitely inhabits the kind of guy I've known back home. To see him walking around Marseille certainly feels as if Oklahoma has come to the southern coast of France.

I sense that ''Stillwater'' is using Oklahoma as a stand-in for Middle America. It would have been nice if the film spent a bit more time in its namesake to characterize it beyond a basic heartland locale, but it does paint Bill with a complexity that belies assumptions that particular characters make about him.

I am holding out hope that Oklahoma will get more chances to shine on the big screen. Perhaps someone will again approach the state in the same spirit as Rodgers and Hammerstein and figure out how to feature it, warts and all, in a way that is genuine and captures some sense of its simple but earnest, character. Who knows, maybe even Shawnee will finally get its close-up.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/movies/stillwater-oklahoma-matt-damon.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/04/movies/stillwater-oklahoma-matt-damon.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Matt Damon as an Oklahoman abroad in ''Stillwater.'' Above, Shirley Jones and Gordon MacRae in ''Oklahoma!,'' easily the best-known film about the state. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSICA FORDE/FOCUS FEATURES

20TH CENTURY FOX, VIA EVERETT COLLECTION)

**Load-Date:** August 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Radical Shift From Democratic Norms***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6499-K7X1-JBG3-621F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 14, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2021 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1231 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

American politics these days can often seem fairly normal. President Biden has had both big accomplishments and big setbacks in his first year, as is typical. In Congress, members are haggling over bills and passing some of them. At the Supreme Court, justices are hearing cases. Daily media coverage tends to reflect this apparent sense of political normalcy.

But American politics today is not really normal. It may instead be in the midst of a radical shift away from the democratic rules and traditions that have guided the country for a very long time.

An antidemocratic movement, inspired by former President Donald J. Trump but much larger than him, is making significant progress. In the states that decide modern presidential elections, this movement has already changed some laws and ousted election officials, with the aim of overturning future results. It has justified the changes with blatantly false statements claiming that Biden did not really win the 2020 election.

The movement has encountered surprisingly little opposition. Most leading Republican politicians have either looked the other way or supported the antidemocratic movement. In the House, Republicans ousted Liz Cheney from a leadership position because she called out Mr. Trump's lies.

The pushback within the Republican Party has been so weak that about 60 percent of Republican adults now tell pollsters that they believe the 2020 election was stolen -- a view that's simply wrong.

Most Democratic officials, for their part, have been focused on issues other than election security, like Covid-19 and the economy. It's true that congressional Democrats have tried to pass a new voting rights bill, only to be stymied by Republican opposition and the filibuster. But these Democratic efforts have been sprawling and unfocused. They have included proposals -- on voter-ID rules and mail-in ballots, for example -- that are almost certainly less important than a federal law to block the overturning of elections.

All of which has created a remarkable possibility: In the 2024 presidential election, Republican officials in at least one state may overturn a legitimate election result, citing fraud that does not exist, and award the state's electoral votes to the Republican nominee. Trump tried to use this tactic in 2020, but local officials rebuffed him.

Since then, his supporters have begun a campaign -- with the Orwellian name ''Stop the Steal'' -- to ensure success next time. Steven K. Bannon has played a central role, using his podcast to encourage Trump supporters to take over positions in election administration, ProPublica has explained.

''This is a five-alarm fire,'' Jocelyn Benson, the Democratic secretary of state in Michigan, who presided over the 2020 vote count there, told The Times. ''If people in general, leaders and citizens, aren't taking this as the most important issue of our time and acting accordingly, then we may not be able to ensure democracy prevails again in '24.''

Barton Gellman, who wrote a recent Atlantic magazine article about the movement, told Terry Gross of NPR last week, ''This is, I believe, a democratic emergency, and that without very strong and systematic pushback from protectors of democracy, we're going to lose something that we can't afford to lose about the way we run elections.''

Theda Skocpol, a Harvard political scientist, notes that the movement is bigger than Trump. ''I think things have now moved to the point that many Republican Party officials and elected officeholders are self-starters,'' she told Thomas Edsall of Times Opinion.

In Plain Sight

The main battlegrounds are swing states where Republicans control the legislature, like Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Republicans control these legislatures because of both gerrymandered districts and Democratic weakness outside of major metro areas. (One way Democrats can push back against the antidemocratic movement: Make a bigger effort to win ***working-class*** votes.) The Constitution lets state legislatures set the rules for choosing presidential electors.

''None of this is happening behind closed doors,'' Jamelle Bouie, a Times columnist, recently wrote. ''We are headed for a crisis of some sort. When it comes, we can be shocked that it is actually happening, but we shouldn't be surprised.''

Here is an overview of recent developments:

ARIZONA Republican legislators have passed a law taking away authority over election lawsuits from the secretary of state, who's now a Democrat, and giving it to the attorney general, a Republican. Legislators are debating another bill that would allow them to revoke election certification ''by majority vote at any time before the presidential inauguration.''

GEORGIALast year, Brad Raffensperger, Georgia's Republican secretary of state, helped stop Mr. Trump's attempts to reverse the result. State legislators in Georgia have since weakened his powers, and a Trump-backed candidate is running to replace Mr. Raffensperger next year. Republicans have also passed a law that gives a commission they control the power to remove local election officials.

MICHIGANKristina Karamo, a Trump-endorsed candidate who has repeated the lie that the 2020 elections were fraudulent, is running for secretary of state, the office that oversees elections. (Republican candidates are running on similar messages in Colorado, Florida, Nevada, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas and elsewhere, according to ABC News.)

PENNSYLVANIA Republicans are trying to amend the state's Constitution to make the secretary of state an elected position, rather than one that the governor appoints. Pennsylvania is also one of the states where Trump allies -- like Stephen Lindemuth, who attended the Jan. 6 rally that turned into an attack on Congress -- have won local races to oversee elections.

WISCONSINSenator Ron Johnson is urging the Republican-controlled Legislature to take full control of federal elections. Doing so could remove the governor, currently a Democrat, from the process, and weaken the bipartisan state elections commission.

What's Next?

The new antidemocratic movement may still fail. This year, for example, Republican legislators in seven states proposed bills that would have given partisan officials a direct ability to change election results. None of the bills passed.

Probably the most important figures on this issue are Republican officials and voters who believe in democracy and are uncomfortable with using raw political power to overturn an election result.

Miles Taylor, a former Trump administration official, has helped to start the Renew America Movement, which supports candidates -- of either party -- running against Trump-backed Republicans. It is active in congressional races but does not have enough resources to compete in the state contests that often determine election procedures, Mr. Taylor told The Times.

Mr. Gellman, the Atlantic writer, argues that Democrats and independents -- as well as journalists -- can make a difference by paying more attention. ''Grass-roots organizers who are in support of democratic institutions,'' he said on NPR, ''could be doing what the Republicans are doing at the precinct and the county and the state level in terms of organizing to control election authorities to ensure that they remain nonpartisan or neutral.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/pageoneplus/14rex-nl.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/pageoneplus/14rex-nl.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The U.S. Capitol last week. An antidemocratic movement is working to change election laws. (PHOTOGRAPH BY STEFANI REYNOLDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Why Are Oil Prices So High and Will They Stay That Way?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P0-FMV1-DXY4-X2R9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2022 Wednesday 11:20 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS; economy

**Length:** 1255 words

**Byline:** Clifford Krauss

**Highlight:** Geopolitical tensions and a growing disparity between supply and demand have driven up prices. Here is what that means and what could happen next.

**Body**

Geopolitical tensions and a growing disparity between supply and demand have driven up prices. Here is what that means and what could happen next.

HOUSTON — Oil prices are increasing, again, casting a shadow over the economy, driving up inflation and eroding consumer confidence.

Crude prices rose more than 15 percent in January alone, with the global benchmark price crossing $90 a barrel for the first time in more than seven years, as fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine grew.

Though the summer driving season is still months away, the average price for regular gasoline is fast approaching $3.40 a gallon, roughly a dollar higher than it was a year ago, according to AAA.

The Biden administration said in November that it would release 50 million barrels of oil from the nation’s strategic reserves to relieve the pressure on consumers, but the move hasn’t made much of a difference.

Many energy analysts predict that oil could soon touch $100 a barrel, even as electric cars become more popular and the coronavirus pandemic persists. Exxon Mobil and other oil companies that only a year ago were considered endangered dinosaurs by some Wall Street analysts are thriving, raking in their biggest profits in years.

Why are oil prices suddenly so high?

The pandemic depressed energy prices in 2020, even sending the [*U.S. benchmark oil price below zero*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/20/business/oil-prices.html) for the first time ever. But prices have snapped back faster and more than many analysts had expected in large part because supply has not kept up with demand.

Western oil companies, partly under pressure from investors and environmental activists, are drilling fewer wells than they did before the pandemic to restrain the increase in supply. Industry executives say they are trying not to make the same mistake they made in the past when they pumped too much oil when prices were high, leading to a collapse in prices.

Elsewhere, in countries like Ecuador, Kazakhstan and Libya, natural disasters and political turbulence have curbed output in recent months.

“Unplanned outages have flipped what was thought to be a pivot towards surplus into a deep production gap,” said Louise Dickson, an oil markets analyst at Rystad Energy, a research and consulting firm.

On the demand side, much of the world is learning to cope with the pandemic and people are eager to shop and make other trips. Wary of coming in contact with an infectious virus, many are choosing to drive rather than taking public transportation.

But the most immediate and critical factor is geopolitical.

A potential Russian invasion of Ukraine has “the oil market on edge,” said Ben Cahill, a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. “In a tight market, any significant disruptions could send prices well above $100 per barrel,” Mr. Cahill wrote in a report this week.

Russia produces 10 million barrels of oil a day, or roughly one of every 10 barrels used around the world on any given day. Americans would not be directly hurt in a significant way if Russian exports stopped, because the country sends only about 700,000 barrels a day to the United States. That relatively modest amount could easily be replaced with oil from Canada and other countries.

But any interruption of Russian shipments that transit through Ukraine, or the sabotage of other pipelines in northern Europe, would cripple much of the continent and distort the global energy supply chain. That’s because, traders say, the rest of the world does not have the spare capacity to replace Russian oil.

Even if Russian oil shipments are not interrupted, the United States and its allies could impose sanctions or export controls on Russian companies, limiting their access to equipment, which could gradually reduce production in that country.

In addition, interruptions of Russian natural gas exports to Europe could force some utilities to produce more electricity by burning oil rather than gas. That would raise demand and prices worldwide.

What can the United States and its allies do if Russian production is disrupted?

The United States, Japan, European countries and even China could release more crude from their strategic reserves. Such moves could help, especially if a crisis is short-lived. But the reserves would not be nearly enough if Russian oil supplies were interrupted for months or years.

Western oil companies that have pledged not to produce too much oil are likely to change their approach if Russia was unable or unwilling to supply as much oil as it did. They would have big financial incentives — from a surging oil price — to drill more wells. That said, it would take those businesses months to ramp up production.

What is OPEC doing?

President Biden has been urging the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries to pump more oil, but several members have been falling short of their monthly production quotas, and some may not have the capacity to quickly increase output. OPEC members and their allies, Russia among them, [*agreed on Wednesday to stick to a plan for increasing production*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/02/business/opec-meeting-oil.html) next month by a relatively modest 400,000 barrels a day.

In addition, if Russian supplies are suddenly reduced, Washington is likely to put pressure on Saudi Arabia to raise production independently of the cartel. Analysts think that the kingdom has several million barrels of spare capacity that it could tap in a crisis.

What impact would higher oil prices have on the U.S. economy?

A big jump in oil prices would push gasoline prices even higher, and that would hurt consumers. ***Working-class*** and rural Americans would be hurt the most because they tend to drive more. They also drive older, less fuel-efficient vehicles. And energy costs tend to represent a larger percentage of their incomes, so price increases hit them harder than more affluent people or city dwellers who have access to trains and buses.

But the direct economic impact on the nation would be more modest than in previous decades because the United States produces more and imports less oil since drilling in shale fields exploded around 2010 because of hydraulic fracturing. The United States is now a net exporter of fossil fuels, and the economies of several states, particularly Texas and Louisiana, could benefit from higher prices.

What would it take for oil prices to fall?

Oil prices go up and down in cycles, and there are several reasons prices could fall in the next few months. The pandemic is far from over, and China has shut down several cities to stop the spread of the virus, slowing its economy and demand for energy. Russia and the West could reach an agreement — formal or tacit — that forestalls a full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

And the United States and its allies could [*restore a 2015 nuclear agreement with Iran*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/us/politics/iran-nuclear-deal-biden.html) that former President Donald J. Trump abandoned. Such a deal would allow Iran to sell oil much more easily than now. Analysts think the country could export a million or more barrels daily if the nuclear deal is revived.

Ultimately, high prices could depress demand for oil enough that prices begin to come down. One of the main financial incentives for buying electric cars, for example, is that electricity tends to be cheaper per mile than gasoline. Sales of electric cars are growing fast in Europe and China and increasingly also in the United States.

PHOTO: A liquified natural gas facility in Italy. Global tensions are disrupting energy markets while supply has not kept up with demand. Prices for oil and natural gas are spiking. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CLARA VANNUCCI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Did Trump Start a Political Earthquake With These Voters?; Ross Douthat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:649H-WNF1-JBG3-64F3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 15, 2021 Wednesday 20:49 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1311 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** How Hispanics became swing voters.

**Body**

The chart that should frighten Democratic strategists appears in the 23rd slide of a [*newly released report*](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d30982b599bde00016db472/t/61b7e8e75c74f5558036268b/1639442667560/Post-Mortem+Part+Two+FINAL+Dec+13.pdf) from Equis Research, which tries to explain the Hispanic shift toward the Republican Party in the 2020 election. It shows how favorably Hispanic voters responded to a variety of Donald Trump’s positions and policies, on Covid and the economy and immigration — more favorably, in many cases, than many liberals would have expected.

Some responses aren’t all that surprising: 77 percent favorability for pandemic stimulus, 74 percent favorability for “rapid vaccine development,” 69 percent for middle-class tax cuts (who could be against middle-class tax cuts?). Some of them offer interesting evidence that Trump’s Covid insouciance, his attempt to prioritize economic reopening over precaution, was popular with Hispanic voters: “reopen economy” at 66 percent, “Covid policy set by states” at 62 percent, “living without fear of Covid” at 55 percent.

But it’s the numbers on immigration and border policy that are particularly notable. Trump’s family-separation policy, not surprisingly, polls at 28 percent. But “more border spending” gets 55 percent approval, “limiting refugees/asylum” receives 51 percent and even “reducing legal immigration” gets 49 percent.

At the same time, “more deportations” and “build the wall” poll lower, at 42 percent and 39 percent. But then recall that Trump got only 38 percent of the Hispanic vote overall. Which means that in an important sense, despite overperforming expectations, he arguably underperformed his potential with Hispanics. He didn’t even consolidate the full share of voters who favored building his border wall, let alone the share that supported other forms of immigration restriction, let alone the share that agreed with his Covid response.

Or as the report puts it, “Absent any context, the numbers might even suggest that the incumbent should have done better than he did.”

This is just one survey, but it’s congruent with a lot of different data sources suggesting that Trump’s improvement with Hispanics in 2020, rather than an outlier that other Republicans won’t hit, represents a foundation on which the G.O.P. could potentially build further gains. Ruy Teixeira, the analyst whose famous “emerging Democratic majority” thesis (shared with John Judis) was welcomed and then misinterpreted by Democrats banking on the inevitable march of demographic change, has been particularly aggressive in warning about this scenario. In a [*recent post*](https://theliberalpatriot.substack.com/p/the-democrats-hispanic-voter-problem-dfc), he rattled off several polling results suggesting that Republicans could be moving close to parity in the Hispanic vote — a true political earthquake if it ever happened.

In the long-ago days of the George W. Bush presidency there was a lot of talk from pro-immigration Republicans about how Hispanics were “natural Republicans” — meaning family-oriented, religious, hardworking, in love with the American dream. But as the political parties were aligned in those days Hispanics fit pretty comfortably in the Democratic coalition. Even if they were more culturally conservative than white Democrats, they [*prioritized*](https://prospect.org/power/myth-buster-latinos-natural-conservatives/) issues like health care and jobs and education and generally trusted the Democratic Party more on a range of domestic policy questions.

The Republican elites who imagined that they could make inroads with Hispanics by passing a comprehensive immigration reform bill weren’t completely out of touch, since there was often strong Hispanic support for that kind of measure. But the Republican Party’s core obstacle was always economic policy. Bush’s “compassionate conservatism” probably helped him to [*a relatively strong showing*](https://www.americanprogress.org/article/public-opinion-watch-64/) with Hispanics in 2004, although one overstated by flawed exit polls (he probably got about 39 percent, not the oft-quoted 44 percent). But thereafter the party moved right on economics, and the sequence of Bush’s push for Social Security privatization, the Tea Party’s anti-spending zeal and then the Romney-Ryan ticket’s promise of entitlement cuts all made the Republicans too economically libertarian to appeal to most Hispanics.

Since then, though, three crucial things have changed. First, the shape of immigration is different: Both legal and illegal immigration have become less Latin American and more global, and there has been a new pattern of rushes to the border by asylum-seekers who are more likely to come from Central America than Mexico. A simple story in which American Hispanics effectively saw themselves in every subsequent wave of migrants never quite fit reality, but for, say, a second-generation Mexican American in Texas, it fits the reality of 2021 less than the reality of 15 years ago.

As this shift was happening, the Democrats were moving leftward on most fronts, following public opinion at first (on same-sex marriage, for instance) but then arguably outpacing it. On economic policy, what counts as centrism from Joe Manchin today would have placed him to the left of Barack Obama in 2010; on cultural and racial issues, the radicalization of white Democrats has moved them to the left of many Hispanic voters; on social issues, the kind of anti-abortion Democrat who once held the balance of power in the House of Representatives has mostly gone extinct.

Then Trump’s ascent in 2016 suspended the Republican commitment to austerity, entitlement cuts and other features of its Tea Party-era agenda. That didn’t help Republicans make gains with Hispanics in 2016 because Trumpian bigotry was front and center — though keen observers noted that he did no worse than Romney in 2012.

But the subsequent strength of the Trump economy, the sidelining of his party’s deficit hawks and his administration’s willingness to spend money in the face of the pandemic all created an opening for Republicans to cast themselves as pro-capitalism moderates and to portray the leftward-moving, Bernie Sanders-influenced Democrats as socialists. That frame was effective — the apparent potency of the “socialism” charge is discussed in the Equis Research report — and much more to the G.O.P.’s advantage than a clash between stringent government cutters and moderate-welfare-state liberals, which was how the parties often appeared in the Obama era.

Its emerging opportunity with Hispanic voters, then, crystallizes the [*larger Republican Party opportunity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/27/opinion/republicans-trump.html) right now — where it’s clear enough that a party that was genuinely moderate on economics, Trumpishly populist without being Trumpishly toxic, could lay claim to a lot of swing voters, and all without making the sweeping moves leftward on issues like immigration that were urged on Republicans 10 or 15 years ago.

The question, as always, is how much of the party’s core of donors and activists and voters wants to be economically moderate or wants to be nontoxic; I still think the answer is “not enough.”

The Democrats’ Hispanic challenge likewise distills their larger political problem: How to [*recreate some version*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/opinion/democrats-david-shor.html) of their early Obama-era messaging, which presented a moderate liberalism that appealed more effectively to ***working-class*** voters of all races, in a very different social and economic landscape, in a party with a much more powerful and demanding progressive wing.

One way or another, that adaptation will be fraught and painful. But this is the moment when the Democrats need to do it — when the Hispanic realignment is still more hypothetical than real, still more visible in issue surveys than electoral results, still only a harbinger of an epic political defeat rather than the thing itself.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CALLAGHAN O’HARE/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** December 15, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Is Hollywood Doing Fine With Oklahoma?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6397-4461-DXY4-X3YC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 4, 2021 Wednesday 13:32 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 879 words

**Byline:** Mekado Murphy

**Highlight:** The Matt Damon film “Stillwater” is one of the rare times that the state gets some degree of a movie spotlight.

**Body**

The Matt Damon film “Stillwater” is one of the rare times that the state gets some degree of a movie spotlight.

There’s a moment early in the [*new Matt Damon drama “Stillwater”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/stillwater-review.html) that made me both proud and a little disappointed.

Damon’s character, Bill, is an unemployed Oklahoma oil-rig worker interviewing for a new job when he mentions my little-known hometown, Shawnee. Exciting! But then he mispronounces it.

It’s a subtle difference that perhaps only an Oklahoman would take issue with. He puts the emphasis on the first syllable (SHAW-nee), but we put the emphasis on both syllables. It’s a whole thing how various towns in the state are pronounced in ways you might not expect: Miami, Okla., sounds like the Florida city until you get to the last syllable, which isn’t “mee” but “muh.” The town of Prague rhymes with Craig.

My feelings are assuredly mixed about my Oklahoma roots. Growing up there, I was deeply involved but not always invested, knowing even then that it wasn’t going to be the right place for my future. The state has plenty of space (maybe too much) and it was certainly easy to make friends. But I wanted more beyond its plains. Creative career options, like movie journalism gigs, were limited to say the least. I moved away a year after graduating from college and haven’t lived there since, although most of my family still does. Nonetheless, there’s something about Oklahoma I can’t shake, and I do get a little protective of it when it comes up in movies.

Probably your first cultural experience with the state was the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical that bears its name. Oklahomans breathe that show, and the 1955 film version, as easily as air. For many theater kids there, performing in a production of it is a rite of passage. I was in two, one in junior high, another in high school. The tendency for Oklahomans to stage “Oklahoma!” comes up in the 2020 [*Charlie Kaufman drama “I’m Thinking of Ending Things,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/stillwater-review.html) which is set in Oklahoma but explores the location and the musical more as a state of mind, rather than as an actual state.

Even though “Oklahoma!” extols the wonderful smells of “waving wheat” and the joys of hawk-watching, a closer read of those lyrics might leave you with the perception of a place where there’s not much to do. Hollywood probably sensed this as well.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/stillwater-review.html)]

When I started watching movies regularly as a kid, few took place in Oklahoma. Tulsa was home to the characters in “The Outsiders” (1983), which ran a lot on cable. Though the location itself was eclipsed by the cast (Tom Cruise, Patrick Swayze, Matt Dillon) in a stream of career-launching performances. And there’s a scene from the 1988 comedy “Dirty Rotten Scoundrels” that stands out in my memory: Steve Martin, playing a con man pretending to be mentally impaired, [*shouts the name of the state passionately and repeatedly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/stillwater-review.html) while banging a pot. Even if it was a ruse, it was the most enthusiasm I’d ever heard drummed up for Oklahoma. Later came the 1996 blockbuster “Twister,” about tornado chasers, which really couldn’t be set in too many other places. And yet, the state was still overshadowed by the digital tornado effects ([*and those cows*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/stillwater-review.html)).

More recent productions have focused on shameful episodes in history. The HBO limited series “Watchmen” made the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre a central, sobering presence. And Martin Scorsese’s forthcoming movie, “Killers of the Flower Moon,” also set in the 1920s, looks at the murders of members of the Osage Nation just as the oil boom was increasing their wealth.

“Stillwater” gets its name from the north-central home to Oklahoma State University and the popular restaurant [*Eskimo Joe’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/stillwater-review.html). The title has a nice double meaning for a contemplative thriller (still waters running deep and all). While the movie spends much of its time in Marseille, France, where Bill tries to figure out how to get his daughter out of prison, the moments in Oklahoma capture a kind of ***working-class***, no-frills milieu with an accurate familiarity. And, town pronunciations aside, Damon does a good job with an Oklahoma accent, much more so than, say, [*Benedict Cumberbatch in “August: Osage County.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/29/movies/stillwater-review.html) Damon most definitely inhabits the kind of guy I’ve known back home. To see him walking around Marseille certainly feels as if Oklahoma has come to the southern coast of France.

I sense that “Stillwater” is using Oklahoma as a stand-in for Middle America. It would have been nice if the film spent a bit more time in its namesake to characterize it beyond a basic heartland locale, but it does paint Bill with a complexity that belies assumptions that particular characters make about him.

I am holding out hope that Oklahoma will get more chances to shine on the big screen. Perhaps someone will again approach the state in the same spirit as Rodgers and Hammerstein and figure out how to feature it, warts and all, in a way that is genuine and captures some sense of its simple but earnest, character. Who knows, maybe even Shawnee will finally get its close-up.

PHOTOS: Top, Matt Damon as an Oklahoman abroad in “Stillwater.” Above, Shirley Jones and Gordon MacRae in “Oklahoma!,” easily the best-known film about the state. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSICA FORDE/FOCUS FEATURES; 20TH CENTURY FOX, VIA EVERETT COLLECTION)

**Load-Date:** August 5, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Fewer Men in College, Yet the Pay Gap Persists***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63K2-6191-DXY4-X4TM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 10, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 964 words

**Byline:** By Kevin Carey

**Body**

Women are overrepresented in low-paying professions that require college credentials.

The coronavirus upended the lives of millions of college students. The Wall Street Journal reported this week that men have been hit particularly hard -- accounting for roughly three-fourths of pandemic-driven dropouts -- and depicted an accelerating crisis in male enrollment.

A closer look at historical trends and the labor market reveals a more complex picture, one in which women keep playing catch-up in an economy structured to favor men.

In many ways, the college gender imbalance is not new. Women have outnumbered men on campus since the late 1970s. The ratio of female to male undergraduates increased much more from 1970 to 1980 than from 1980 to the present. And the numbers haven't changed much in recent decades. In 1992, 55 percent of college students were women. By 2019, the number had nudged up to 57.4 percent.

While the shift in the college gender ratio is often characterized as men ''falling behind,'' men are actually more likely to go to college today than they were when they were the majority, many decades ago. In 1970, 32 percent of men 18 to 24 were enrolled in college, a level that was most likely inflated by the opportunity to avoid being drafted into the Vietnam War. That percentage dropped to 24 percent in 1978 and then steadily grew to a stable 37 percent to 39 percent over the last decade.

The gender ratio mostly changed because female enrollment increased even faster, more than doubling over the last half-century.

Because of the change in ratio, some selective colleges discriminate against women in admissions to maintain a gender balance, as The Journal reported. Generally, admissions officials prefer to limit the disparity to 55 percent female and 45 percent male. Their reason not to let the gender ratio drift further toward 2 to 1 is straightforward: Such a ratio would most likely cause a decrease in applications.

In a New York Times essay in 2006 titled ''To All the Girls I've Rejected,'' the dean of admissions at Kenyon College at the time explained: ''Beyond the availability of dance partners for the winter formal, gender balance matters in ways both large and small on a residential college campus. Once you become decidedly female in enrollment, fewer males and, as it turns out, fewer females find your campus attractive.''

During the pandemic, many undergraduates struggled to make the grade. Some left school altogether. But according to the National Student Clearinghouse, the initial male-dominated pandemic enrollment shock was almost entirely confined to community colleges that are open to all. In fact, the Clearinghouse data shows that male enrollment in public and private nonprofit four-year colleges dropped more from 2018 to 2019, before the pandemic, than from 2019 to 2020.

The raw numbers don't take into account the varying value of college degrees. Men still dominate in fields like technology and engineering, which offer some of the highest salaries for recent graduates. Perhaps not coincidentally, the professors in those fields remain overwhelmingly male.

Women surged into college because they were able to, but also because many had to. There are still some good-paying jobs available to men without college credentials. There are relatively few for such women. And despite the considerable cost in time and money of earning a degree, many female-dominated jobs don't pay well.

Consider a woman working as a cosmetologist who took out a student loan to earn a credential and complete the arduous process of getting an occupational license. Her husband in a male-dominated ***working-class*** field is more likely to have no degree at all. One way to see that couple is as an example of the greater likelihood of graduation among women than men. Another way is how our society requires women to spend more time and money than men to get a job. The female-to-male gender ratio is highest in for-profit colleges, which often overcharge students for worthless degrees.

The fact that the male-female wage gap remains large after more than four decades in which women outnumbered men in college strongly suggests that college alone offers a narrow view of opportunity. Women often seem stuck in place: As they overcome obstacles and use their degrees to move into male-dominated fields, the fields offer less pay in return.

None of this diminishes the significance of the male decrease in college enrollment and graduation. Educators view the male-driven dive in community college enrollment over the last 18 months as a calamity. The pandemic confirmed what was already known. Higher socioeconomic classes are deeply embedded in college and will bear considerable cost and inconvenience to stay there, even if it means watching lectures on a laptop in the room above your parent's garage and missing a season of parties and football games.

For other people, college attendance is far more fragile. It does not define their identities and is not as important as earning a steady paycheck or starting and nurturing a family. In a time of crisis, it can be delayed -- but the reality is that people who drop out of college are statistically unlikely to complete a degree.

Last year, women were less likely than men to leave community college, despite their disproportionate responsibility for caregiving and domestic work, because they no doubt understood the bleak long-term job prospects for women without a credential.

But about 200,000 fewer women were enrolled in community college last year nonetheless. If we're looking for a college enrollment crisis, that's also a good place to start.

Kevin Carey directs the education policy program at New America. You can follow him on Twitter at @kevincarey1.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/upshot/college-admissions-men.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/upshot/college-admissions-men.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Some selective colleges have higher admissions criteria for women to maintain gender balance. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brian Snyder/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Biden Is No Sure Thing for 2024. What About Buttigieg? Harris? Even Whitmer?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66V9-Y1T1-DXY4-X49R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 18; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 3123 words

**Byline:** By Frank Bruni

**Body**

The midterms were very good to President Biden.

His party avoided the shellacking that it suffered halfway through President Barack Obama's first term and the drubbing that Republicans experienced after two years of President Donald Trump. After two years of Biden, voters gave Democrats a gentle slap on the wrist. That makes him look like a miracle worker and may well muffle chatter about whether he should run for a second term.

But the noise won't go away entirely. There's the matter of Biden's age, and there's the matter of Biden's energy.

He was already the oldest president in American history when he took office at 78. He'd be just shy of 82 on Election Day in 2024. It shows. He doesn't project anything like the ebullience he once did. His flubs transcend malapropisms. Last month, he erroneously claimed that student loan forgiveness -- which he decreed by executive action -- passed Congress by a few votes. That was the most glaring misstatement of his own record but hardly the only one.

When Robert Costa of CBS News interviewed Representative Jim Clyburn, the South Carolina Democrat, just before the midterm results came in and asked him whether Biden should seek re-election, Clyburn declined to answer. He said that the Democrats' decisions going forward should take into account ''who has what capacity to do what,'' according to a tweet of Costa's on Tuesday night.

Does Biden have the grip and glow to make certain that Donald Trump or some other Republican doesn't win the presidency in two years? Before the midterms, polling showed that a significant majority of Democrats craved the chance to pick somebody else. I'm not sure that this week's results will change that sentiment much. It's how I feel.

But which somebody? Here's an assessment (and rough ranking) of various Democrats who would be possible contenders in 2024 or who are poised to emerge as party leaders on the far side of Biden, whenever that is.

Pay the closest attention to ...

Kamala Harris

Pete Buttigieg

Gretchen Whitmer

Many Democrats cringe at the thought of Kamala Harris as the party's 2024 nominee. They regard that as party suicide, pointing to her persistently low approval ratings and her miserable 2020 presidential campaign, which ended before the Iowa caucuses began.

But Biden chose her as a running mate because she has credentials and appeal, and her current perch would make her the ipso facto front-runner. ''I think she's one of the reasons Biden won, and she never got credit for that,'' Doug Sosnik, a veteran Democratic strategist, told me. ''She energized the base. She was good on the stump, and she handled herself well in the debate.''

She also made history -- she's the first woman, the first Black woman and the first South Asian in the vice presidency -- and she'd be those same firsts in the presidency, an exhilarating prospect that could dissuade some would-be competitors.

Harris would be in an especially strong position if Biden dallied before deciding against another presidential run; a compressed time frame could squash candidacies by politicians who still need to build name recognition, political networks and donor lists. ''There are only two or three people who can add water and go,'' said Bakari Sellers, a former Democratic lawmaker in South Carolina, which has a pivotal Democratic primary. He named Harris, Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar. He left out Bernie Sanders, later saying that Sanders, 81, is ''probably too old.''

Buttigieg, 40, would be the second-youngest American president on Inauguration Day 2025, only a month and a half older than Theodore Roosevelt. He represents stark generational change. And most of the Democratic insiders I spoke with predicted that he'd be a formidable candidate, based on his breakout success in 2020 -- he essentially came in third, behind Biden and Sanders, in the Democratic primaries -- and his experience as transportation secretary. A gay man with a husband and two children, he, like Harris, represents progress toward equality. And he has proved to be one of the party's gamest and nimblest messengers, his appearances on Fox News and MSNBC yielding snippets shared widely on social media.

''You have to give credit to a guy who went from being a mediocre mayor of Indiana's fourth-largest city to getting the most delegates in Iowa,'' said Ari Rabin-Havt, who was Sanders's deputy campaign manager in 2020, referring to Buttigieg's time in South Bend. ''I think he's the most potent wine-track candidate who exists.''

Rabin-Havt likes to categorize Democratic candidates as ''wine track'' (Buttigieg, Elizabeth Warren and other Democrats favored by voters with more education and money) or ''beer track'' (politicians, like Sanders, who are most ardently backed by a less affluent group). Biden won the nomination because he was acceptable to both contingents.

Can Buttigieg clear that bar? ''He was an intellectual force in the Democratic primaries,'' said Joel Benenson, who was Barack Obama's chief pollster in 2008 and 2012 and whose firm did polling for Buttigieg in 2020. ''He may have been a little too intellectual.'' And he didn't generate excitement among Black voters, who are critical to Democrats' fortunes. ''Serious candidates and strategists know that you must show up early and consistently with Black voters because they rightly see showing up late as checking a box rather than a serious commitment,'' Benenson told me.

Additionally, Buttigieg wouldn't be the ''new kid on the block'' in the 2024 cycle, one longtime Democratic strategist said. ''He'd be treated differently.''

Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat who just won re-election by an impressive margin in the key presidential battleground of Michigan, is Pabst Blue Ribbon with just the right measure of merlot. She ''thinks like a general, looks like a '40s film star and talks like she's ice fishing for muskie,'' Sarah Vowell wrote in The Times in August 2020. Vowell grouped Whitmer with Biden and several other nationally prominent politicians who, unlike every president since Jimmy Carter, graduated from public universities (in Whitmer's case, Michigan State, both college and law school). She's also the subject of an adoring song by the Detroit rapper GmacCash, ''Big Gretch.'' The nickname took, and it's gold.

Many prominent Democrats urged Biden to run with Whitmer in 2020 -- that's how potent they felt her pull could be. There's no reason to think that it has weakened with more experience. And it's arguably the right kind of experience. Governors have an easier time separating themselves from Washington -- and from voters' cynicism about it -- than politicians who've been working in the capital for many years. There will no doubt be some governor in any post-Biden mix. I don't spot another with more potential than Whitmer. ''Big Gretch is going to be very formidable,'' Sellers said.

Nicole Hemmer, a political scientist at Vanderbilt University and the author of the recently published book ''Partisans: The Conservative Revolutionaries Who Remade American Politics in the 1900s,'' noted that Whitmer ''has been targeted by the far right, so it fits into the narrative of dangers to democracy.'' ''On paper,'' Hemmer continued, ''it makes a lot of sense. I just don't know if she has that punch to break through in terms of national media.''

Indeed, Whitmer, 51, hasn't spent much time in the national spotlight, so it's unclear how commanding she'd be on a larger stage. In a recent debate against her Republican opponent for governor, Tudor Dixon, she was solid but unspectacular.

Keep an eye on ...

Amy Klobuchar

Elizabeth Warren

Roy Cooper

Sherrod Brown

J.B. Pritzker

Ro Khanna

Amy Klobuchar lasted much longer in the 2020 primaries than Harris did, and with each passing week, the Minnesota senator, now 62, honed her message and voice. She could build from there. And at least in Minnesota, she has shown the ability to win support among Democratic progressives and moderates alike.

But she's certainly no progressive darling, and just as a 2024 Democratic field would almost certainly have a governor in the foreground, it would have a progressive there, too. If Sanders doesn't run, does Elizabeth Warren -- who, at 73, is eight years his junior -- become their standard-bearer? She has undoubtedly learned from her 2020 campaign, which trailed off after an early surge but revealed her to be not only thoroughly prepared but also dynamic in debates and on the stump.

I mentioned governors. Roy Cooper, the Democrat at the helm of North Carolina, has twice been elected in years (2016, 2020) when Trump won North Carolina and when North Carolina Republicans prevailed in fiercely contested Senate races, too.

That amounts to at least some promise of crossover appeal in rigidly and toxically partisan times. Cooper, 65, could be a tonic -- affable, sensible, with no whiff of ideologue in him. I may be biased; he's my governor, and I think he has done an admirable, balanced job of alternately stymieing and working with the Republicans who control both chambers of the state legislature. He praises and models the qualities of competence and pragmatism. Additionally, his current stint as chair of the Democratic Governors Association means that he has made or strengthened connections beyond his state, collecting I.O.U.s. ''There's a charisma issue,'' one Democratic insider, echoing others, confided in me. But, she added, ''I do think his name will be floated, and he'd be an interesting candidate.''

Although Tim Ryan's loss to J.D. Vance in the Senate race in Ohio made that state look redder than ever, its voters just four years ago awarded Senator Sherrod Brown, a Democrat, a third term -- and they did so by a margin of almost seven percentage points. That's a testament to the breadth of his appeal. ''If you ask me who in the Democratic Party has the trust of the progressive community and the pulse of ***working-class*** Americans, that's Sherrod Brown,'' Sosnik told me. ''He bridges the wings of the party.'' But Brown, 70, passed on the 2020 presidential race despite considerable interest in him. Several Democratic insiders told me that he's simply too equivocal about his intentions and ambition to mount a winning presidential campaign.

Gov. J.B. Pritzker of Illinois has won fans for his fiery moments of refreshing bluntness. ''There's a kind of strange internet sparkle around Governor Pritzker,'' Hemmer said. The mix of urban and rural areas in Illinois provides an instructive lesson for a national campaign. And several Democratic strategists pointed out that if Biden leaves his would-be successors with little time to raise the money they need, Pritzker, 57, could fund his own campaign. One strategist quipped that he'd be an especially fascinating adversary for Trump, ''a real billionaire against a fake billionaire.'' But is a billionaire the right Democratic fit?

The leap from House member to presidential nominee is a big and unlikely one -- just ask Tim Ryan and Eric Swalwell, who failed to make it in 2020 -- but that might not prevent Representative Ro Khanna, a California Democrat, from trying. A strong communicator who represents Silicon Valley but talks with passion about the concerns of workers at a lower economic altitude, Khanna is well regarded by progressives, especially those interested in a changing of the guard.

''I think there is getting to be a certain wariness among the Democratic base with having the entire leadership of their party being people with a 1990s mentality about politics,'' Rabin-Havt said, adding that Khanna, a 46-year-old Indian American, departs from that mentality. Hemmer concurred that he's not part of the Democratic establishment and, if he played his cards right, could wring that for extra excitement, a particular buzz, ''introducing himself to the American people as a candidate who has not been defined by others and has a little more breathing room.''

I'm just not feeling it ...

Bernie Sanders

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Gavin Newsom

Mitch Landrieu

Michelle Obama

There's inevitable curiosity about Bernie Sanders. He has been the Democratic runner-up twice in a row, and he's still in the mix, still in the Senate, still revered by many progressives. But if Biden essentially ages out, can he be succeeded by someone older who had a heart attack in 2019? I don't see it.

What, then, about a young progressive like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez? Her name gets bandied about. But there's young and then there's 33 years old. She'd reach the minimum age for the presidency, 35, less than a month before Election Day 2024. And she'd bring just six years of experience in the House to the job. These are wild days in which old rules fly out the window, but probably not this fast and far.

The eagerness with which Gavin Newsom, 55, has stepped forward as a voluble defender of liberal values and pugilistic critic of Ron DeSantis has predictably fed speculation about a presidential candidacy. And he has the precious credential of big-state governor. But that state is California, once a harbinger and now more a partisan Rorschach test. And there's a preening quality and a slickness to Newsom that give many observers pause and make others -- including the writer Josh Barro, who used his Very Serious newsletter for a savage delineation of the easy case against Newsom -- cringe.

And both specifically and metaphorically, can a Newsom candidacy survive the widely circulated photo of him and his former wife, Kimberly Guilfoyle, who is now engaged to Donald Trump Jr., stretched out on an ostentatious rug in a gilded room? One way to think about Newsom's shortcomings versus those of other Democratic presidential prospects: When he arguably violated his own Covid counsel against large gatherings in California, it was for a sumptuous feast at the fabled French Laundry in the Napa Valley. When Whitmer violated hers in Michigan, it was for dinner at a bar and grill with mozzarella sticks and chili cheese fries on the menu.

Many Democrats still gush about the 2017 speech that Mitch Landrieu, then the mayor of New Orleans, gave about Confederate monuments and racial reconciliation. It was sublime. And his current role as a senior adviser and infrastructure coordinator for the Biden administration has him crisscrossing the country in advantageous ways. But a Landrieu candidacy elicits the most discussion and excitement from Democratic intelligentsia. That's as much curse as blessing.

The next supposedly sentient acquaintance of mine who suggests that Michelle Obama would or should run for president is getting deleted from my contacts. She's a profoundly admirable person who ... has never signaled a scintilla of amenability to this idea and whose favorability ratings would plummet the minute she was in the fray rather than above it.

I'm intrigued ...

Mark Kelly

Raphael Warnock

Jared Polis

Jon Tester

Andy Beshear

Arizona is a purple state with a penchant for political madness and yet Senator Mark Kelly, a 58-year-old Democrat who's the epitome of even-keeled, could be on the cusp of re-election there. That could prompt speculation about his appeal as a presidential candidate, especially given his biography (former astronaut; former Navy pilot; married to Gabby Giffords, a former House member who became one of the country's most prominent advocates for gun safety after she was nearly killed in a mass shooting).

''He has a brand that transcends party,'' one strategist observed. Hemmer said: ''He has that ability to hit some of those notes that really worked for the Biden campaign: 'I'm somebody who knows and understands suffering. I'm somebody who has turned challenges into public service.'''

If Senator Raphael Warnock, 53, beats his Republican opponent, Herschel Walker, in a December runoff, he will have won a purple state twice in two years. He connects with Black voters and ''also doesn't offend white people,'' Sellers said, adding: ''He can be a generational transition from Biden.'' Additionally, Warnock, an ordained Baptist minister, could challenge Republican candidates' shopworn claims to greater religiousness. ''Many Republicans think G.O.P. means God's Only Party,'' Sellers said. ''Raphael snatches that from them.''

Gov. Jared Polis, 47, just cruised to re-election in light blue Colorado, where he has done an excellent job by most accounts and, in the admiring words of the conservative Washington Post columnist George Will, shown a ''knack for leavening his high-octane progressivism with departures from that church's strict catechism.'' The headline on that column of Will's, published two months ago: ''Why Colorado Gov. Jared Polis could answer Democrats' 2024 prayers.'' He's the first openly gay man to be elected a governor in America, making him the kind of trailblazer that Democrats often like to embrace, and he's wealthy from internet start-ups that go back to his days as a Princeton student. But he's no geyser of charisma, barely a font. Could his awkwardness be endearing in an age of lacquered social media?

The early exit of Steve Bullock, the former Montana governor, from the 2020 presidential primary took some shine off the notion that a Democrat who'd found success and elicited affection from Republicans in a red and largely rural state might be presidential gold. But that hasn't stopped some people, including yours truly, from wondering about someone like the Kentucky governor, Andy Beshear, 44, or the Montana senator Jon Tester, 66, a farmer in his third term in the chamber. Tester is beloved by many Democrats in Washington but might have enough trouble winning a fourth Senate term in 2024 to make a run at the presidency an attractive, nothing-to-lose adventure.

But the most intriguing potential candidate is, almost by definition, one whose name has not yet come up. And the metabolism of the media these days harbors the possibility of vaulting from relative anonymity to saturation exposure in a few hot weeks. That kind of phenom could lunge for the presidency even if Biden does run. Incumbent presidents have been challenged that way before.

Frank Bruni (@FrankBruni) is a professor of journalism and public policy at Duke University, the author of ''The Beauty of Dusk'' and a contributing Opinion writer. He writes a weekly email newsletter and can be found on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/10/opinion/biden-democrat-2024.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/10/opinion/biden-democrat-2024.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRITTANY GREESON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DESIREE RIOS

LEIGH VOGEL

EMILY ELCONIN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

HILARY SWIFT

ANNA ROSE LAYDEN

TRAVIS DOVE

PETE MAROVICH

MICHELLE LITVIN

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EMILY BERL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ILANA PANICH-LINSMAN

GABRIELA BHASKAR

THEO STROOMER

LUKE SHARRETT, FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) This article appeared in print on page A18.

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2022

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[***3 Democratic presidential candidates are in Washington on the day of the Iowa caucuses.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y4B-R401-DXY4-X1N5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 3, 2020 Monday 11:34 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 393 words

**Byline:** Reid J. Epstein

**Highlight:** All three — Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and Amy Klobuchar — are expected to return to Iowa in the evening as results roll in.

**Body**

All three — Bernie Sanders, Elizabeth Warren, and Amy Klobuchar — are expected to return to Iowa in the evening as results roll in.

The [*Iowa caucuses are Monday night*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/02/03/us/politics/2020-iowa-caucus-date-time.html), but the three Democratic senators mounting competitive efforts in the state are in Washington for the impeachment trial. All three — Bernie Sanders of Vermont, Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota — are expected to return to Iowa in the evening as results roll in.

Mr. Sanders almost won Iowa four years ago and is poised to claim what would be a seismic victory Monday night. Leading in some recent polls, Mr. Sanders has drawn big crowds to rallies when he’s been able to slip away from the impeachment trial over the last week. Popular especially with ***working-class*** voters and young people, Mr. Sanders’s biggest advantage may be that he figures to reach the 15 percent viability threshold in more caucuses than any of his opponents, giving him more chances to accrue delegates than anyone else.

There was a time this fall when Ms. Warren was the Iowa front-runner. She led the field in the Des Moines Register’s September poll, then got eclipsed in polling first by Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Ind., and then by Mr. Sanders. Still, she is widely said to have the strongest field organization, which can boost a candidate on caucus night. She figures to be strongest among college-educated women in the state’s suburban enclaves.

Ms. Klobuchar’s bet is that Iowans will pick someone who stresses the just-like-them argument in searching for a moderate candidate who can carry the Midwest. But she’s never broken double digits in Iowa’s polling, leaving her well behind the top-tier candidates. Ms. Klobuchar would declare Iowa a victory if she sneaks into the top four, especially if she winds up ahead of former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. or Ms. Warren. But she has run a very Iowa-centric campaign and a poor finish there risks her chances of advancing in the other states.

A fourth Democratic senator running for president, Michael Bennet of Colorado, is in Washington for the trial as well, but he is focusing his campaign efforts on the next primary contest, New Hampshire.

PHOTO: Senator Amy Klobuchar, Democrat of Minnesota, arriving Monday at the Capitol. (PHOTOGRAPH BY T.J. Kirkpatrick for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 3, 2020

**End of Document**



[***On Abortion, Public Is Not as Polarized as Parties***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648X-J2T1-DXY4-X0S1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 12, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 27; NEWS ANALYSIS

**Length:** 1226 words

**Byline:** By Nate Cohn

**Body**

Despite decades of partisan fighting in Washington, Americans are not as neatly divided on abortion as politicians and activists.

Abortion is one of the most polarizing issues in Washington. Congressional Democrats and Republicans all but unanimously back their party's view on abortion, and many highly engaged activists feel the same way.

But the public's view of abortion is far more complicated.

Despite decades of partisan fighting, Americans are not as neatly divided on abortion as politicians and activists. There are Republicans who support abortion rights, Democrats who oppose abortion and a surprisingly large group of voters who appear to have muddled or conflicted views. Overall, 26 percent of voters hold a different view on abortion than the presidential candidate they supported in 2020, according to data from an AP VoteCast election survey of more than 100,000 voters.

No issue quite compares to abortion, at least not in its emotional and moral stakes. Yet by some measures, more voters hold views on abortion at odds with those of their presidential pick than on other hot-button issues, including gun control, coronavirus mask mandates or a border wall.

The relatively large number of voters who split with their party on abortion may simply be a reflection of how the Supreme Court's decision in Roe v. Wade often kept the issue from the center of political debate. But it may also suggest that many voters just don't feel as strongly about the issue as one might assume.

The findings in the AP VoteCast election survey are a reminder that American politics are not always as polarized as we imagine. The bitterly partisan fight unfolding in statehouses and courthouses, even in the Supreme Court's split decision on Friday over the Texas abortion law, can obscure how many Americans of all parties struggle with the weighty moral and ethical questions raised by abortion.

As recently as 30 years ago, Democrats and Republicans had very similar views of abortion. In 1991, 42 percent of Democrats thought abortion should be legal whenever a woman sought one, compared with 41 percent of Republicans. Although attitudes about abortion have gradually tracked more sharply along partisan lines since then, there are still many voters who hold a mix of views that diverge from party allegiance or affiliation.

Less engaged and moderate voters are especially likely to hold abortion views at odds with their party. According to the 2018 General Social Survey, 92 percent of college-educated liberal Democrats believe it should be possible for women to obtain a legal abortion if she wanted for any reason, compared with just 55 percent of more moderate Democrats. Similarly, 39 percent of moderate Republicans say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, according to Pew Research.

The complexity of Americans' views on abortion is perhaps a reflection of the role religion plays in it. Only a handful of other political issues are more closely tied to people's personal religious beliefs.

At least 65 percent of evangelical Christians believe that abortion should be illegal in most or all cases, according to the AP VoteCast data, compared with 29 percent of nonevangelical voters. That 36-point gap is far larger than the 21-point gap between evangelical and nonevangelical support for Joseph R. Biden in the 2020 election.

As a result, the conflicted voters tend to be relatively religious Democrats and less religious Republicans, including Black evangelical Democrats who oppose abortion or relatively secular white ***working-class*** Trump voters who support abortion rights.

The importance of religion brings a clear regional dimension to the political stakes of the issue. Evangelical and religious voters are disproportionately concentrated in the South. That includes conflicted Democrats: Only 59 percent of Southern Democratic-leaning voters say most abortions should be legal, according to Pew Research. Conflicted Republicans, meanwhile, are likeliest to live in the North and especially the Northeast.

For Republicans, the electoral risk might be most pronounced in these Northern battleground states, where a sizable share of their voters believe abortion should be legal. About 37 percent of Donald J. Trump's supporters in Pennsylvania and Michigan believe that abortion should be mostly legal, according to the AP VoteCast data. It's a large enough number to create a plausible electoral vulnerability for Republicans advocating abortion restrictions, but it's a small enough number that the party would most likely support new abortion restrictions if the Supreme Court allowed it.

There's nothing new about these cultural issues holding Republicans back in the Midwest.

Republicans struggled to break through in the region for a generation, as the religious right helped the party in the South but not in the less evangelical Northern battleground states. It was Mr. Trump's new brand of incendiary politics, focused on issues like immigration and crime, that helped Republicans gain an advantage in the region by polarizing American politics along educational rather than religious lines.

Although renewed attention on abortion might cut against some Trump-era trends, it could tend to reinforce others, like deteriorating Democratic strength among nonwhite voters. Much like white voters, Black and Hispanic voters are largely divided on abortion, even though they are far more likely to vote Democratic.

Of course, just because voters are conflicted on an issue doesn't mean they are bound to break to the other party. Many of these voters are partisans, despite their views on abortion, precisely because they care more about other issues.

It's even possible that many of these conflicted voters aren't conflicted between their views and their party's views, but simply conflicted on abortion itself. The number of Americans who support or oppose abortion rights can vary widely, depending on how pollsters phrase the question. And while polls routinely show that a majority of voters think abortion should be mostly legal, polls often show significant support for the kinds of restrictions that might be up for debate if the Supreme Court overturns Roe.

The confusion is perhaps best illustrated in a series of poll questions asked by Gallup. Each result alone could seem to vindicate either side's view of abortion. Together, however, they raise doubts about whether a majority of voters have a clear position on the issue at all.

According to Gallup, voters overwhelmingly think abortion should generally be illegal during the second trimester. But a different Gallup poll found that voters opposed a ban on abortion after 18 weeks, in the middle of the second trimester.

In another set of perplexing findings, Gallup found that 60 percent of Americans thought abortion should be legal in the first three months of pregnancy, only to see support drop to 45 percent simply by adding the condition: ''when the woman does not want the child for any reason.'' Apparently, many people who support legal abortion still recoil at the idea of it under many circumstances.

These seemingly incompatible findings suggest that a large number of voters either have complex and nuanced views or are so conflicted that even subtle changes in the wording of a question can yield huge changes in the results.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/us/abortion-politics-polls.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/11/us/abortion-politics-polls.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Attitudes on abortion don't always align with partisanship. Many voters hold conflicting views. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 12, 2021

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[***Ugly Primary Races Are Looming***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6493-M171-JBG3-608D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 13, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 18; MICHELLE COTTLE

**Length:** 1179 words

**Byline:** By Michelle Cottle

**Body**

Election Day 2022 is still many months off, but already the primary season is shaping up to be a lulu. So much at stake. So many electrifying candidates -- albeit some less evidently qualified than others. (Dr. Oz? Seriously?) And scads to be learned about the unsettling state of American democracy.

High-profile races in two crucial swing states promise to be especially enlightening, offering a handy guide to the existential issues roiling the parties. The contrast could hardly be starker.

In Pennsylvania, the Democratic fight for a Senate seat features an array of contenders slugging it out over a slew of knotty questions involving policy and ideology, progressivism, populism, centrism and how -- or even if -- to woo blue-collar whites in deep-purple places.

In Georgia, the Republican battle for governor has been reduced to the singular, defining question looming over the whole party: Does the G.O.P. still have room for leaders who aren't Trump-addled invertebrates?

The outcomes of these contests will shake the parties well beyond the states in play.

It's tough to overstate the importance of the Pennsylvania Senate race. With Senator Pat Toomey, a Republican, retiring, the state is considered the Democrats' best hope for picking up a seat and retaining their whip-thin majority. But there is much debate over what kind of candidate has the best shot at victory.

The current front-runner is the lieutenant governor, John Fetterman. The former mayor of a busted steel town on the outskirts of Pittsburgh, Mr. Fetterman has been on the national political scene for a while as a champion of Rust Belt populism. His profile shot way up in the wake of last year's elections, with his frequent media appearances smacking down Donald Trump's election-fraud lies.

When the lieutenant governor talks, it's hard not to listen. Standing 6-foot-8, he is bald, hulking, goateed and tattooed. He wears work shirts and cargo shorts and radiates an anti-establishment, anti-elitist vibe that his supporters say helps him connect with the rural and blue-collar types who have abandoned the Democrats in recent years. He presents more as a guy you'd see storming the Capitol with his biker pals than a candidate espousing progressive policies like Medicare for all and criminal justice reform.

He's known as a bit of a loner, and not all of his positions play well with progressives. (For instance, he opposes an immediate ban on fracking.) But he was a Bernie backer in 2016, and he is not above poking at his party's more conservative members. He vows that, if elected, he will not be ''a Joe Manchin- or Kyrsten Sinema-type'' centrist obstructing President Biden's agenda.

Such criticisms are seen as indirect slaps at Mr. Fetterman's closest opponent in the race, Representative Conor Lamb. A Marine Corps veteran and former federal prosecutor, Mr. Lamb shocked and thrilled his party by winning a special election in 2018 in a conservative western district that went for Mr. Trump by nearly 20 points in 2016.

Mr. Lamb is an unabashed moderate, and his politics and personal style are decidedly more buttoned-down than Mr. Fetterman's -- more high school principal than pro wrestler. He has expressed frustration with his party's left flank for ''advocating policies that are unworkable and extremely unpopular,'' such as defunding the police. He speaks kindly of Mr. Manchin, with whom he did a fund-raiser this year. He contends that Mr. Fetterman leans too far left, and he characterizes himself as ''a normal Democrat'' who can appeal to ***working-class*** voters and suburban moderates alike.

There are other, lesser-known Democrats in the mix, too. A state lawmaker, Malcolm Kenyatta, hails from North Philly. Young, Black, progressive and gay, with a working-poor background, he has pitched himself as the candidate to energize the party's base voters, especially those who tend to sit out nonpresidential elections.

Commissioner Val Arkoosh of Montgomery County is based in Philadelphia's upscale, voter-rich suburbs. She leans liberal on policy and has been endorsed by Emily's List. An obstetric anesthesiologist, she hopes to position herself as a sensible alternative to Dr. Mehmet Oz, the celebrity physician who jumped into the Republican primary contest about two weeks ago. She is also betting that the growing threat to abortion rights will help her rally suburban women, whom she sees as a natural base.

Wherever this race ultimately leads, there will be lessons for other Democrats looking to compete in tough battleground areas.

The Georgia primary for governor could prove even more clarifying about the state of the G.O.P. -- though not in a good way. The Republican incumbent, Brian Kemp, is running for re-election. But he is high on Mr. Trump's drop-dead list for refusing to help overturn the results of last November's election.

Desperate to see Mr. Kemp unseated, Mr. Trump lobbied former Senator David Perdue, who also lost his re-election bid last cycle, to challenge the governor. Last week, Mr. Perdue entered the race. Mr. Trump promptly endorsed him, slagging Mr. Kemp as ''a very weak governor'' who ''can't win because the MAGA base -- which is enormous -- will never vote for him.''

This contest is not about Mr. Kemp's politics or governing chops. Both he and Mr. Perdue are staunch conservatives and fierce partisans. And Mr. Perdue is not some hard-charging outsider looking to overthrow the establishment or push the party to the right or redefine conservatism in some fresh way. In his announcement video, Mr. Perdue blamed Mr. Kemp for dividing Republicans and costing them Georgia's two Senate seats. ''This isn't personal. It's simple,'' said Mr. Perdue. ''He has failed all of us and cannot win in November.''

Mr. Perdue is correct that this is simple. But it is also deeply personal -- for Mr. Trump. This matchup is about the former president having reduced the G.O.P. to an extension of his own ego, redefining party loyalty as blind fealty to him and his election-fraud lies. Whatever his personal aims, Mr. Perdue is just another tool in Mr. Trump's vendetta against Republicans he sees as insufficiently servile. The race is expected to be bloody, expensive and highly divisive -- all the things parties aim to avoid in a primary.

The G.O.P. is already hemorrhaging Trump-skeptical, independent-minded officials at all levels. Just this month, Charlie Baker, the popular Republican governor of deep-blue Massachusetts, announced that he would not run for re-election. If Georgia Republicans take the bait and throw Mr. Kemp over for Mr. Trump's preferred lickspittle, it will send a clear message to the party's dwindling pockets of principle and rationality: Get out. Now. While you still have a soul.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY QUINN GLABICKI/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2021

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[***Your Monday Briefing: Deadly Airstrikes in Ukraine’s West***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:650C-35J1-JBG3-601N-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 13, 2022 Sunday 16:36 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1402 words

**Byline:** Matthew Cullen

**Highlight:** Plus Omicron’s impact in the South Pacific and the struggles of the French Greens.

**Body**

Plus Omicron’s impact in the South Pacific and the struggles of the French Greens.

We’re covering Russian airstrikes in western Ukraine and the difficulties France’s Green Party has faced in getting votes.

Russian airstrikes kill dozens in western Ukraine

Russia launched a barrage of airstrikes at a military base that had served as a hub for Western arms shipments near the Polish border, [*killing at least 35 people and wounding at least 134*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/13/world/ukraine-russia-war/here-are-the-latest-developments-in-ukraine). Videos show [*the moment of the attack and the aftermath*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/13/world/ukraine-russia-war#video-shows-the-moment-of-an-attack-on-a-ukrainian-military-base-near-the-polish-border).

The base is just 12 miles from Poland, perilously close to where American troops are deployed, in a region of Ukraine that [*has been a safe haven*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/ukraine-lutsk-ivano-frankivsk-russian-attacks.html). Ukrainian officials called the strike a “terrorist attack,” and renewed calls for NATO to establish a no-fly zone in the country.

Jake Sullivan, the U.S. national security adviser, said the airstrikes were a sign that Russian forces were expanding their targets in Ukraine because they were “frustrated by their lack of ability to take some of the major cities.”

Toll: The International Committee of the Red Cross warned that time was running out for hundreds of thousands of civilians [*still trapped in Mariupol*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/13/world/europe/mariupol-red-cross.html), where more than 2,000 people have been killed. In a basement in Kyiv, Ukraine’s capital, nannies are [*keeping 19 surrogate babies alive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/ukraine-surrogate-mothers-babies.html).

Abducted: Ivan Fyodorov, the 33-year-old mayor of the southern Ukrainian city of Melitopol, encouraged defiance against the conquering Russian soldiers. [*He was then arrested*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/ukraine-mayor-kidnapped-ivan-fyodorov.html), and hasn’t been heard from since.

Press casualties: Brent Renaud, an award-winning American filmmaker and journalist, was [*killed in Ukraine yesterday in Irpin*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/13/world/ukraine-russia-war#brent-renaud-irpin), a suburb of Kyiv. He had contributed to The Times in recent years. His reporting partner, Juan Arredondo, was hospitalized.

Oligarchs: The war has finally led Britain to [*go after ultrawealthy Russians in London*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/13/world/europe/uk-oligarchs-russia-ukraine.html). U.S. officials believe a [*superyacht in an Italian dry dock*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/politics/putin-yacht-russia-ukraine.html) may be associated with the Russian president, Vladimir Putin.

Stranded: Hundreds of planes owned by Western companies are still in Russia. [*They may never be recovered*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/business/russia-airlines-planes.html), forcing the companies to take on billions of dollars in losses.

Covid surges in the South Pacific islands

After escaping the coronavirus for a year and a half, New Caledonia, a French territory in the South Pacific, experienced a deadly outbreak last fall as the Delta variant swept through. Now, as the more recent Omicron surge eases, the virus’s [*disproportionate affect on the territory’s Indigenous population*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/australia/new-caledonia-coronavirus.html) has become apparent.

While New Caledonia’s connections with France have led to state-of-the-art medical facilities to care for the infected, nearly all of the doctors are from abroad. Indigenous Kanaks also have high levels of obesity and diabetes, and low levels of income compared to the region’s European settlers, making it harder for them to live with the coronavirus.

New Caledonia is not alone. Fueled by the Omicron variant, the coronavirus is now reaching parts of the South Pacific that had avoided the pandemic for nearly two years. More than a thousand people have been infected in Tonga — a surge likely catalyzed by ships bringing aid supplies after a volcanic eruption and tsunami in January — while Kiribati and the Solomon Islands have contended with their own first outbreaks.

In other developments:

* Shenzhen and Shanghai [*imposed stringent restrictions on travel*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/13/world/covid-19-mandates-cases-vaccine/china-shanghai-shenzhen) as a coronavirus outbreak spread across much of mainland China.

1. South Korea reported [*383,665 new known Covid cases on Saturday*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/13/world/covid-19-mandates-cases-vaccine/south-korea-exceeds-380000-new-cases-in-a-24-hour-period-a-few-days-after-its-presidential-election), another record fueled by the highly contagious Omicron variant.
2. The new [*“Deltacron” variant*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/science/deltacron-coronavirus-variant.html) is rare, and similar to Omicron, experts say.
3. Doctors warned that the war in Ukraine could [*fuel a Covid surge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/covid-ukraine-russia-war.html).

France’s Green Party struggles to inspire voters

Environmental concerns have grown increasingly prominent in France in recent years, marked by a series of marches and lawsuits, as well as by sweeping climate change legislation. Yet the political party advancing those issues most centrally has [*failed to garner many voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/europe/france-elections-greens-environment.html).

With less than 30 days to go before the first round of the presidential election, the Green Party’s candidate, Yannick Jadot, sits at around 5 percent in the polls. The run-up to the election has been dominated by issues like security, immigration and national identity, reflecting France’s recent shift to the right. Jadot is performing poorly with ***working-class*** voters, who fear the impact of the transition to clean energy on their livelihoods.

The French Greens, analysts say, have been unable to convince voters that they are a credible governmental force, capable of dealing with issues like diplomacy and defense, as is the case in Germany, where the Greens are now part of a three-party government coalition.

Media: Climate issues have accounted for just 2.5 percent of media coverage of the election in the past four weeks, according to a study released by several environmental groups.

THE LATEST NEWS

Asia and the Middle East

* At least a dozen missiles fired from Iran struck near a U.S. Consulate compound being built in the Kurdish region of Iraq. [*No serious injuries were reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/13/world/asia/iran-missiles-us-consulate-iraq.html).

1. Many former Afghan Air Force members [*fear they could be killed by the Taliban if they come out of hiding*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/13/world/asia/afghan-air-force-taliban.html), but others have joined the nascent Taliban air force.
2. Pakistan criticized India’s “callousness and ineptitude” for mistakenly firing a missile into Pakistan, but no further escalation ensued — [*which many saw as a small miracle*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/asia/india-pakistan-missile.html).
3. Saudi Arabia [*put 81 people to death*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/world/middleeast/saudi-arabia-executions.html) in its largest mass execution in years, despite recent promises to curb the use of the death penalty.

What Else Is Happening

* Naomi Osaka was brought to tears by a heckler during a second round loss at the BNP Paribas Open. Afterward, [*she explained her frustration to the crowd*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/13/sports/tennis/naomi-osaka-indian-wells.html).

1. Without the backing of a recognized government or money to keep the lights on, [*the Afghan Embassy in the U.S. is shutting down*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/politics/afghan-embassy-closing.html).
2. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has [*upended Arctic diplomacy*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/03/11/world/ukraine-russia-news/the-invasion-has-upended-diplomacy-in-the-arctic-where-russia-sought-resources).

A Morning Read

Hazel McCallion has been a force in Canadian politics for longer than just about anyone alive, despite starting her career in middle age. After playing pro hockey in the 1940s, “Hurricane Hazel” led Mississauga, Ontario, through epic growth until she left office at 93. At 101, [*her endorsements still matter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/world/canada/hazel-mccallion-mississauga-mayor.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

Fresh eyes on an ancient site

It’s time to bring the 2,000-year-old city of Pompeii into the 21st century.

Gabriel Zuchtriegel, the site’s 40-year-old director, hopes that visitors will [*get a broader understanding of the ancient city*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/arts/design/pompeii-italy-gabriel-zuchtreigel.html) — which was buried in ash by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in A.D. 79 — including the roles of race, gender and class within its complex society. And he is using technology to try to shield the site from the ravages of climate change.

“We should not forget that all the wealth and art works that we see in Pompeii are really based on a society where not only slavery existed, but there was no concept of social welfare,” he said. Last year, archaeologists uncovered a grim room where they believed an enslaved family had lived — a cramped space that may have doubled as storage, lit by a single window.

Other experts have praised the approach, which is part of a broader shift in archaeology. “Oftentimes archaeologists can be conservative with the topics they address,” one historian said, adding, “I am psyched to see things starting to come around in Pompeii.”

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Looking for an easier way to make cheesecake? Try this tangy [*cheesecake pudding*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1020042-cheesecake-pudding?campaign_id=58&amp;emc=edit_ck_20220311&amp;instance_id=55508&amp;nl=cooking&amp;regi_id=86365041&amp;segment_id=85287&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=c59ee965d6b326ccfe6fd89a461f8b53).

What to Read

In [*“Extreme North,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/12/books/review/the-land-of-the-ice-and-snow.html) Bernd Brunner explores the idea of what “the north” means to different cultures — and why.

Work Friend

Being on leave means [*not sending that 2 a.m. email*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/13/business/parental-leave-email.html).

Now Time to Play

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Take a plane (three letters).

Here’s [*today’s Wordle*](https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html). (If you’re worried about your stats streak, play in the browser you’ve been using.)

And here is [*today’s Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

[*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

That’s it for today’s briefing. See you next time. — Matthew

P.S. Jazmine Ulloa and Alexandra Berzon are joining the Times as [*Politics reporters*](https://www.nytco.com/press/announcing-two-new-members-of-the-politics-team/).

The latest episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/podcasts/the-daily/fiona-hill-ukraine-russia-ezra-klein.html?action=click&amp;module=audio-series-bar&amp;region=header&amp;pgtype=Article)” is about Putin’s endgame.

You can reach Matthew and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing+pm@nytimes.com?subject=Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: The aftermath of what appears to be an attack at the International Peacekeeping and Security Center in western Ukraine early on Sunday. The Times received these photos from a fighter at the center. (PHOTOGRAPH BY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Upcoming Elections That Could Shake Both Parties; Michelle Cottle***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6492-FYY1-JBG3-604J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 12, 2021 Sunday 15:49 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1175 words

**Byline:** Michelle Cottle

**Highlight:** Control of the Senate hangs on a few state races.

**Body**

Election Day 2022 is still many months off, but already the primary season is shaping up to be a lulu. So much at stake. So many electrifying candidates — albeit some less evidently qualified than others. (Dr. Oz? Seriously?) And scads to be learned about the unsettling state of American democracy.

High-profile races in two crucial swing states promise to be especially enlightening, offering a handy guide to the existential issues roiling the parties. The contrast could hardly be starker.

In Pennsylvania, the Democratic fight for a Senate seat features an array of contenders slugging it out over a slew of knotty questions involving policy and ideology, progressivism, populism, centrism and how — or even if — to woo blue-collar whites in deep-purple places.

In Georgia, the Republican battle for governor has been reduced to the singular, defining question looming over the whole party: Does the G.O.P. still have room for leaders who aren’t Trump-addled invertebrates?

The outcomes of these contests will shake the parties well beyond the states in play.

It’s tough to overstate the importance of the Pennsylvania Senate race. With Senator Pat Toomey, a Republican, retiring, the state is considered the Democrats’ best hope for picking up a seat and retaining their whip-thin majority. But there is much debate over what kind of candidate has the best shot at victory.

The current front-runner is the lieutenant governor, John Fetterman. The former mayor of a busted steel town on the outskirts of Pittsburgh, Mr. Fetterman has been on the national political scene for a while as a champion of Rust Belt populism. His profile shot way up in the wake of last year’s elections, with his frequent media appearances smacking down Donald Trump’s election-fraud lies.

When the lieutenant governor talks, it’s hard not to listen. Standing 6-foot-8, he is bald, hulking, goateed and tattooed. He wears work shirts and cargo shorts and radiates an anti-establishment, anti-elitist vibe that his supporters say helps him connect with the rural and blue-collar types who have abandoned the Democrats in recent years. He presents more as a guy you’d see storming the Capitol with his biker pals than a candidate espousing progressive policies like Medicare for all and criminal justice reform.

He’s known as a bit of a loner, and not all of his positions play well with progressives. (For instance, he [*opposes*](https://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2021/03/18/fetterman-negotiates-difficult-terrain-on-fracking-issue/) an immediate ban on fracking.) But he was a Bernie backer in 2016, and he is not above poking at his party’s more conservative members. He [*vows*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/12/07/pennsylvania-senate-primary-test-loyal-democrat-523862?nname=playbook&amp;nid=0000014f-1646-d88f-a1cf-5f46b7bd0000&amp;nrid=00000163-9937-d365-aff3-fdbffcd70000&amp;nlid=630318) that, if elected, he will not be “a Joe Manchin- or Kyrsten Sinema-type” centrist obstructing President Biden’s agenda.

Such criticisms are seen as indirect slaps at Mr. Fetterman’s closest opponent in the race, Representative Conor Lamb. A Marine Corps veteran and former federal prosecutor, Mr. Lamb shocked and thrilled his party by winning a [*special election in 2018*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/13/us/elections/results-pennsylvania-house-special-election.html) in a conservative western district that went for Mr. Trump by nearly 20 points in 2016.

Mr. Lamb is an unabashed moderate, and his politics and personal style are decidedly more buttoned-down than Mr. Fetterman’s — more high school principal than pro wrestler. He has [*expressed frustration with*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/08/us/politics/conor-lamb-democrats-biden.html) his party’s left flank for “advocating policies that are unworkable and extremely unpopular,” such as defunding the police. He speaks [*kindly*](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1303506789987473) of Mr. Manchin, with whom he did a fund-raiser this year. He contends that Mr. Fetterman [*leans too far left*](https://www.politico.com/news/2021/12/07/pennsylvania-senate-primary-test-loyal-democrat-523862?nname=playbook&amp;nid=0000014f-1646-d88f-a1cf-5f46b7bd0000&amp;nrid=00000163-9937-d365-aff3-fdbffcd70000&amp;nlid=630318), and he characterizes himself as “[*a normal Democrat*](https://twitter.com/ConorLambPA/status/1457553657898184705)” who can appeal to ***working-class*** voters and suburban moderates alike.

There are other, lesser-known Democrats in the mix, too. A state lawmaker, [*Malcolm Kenyatta*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/19/us/malcolm-kenyatta-announces-his-candidacy-for-a-pennsylvania-senate-seat.html), hails from North Philly. Young, Black, progressive and gay, with a working-poor background, he has [*pitched himself*](https://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/2021/04/10/malcolm-kenyatta-john-fetterman-democratic-senate-primary-pennsylvania/) as the candidate to energize the party’s base voters, especially those who tend to sit out nonpresidential elections.

Commissioner Val Arkoosh of Montgomery County is based in Philadelphia’s upscale, voter-rich suburbs. She [*leans liberal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/us/politics/pennsylvania-senate-oz-arkoosh.html) on policy and has been endorsed by Emily’s List. An obstetric anesthesiologist, she hopes to [*position herself*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/us/politics/pennsylvania-senate-oz-arkoosh.html) as a sensible alternative to Dr. Mehmet Oz, the celebrity physician who [*jumped into*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/us/politics/dr-oz-senate-run-pennsylvania.html) the Republican primary contest about two weeks ago. She is also betting that the growing threat to abortion rights will help her rally suburban women, whom she sees as a natural base.

Wherever this race ultimately leads, there will be lessons for other Democrats looking to compete in tough battleground areas.

The Georgia primary for governor could prove [*even more clarifying*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/georgia-abrams-perdue-kemp.html) about the state of the G.O.P. — though not in a good way. The Republican incumbent, [*Brian Kemp*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/georgia-abrams-perdue-kemp.html), is running for re-election. But he is high on Mr. Trump’s drop-dead list for refusing to help overturn the results of last November’s election.

Desperate to see Mr. Kemp unseated, Mr. Trump lobbied former Senator David Perdue, who also lost his re-election bid last cycle, to challenge the governor. Last week, Mr. Perdue entered the race. Mr. Trump promptly endorsed him, [*slagging*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/georgia-abrams-perdue-kemp.html) Mr. Kemp as “a very weak governor” who “can’t win because the MAGA base — which is enormous — will never vote for him.”

This contest is not about Mr. Kemp’s politics or governing chops. Both he and Mr. Perdue are staunch conservatives and fierce partisans. And Mr. Perdue is not some hard-charging outsider looking to overthrow the establishment or push the party to the right or redefine conservatism in some fresh way. In his [*announcement video*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/politics/former-georgia-senator-david-perdue-announces-bid-for-governor/2021/12/06/e6009d77-3a46-438f-bc50-2a5f8978f641_video.html), Mr. Perdue blamed Mr. Kemp for dividing Republicans and costing them Georgia’s two Senate seats. “This isn’t personal. It’s simple,” said Mr. Perdue. “He has failed all of us and cannot win in November.”

Mr. Perdue is correct that this is simple. But it is also deeply personal — for Mr. Trump. This matchup is about the former president having reduced the G.O.P. to an extension of his own ego, redefining party loyalty as blind fealty to him and his election-fraud lies. Whatever his personal aims, Mr. Perdue is just another tool in Mr. Trump’s vendetta against Republicans he sees as insufficiently servile. The race is expected to be bloody, expensive and highly divisive — all the things parties aim to avoid in a primary.

The G.O.P. is already hemorrhaging Trump-skeptical, independent-minded officials at all levels. Just this month, [*Charlie Baker*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/01/us/politics/charlie-baker-massachusetts-governor.html), the popular Republican governor of deep-blue Massachusetts, [*announced*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/01/us/politics/charlie-baker-massachusetts-governor.html) that he would not run for re-election. If Georgia Republicans take the bait and throw Mr. Kemp over for Mr. Trump’s preferred lickspittle, it will send a clear message to the party’s dwindling pockets of principle and rationality: Get out. Now. While you still have a soul.

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 QUINN GLABICKI/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** December 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Men Fall Behind in College Enrollment. Women Still Play Catch-Up at Work.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JV-J7J1-DXY4-X35G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 9, 2021 Thursday 23:47 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 983 words

**Byline:** Kevin Carey

**Highlight:** Women are overrepresented in low-paying professions that require college credentials.

**Body**

Women are overrepresented in low-paying professions that require college credentials.

The coronavirus upended the lives of millions of college students. The Wall Street Journal [*reported*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/college-university-fall-higher-education-men-women-enrollment-admissions-back-to-school-11630948233?mod=djemalertNEWS) this week that men have been hit particularly hard — accounting for roughly three-fourths of pandemic-driven dropouts — and depicted an accelerating crisis in male enrollment.

A closer look at historical trends and the labor market reveals a more complex picture, one in which women keep playing catch-up in an economy structured to favor men.

In many ways, the college gender imbalance is not new. Women have outnumbered men on campus since the late 1970s. The [*ratio*](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_303.10.asp?current=yes) of female to male undergraduates increased much more from 1970 to 1980 than from 1980 to the present. And the numbers haven’t changed much in recent decades. In 1992, 55 percent of college students were women. By 2019, the number had nudged up to 57.4 percent.

While the shift in the college gender ratio is often characterized as men “falling behind,” men are actually more likely to go to college today than they were when they were the majority, many decades ago. In 1970, [*32 percent*](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_302.60.asp?current=yes) of men 18 to 24 were enrolled in college, a level that was most likely inflated by the opportunity to avoid being drafted into the Vietnam War. That percentage dropped to 24 percent in 1978 and then steadily grew to a stable 37 percent to 39 percent over the last decade.

The gender ratio mostly changed because female enrollment increased even faster, more than doubling over the last half-century.

Because of the change in ratio, some selective colleges discriminate against women in admissions to maintain a gender balance, as The Journal reported. Generally, admissions officials prefer to limit the disparity to 55 percent female and 45 percent male. Their reason not to let the gender ratio drift further toward 2 to 1 is straightforward: Such a ratio would most likely cause a decrease in applications.

In [*a New York Times essay*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/23/opinion/to-all-the-girls-ive-rejected.html) in 2006 titled “To All the Girls I’ve Rejected,” the dean of admissions at Kenyon College at the time explained: “Beyond the availability of dance partners for the winter formal, gender balance matters in ways both large and small on a residential college campus. Once you become decidedly female in enrollment, fewer males and, as it turns out, fewer females find your campus attractive.”

During the pandemic, many undergraduates struggled to make the grade. Some left school altogether. But [*according to*](https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/CTEE_Report_Fall_2020.pdf) the National Student Clearinghouse, the initial male-dominated pandemic enrollment shock was almost entirely confined to community colleges that are open to all. In fact, the Clearinghouse data shows that male enrollment in public and private nonprofit four-year colleges dropped more from 2018 to 2019, before the pandemic, than from 2019 to 2020.

The raw numbers don’t take into account the varying value of college degrees. Men still dominate in fields like technology and engineering, which offer some of the highest salaries for recent graduates. Perhaps not coincidentally, the professors in those fields remain overwhelmingly male.

Women surged into college because they were able to, but also because many had to. There are still some good-paying jobs available to men without college credentials. There are relatively few for such women. And despite the considerable cost in time and money of earning a degree, many female-dominated jobs don’t pay well.

Consider a woman working as a cosmetologist who took out a student loan to earn a credential and complete the arduous process of getting an occupational license. Her husband in a male-dominated ***working-class*** field is more likely to have no degree at all. One way to see that couple is as an example of the greater likelihood of graduation among women than men. Another way is how our society [*requires*](https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/reports/paying-more-and-getting-less/) women to spend more time and money than men to get a job. The female-to-male gender ratio is highest in for-profit colleges, which often overcharge students for worthless degrees.

The fact that the male-female wage gap remains large after more than four decades in which women outnumbered men in college strongly suggests that college alone offers a narrow view of opportunity. Women often seem stuck in place: As they overcome obstacles and use their degrees to move into male-dominated fields, the [*fields offer less pay in return*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/20/upshot/as-women-take-over-a-male-dominated-field-the-pay-drops.html).

None of this diminishes the significance of the male decrease in college enrollment and graduation. Educators view the male-driven dive in community college enrollment over the last 18 months as a calamity. The pandemic confirmed what was already known. Higher socioeconomic classes are deeply embedded in college and will bear considerable cost and inconvenience to stay there, even if it means watching lectures on a laptop in the room above your parent’s garage and missing a season of parties and football games.

For other people, college attendance is far more fragile. It does not define their identities and is not as important as earning a steady paycheck or starting and nurturing a family. In a time of crisis, it can be delayed — but the reality is that people who drop out of college are statistically unlikely to complete a degree.

Last year, women were less likely than men to leave community college, despite their disproportionate responsibility for caregiving and domestic work, because they no doubt understood the bleak long-term job prospects for women without a credential.

But about 200,000 fewer women were enrolled in community college last year nonetheless. If we’re looking for a college enrollment crisis, that’s also a good place to start.

Kevin Carey directs the education policy program at New America. You can follow him on Twitter at [*@kevincarey1.*](https://twitter.com/search?q=%40kevincarey1%20&amp;src=typd)

PHOTO: Some selective colleges have higher admissions criteria for women to maintain gender balance. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Brian Snyder/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 10, 2021

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[***Biden Is No Sure Thing for 2024. What About Buttigieg? Harris? Even Whitmer?; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66TX-9G81-DXY4-X1SP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 10, 2022 Thursday 01:52 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3162 words

**Byline:** Frank Bruni

**Highlight:** Many Democrats have craved the chance to pick somebody else to run for president in 2024. But which somebody?

**Body**

The midterms were very good to President Biden.

His party avoided the shellacking that it suffered halfway through President Barack Obama’s first term and the drubbing that Republicans experienced after two years of President Donald Trump. After two years of Biden, voters gave Democrats a gentle slap on the wrist. That makes him look like a miracle worker and may well muffle chatter about whether he should run for a second term.

But the noise won’t go away entirely. There’s the matter of Biden’s age, and there’s the matter of Biden’s energy.

He was already the oldest president in American history when he took office at 78. He’d be just shy of 82 on Election Day in 2024. It shows. He doesn’t project anything like the ebullience he once did. His flubs transcend malapropisms. Last month, he [*erroneously claimed*](https://www.cnn.com/2022/10/24/politics/fact-check-biden-student-debt-congress-passed) that student loan forgiveness — which he decreed by executive action — passed Congress by a few votes. That was the most glaring misstatement of his own record [*but hardly the only one*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/04/us/politics/biden-midterms-social-security.html?smid=tw-nytimes&amp;smtyp=cur).

When Robert Costa of CBS News interviewed Representative Jim Clyburn, the South Carolina Democrat, just before the midterm results came in and asked him whether Biden should seek re-election, Clyburn declined to answer. He said that the Democrats’ decisions going forward should take into account “who has what capacity to do what,” [*according to a tweet of Costa’s*](https://twitter.com/costareports/status/1590153414737940481?s=20&amp;t=mqrc_WEbv_j8O8Vy9KLbOg) on Tuesday night.

Does Biden have the grip and glow to make certain that Donald Trump or some other Republican doesn’t win the presidency in two years? Before the midterms, [*polling showed*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/07/11/us/politics/biden-approval-polling-2024.html) that a significant majority of Democrats craved the chance to pick somebody else. I’m not sure that this week’s results will change that sentiment much. It’s how I feel.

But which somebody? Here’s an assessment (and rough ranking) of various Democrats who would be possible contenders in 2024 or who are poised to emerge as party leaders on the far side of Biden, whenever that is.

Pay the closest attention to …

Kamala Harris

Pete Buttigieg

Gretchen Whitmer

Many Democrats cringe at the thought of Kamala Harris as the party’s 2024 nominee. They regard that as party suicide, pointing to her [*persistently low approval ratings*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/approval/kamala-harris/) and her miserable 2020 presidential campaign, which ended before the Iowa caucuses began.

But Biden chose her as a running mate because she has credentials and appeal, and her current perch would make her the ipso facto front-runner. “I think she’s one of the reasons Biden won, and she never got credit for that,” Doug Sosnik, a veteran Democratic strategist, told me. “She energized the base. She was good on the stump, and she handled herself well in the debate.”

She also made history — she’s the first woman, the first Black woman and the first South Asian in the vice presidency — and she’d be those same firsts in the presidency, an exhilarating prospect that could dissuade some would-be competitors.

Harris would be in an especially strong position if Biden dallied before deciding against another presidential run; a compressed time frame could squash candidacies by politicians who still need to build name recognition, political networks and donor lists. “There are only two or three people who can add water and go,” said Bakari Sellers, a former Democratic lawmaker in South Carolina, which has a pivotal Democratic primary. He named Harris, Pete Buttigieg and Amy Klobuchar. He left out Bernie Sanders, later saying that Sanders, 81, is “probably too old.”

Buttigieg, 40, would be the second-youngest American president on Inauguration Day 2025, only a month and a half older than Theodore Roosevelt. He represents stark generational change. And most of the Democratic insiders I spoke with predicted that he’d be a formidable candidate, based on his breakout success in 2020 — he essentially came in third, behind Biden and Sanders, in the Democratic primaries — and his experience as transportation secretary. A gay man with a husband and two children, he, like Harris, represents progress toward equality. And he has proved to be one of the party’s gamest and nimblest messengers, his [*appearances on Fox News*](https://www.cnn.com/2020/10/14/media/pete-buttigieg-fox-news/index.html) and MSNBC yielding snippets shared widely on social media.

“You have to give credit to a guy who went from being a mediocre mayor of Indiana’s fourth-largest city to getting the most delegates in Iowa,” said Ari Rabin-Havt, who was Sanders’s deputy campaign manager in 2020, referring to Buttigieg’s time in South Bend. “I think he’s the most potent wine-track candidate who exists.”

Rabin-Havt likes to categorize Democratic candidates as “wine track” (Buttigieg, Elizabeth Warren and other Democrats favored by voters with more education and money) or “beer track” (politicians, like Sanders, who are most ardently backed by a less affluent group). Biden won the nomination because he was acceptable to both contingents.

Can Buttigieg clear that bar? “He was an intellectual force in the Democratic primaries,” said Joel Benenson, who was Barack Obama’s chief pollster in 2008 and 2012 and whose firm did polling for Buttigieg in 2020. “He may have been a little too intellectual.” And he [*didn’t generate excitement among Black voters*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/pete-buttigieg-a-self-described-outsider-couldnt-persuade-black-voters-he-understood-their-struggle/2020/03/02/663030ca-5b36-11ea-9b35-def5a027d470_story.html), who are critical to Democrats’ fortunes. “Serious candidates and strategists know that you must show up early and consistently with Black voters because they rightly see showing up late as checking a box rather than a serious commitment,” Benenson told me.

Additionally, Buttigieg wouldn’t be the “new kid on the block” in the 2024 cycle, one longtime Democratic strategist said. “He’d be treated differently.”

Gretchen Whitmer, a Democrat who just won re-election by an impressive margin in the key presidential battleground of Michigan, is Pabst Blue Ribbon with just the right measure of merlot. She “thinks like a general, looks like a ’40s film star and talks like she’s ice fishing for muskie,” [*Sarah Vowell wrote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/13/opinion/public-universities-biden-2020.html) in The Times in August 2020. Vowell grouped Whitmer with Biden and several other nationally prominent politicians who, unlike every president since Jimmy Carter, graduated from public universities (in Whitmer’s case, Michigan State, both college and law school). She’s also the [*subject*](https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/05/04/gretchen-whitmer-big-gretch-rap-song/3077499001/) of an adoring song by the Detroit rapper GmacCash, “Big Gretch.” The nickname took, and it’s gold.

Many prominent Democrats urged Biden to [*run with Whitmer in 2020*](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/06/13/biden-running-mate-what-gretchen-whitmer-could-bring-as-vp.html) — that’s how potent they felt her pull could be. There’s no reason to think that it has weakened with more experience. And it’s arguably the right kind of experience. Governors have an easier time separating themselves from Washington — and from voters’ cynicism about it — than politicians who’ve been working in the capital for many years. There will no doubt be some governor in any post-Biden mix. I don’t spot another with more potential than Whitmer. “Big Gretch is going to be very formidable,” Sellers said.

Nicole Hemmer, a political scientist at Vanderbilt University and the author of the recently published book “Partisans: The Conservative Revolutionaries Who Remade American Politics in the 1900s,” noted that Whitmer “has been targeted by the far right, so it fits into the narrative of dangers to democracy.” “On paper,” Hemmer continued, “it makes a lot of sense. I just don’t know if she has that punch to break through in terms of national media.”

Indeed, Whitmer, 51, hasn’t spent much time in the national spotlight, so it’s unclear how commanding she’d be on a larger stage. In a recent debate against her Republican opponent for governor, Tudor Dixon, she was solid but unspectacular.

Keep an eye on …

Amy Klobuchar

Elizabeth Warren

Roy Cooper

Sherrod Brown

J.B. Pritzker

Ro Khanna

Amy Klobuchar lasted much longer in the 2020 primaries than Harris did, and with each passing week, the Minnesota senator, now 62, honed her message and voice. She could build from there. And at least in Minnesota, she has shown the ability to win support among Democratic progressives and moderates alike.

But she’s certainly no progressive darling, and just as a 2024 Democratic field would almost certainly have a governor in the foreground, it would have a progressive there, too. If Sanders doesn’t run, does Elizabeth Warren — who, at 73, is eight years his junior — become their standard-bearer? She has undoubtedly learned from her 2020 campaign, which trailed off after an early surge but revealed her to be not only thoroughly prepared but also dynamic in debates and on the stump.

I mentioned governors. Roy Cooper, the Democrat at the helm of North Carolina, has twice been elected in years (2016, 2020) when Trump won North Carolina and when North Carolina Republicans prevailed in fiercely contested Senate races, too.

That amounts to at least some promise of crossover appeal in rigidly and toxically partisan times. Cooper, 65, could be a tonic — affable, sensible, with no whiff of ideologue in him. I may be biased; he’s my governor, and I think he has done an admirable, balanced job of alternately stymieing and working with the Republicans who control both chambers of the state legislature. He praises and models the qualities of competence and pragmatism. Additionally, his current stint as chair of the Democratic Governors Association means that he has made or strengthened connections beyond his state, collecting I.O.U.s. “There’s a charisma issue,” one Democratic insider, echoing others, confided in me. But, she added, “I do think his name will be floated, and he’d be an interesting candidate.”

Although Tim Ryan’s loss to J.D. Vance in the Senate race in Ohio made that state look redder than ever, its voters just four years ago awarded Senator Sherrod Brown, a Democrat, a third term — and they did so by a margin of almost seven percentage points. That’s a testament to the breadth of his appeal. “If you ask me who in the Democratic Party has the trust of the progressive community and the pulse of ***working-class*** Americans, that’s Sherrod Brown,” Sosnik told me. “He bridges the wings of the party.” But Brown, 70, passed on the 2020 presidential race despite considerable interest in him. Several Democratic insiders told me that he’s simply too equivocal about his intentions and ambition to mount a winning presidential campaign.

Gov. J.B. Pritzker of Illinois has won fans for his fiery moments of refreshing bluntness. “There’s a kind of strange internet sparkle around Governor Pritzker,” Hemmer said. The mix of urban and rural areas in Illinois provides an instructive lesson for a national campaign. And several Democratic strategists pointed out that if Biden leaves his would-be successors with little time to raise the money they need, Pritzker, 57, could fund his own campaign. One strategist quipped that he’d be an especially fascinating adversary for Trump, “a real billionaire against a fake billionaire.” But is a billionaire the right Democratic fit?

The leap from House member to presidential nominee is a big and unlikely one — just ask Tim Ryan and Eric Swalwell, who failed to make it in 2020 — but that might not prevent Representative Ro Khanna, a California Democrat, from trying. A strong communicator who represents Silicon Valley but talks with passion about the concerns of workers at a lower economic altitude, Khanna is well regarded by progressives, especially those interested in a changing of the guard.

“I think there is getting to be a certain wariness among the Democratic base with having the entire leadership of their party being people with a 1990s mentality about politics,” Rabin-Havt said, adding that Khanna, a 46-year-old Indian American, departs from that mentality. Hemmer concurred that he’s not part of the Democratic establishment and, if he played his cards right, could wring that for extra excitement, a particular buzz, “introducing himself to the American people as a candidate who has not been defined by others and has a little more breathing room.”

I’m just not feeling it …

Bernie Sanders

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

Gavin Newsom

Mitch Landrieu

Michelle Obama

There’s inevitable curiosity about Bernie Sanders. He has been the Democratic runner-up twice in a row, and he’s still in the mix, still in the Senate, still revered by many progressives. But if Biden essentially ages out, can he be succeeded by someone older who had a heart attack in 2019? I don’t see it.

What, then, about a young progressive like Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez? Her name gets bandied about. But there’s young and then there’s 33 years old. She’d reach the minimum age for the presidency, 35, less than a month before Election Day 2024. And she’d bring just six years of experience in the House to the job. These are wild days in which old rules fly out the window, but probably not this fast and far.

The eagerness with which Gavin Newsom, 55, has stepped forward as a voluble defender of liberal values and pugilistic critic of Ron DeSantis has predictably fed speculation about a presidential candidacy. And he has the precious credential of big-state governor. But that state is California, once a harbinger and now more a partisan Rorschach test. And there’s a preening quality and a slickness to Newsom that give many observers pause and make others — including the writer Josh Barro, who used his Very Serious newsletter for [*a savage delineation of the easy case against Newsom*](https://www.joshbarro.com/p/gavin-newsom-is-gross-and-embarrassing) — cringe.

And both specifically and metaphorically, can a Newsom candidacy survive the [*widely circulated photo*](https://twitter.com/owillis/status/1298117702440148993?s=20&amp;t=mJljvjkpaJ7C9Y9NN-AjrA) of him and his former wife, Kimberly Guilfoyle, who is now engaged to Donald Trump Jr., stretched out on an ostentatious rug in a gilded room? One way to think about Newsom’s shortcomings versus those of other Democratic presidential prospects: When he arguably [*violated his own Covid counsel*](https://www.politico.com/states/california/story/2020/11/13/newsom-faces-backlash-after-attending-french-laundry-dinner-party-1336419) against large gatherings in California, it was for a sumptuous feast at the fabled French Laundry in the Napa Valley. When Whitmer [*violated hers*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2021/05/24/michigan-gretchen-whitmer-social-distance/) in Michigan, it was for dinner at [*a bar and grill*](https://thelandsharkmsu.com/main-menu/) with mozzarella sticks and chili cheese fries on the menu.

Many Democrats still gush about the 2017 speech that Mitch Landrieu, then the mayor of New Orleans, gave about Confederate monuments and racial reconciliation. [*It was sublime*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/23/opinion/mitch-landrieu-new-orleans-mayor-speech.html). And [*his current role*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/us/politics/mitch-landrieu-infrastructure-biden.html) as a senior adviser and infrastructure coordinator for the Biden administration has him crisscrossing the country in advantageous ways. But a Landrieu candidacy elicits the most discussion and excitement from Democratic intelligentsia. That’s as much curse as blessing.

The next supposedly sentient acquaintance of mine who suggests that Michelle Obama would or should run for president is getting deleted from my contacts. She’s a profoundly admirable person who … has never signaled a scintilla of amenability to this idea and whose favorability ratings would plummet the minute she was in the fray rather than above it.

I’m intrigued …

Mark Kelly

Raphael Warnock

Jared Polis

Jon Tester

Andy Beshear

Arizona is a purple state with a penchant for political madness and yet Senator Mark Kelly, a 58-year-old Democrat who’s the epitome of even-keeled, could be on the cusp of re-election there. That could prompt speculation about his appeal as a presidential candidate, especially given his biography (former astronaut; former Navy pilot; married to Gabby Giffords, a former House member who became one of the country’s most prominent advocates for gun safety after she was nearly killed in a mass shooting).

“He has a brand that transcends party,” one strategist observed. Hemmer said: “He has that ability to hit some of those notes that really worked for the Biden campaign: ‘I’m somebody who knows and understands suffering. I’m somebody who has turned challenges into public service.’”

If Senator Raphael Warnock, 53, beats his Republican opponent, Herschel Walker, in a December runoff, he will have won a purple state twice in two years. He connects with Black voters and “also doesn’t offend white people,” Sellers said, adding: “He can be a generational transition from Biden.” Additionally, Warnock, an ordained Baptist minister, could challenge Republican candidates’ shopworn claims to greater religiousness. “Many Republicans think G.O.P. means God’s Only Party,” Sellers said. “Raphael snatches that from them.”

Gov. Jared Polis, 47, just cruised to re-election in light blue Colorado, where he has done an excellent job by most accounts and, in the admiring words of the conservative Washington Post columnist George Will, shown a “knack for leavening his high-octane progressivism with departures from that church’s strict catechism.” The headline on [*that column of Will’s*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2022/09/14/democrat-jared-polis-presidential-potential-2024/), published two months ago: “Why Colorado Gov. Jared Polis could answer Democrats’ 2024 prayers.” He’s the first openly gay man to be elected a governor in America, making him the kind of trailblazer that Democrats often like to embrace, and he’s wealthy from internet start-ups that go back to his days as a Princeton student. But he’s no geyser of charisma, barely a font. Could his awkwardness be endearing in an age of lacquered social media?

The early exit of Steve Bullock, the former Montana governor, from the 2020 presidential primary took some shine off the notion that a Democrat who’d found success and elicited affection from Republicans in a red and largely rural state might be presidential gold. But that hasn’t stopped some people, including yours truly, from wondering about someone like the Kentucky governor, Andy Beshear, 44, or the Montana senator Jon Tester, 66, a farmer in his third term in the chamber. Tester is beloved by many Democrats in Washington but might have enough trouble winning a fourth Senate term in 2024 to make a run at the presidency an attractive, nothing-to-lose adventure.

But the most intriguing potential candidate is, almost by definition, one whose name has not yet come up. And the metabolism of the media these days harbors the possibility of vaulting from relative anonymity to saturation exposure in a few hot weeks. That kind of phenom could lunge for the presidency even if Biden does run. Incumbent presidents have been challenged that way before.

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**Load-Date:** November 12, 2022

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[***Some Voters Are at Odds With Their Party on Abortion; news analysis***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:648R-5511-DXY4-X2FH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 11, 2021 Saturday 14:43 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1245 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Despite decades of partisan fighting in Washington, Americans are not as neatly divided on abortion as politicians and activists.

**Body**

Despite decades of partisan fighting in Washington, Americans are not as neatly divided on abortion as politicians and activists.

Abortion is one of the most polarizing issues in Washington. Congressional Democrats and Republicans all but unanimously back their party’s view on abortion, and many highly engaged activists feel the same way.

But the public’s view of abortion is far more complicated.

Despite decades of partisan fighting, Americans are not as neatly divided on abortion as politicians and activists. There are Republicans who support abortion rights, Democrats who oppose abortion and a surprisingly large group of voters who appear to have muddled or conflicted views. Overall, 26 percent of voters hold a different view on abortion than the presidential candidate they supported in 2020, according to data from an AP VoteCast election survey of more than 100,000 voters.

No issue quite compares to abortion, at least not in its emotional and moral stakes. Yet by some measures, more voters hold views on abortion at odds with those of their presidential pick than on other hot-button issues, including gun control, coronavirus mask mandates or a border wall.

The relatively large number of voters who split with their party on abortion may simply be a reflection of how the Supreme Court’s decision in Roe v. Wade often kept the issue from the center of political debate. But it may also suggest that many voters just don’t feel as strongly about the issue as one might assume.

The findings in the AP VoteCast election survey are a reminder that American politics are not always as polarized as we imagine. The bitterly partisan fight unfolding in statehouses and courthouses, even in the Supreme Court’s [*split decision on Friday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/10/us/politics/texas-abortion-supreme-court.html) over the Texas abortion law, can obscure how many Americans of all parties struggle with the weighty moral and ethical questions raised by abortion.

As recently as 30 years ago, Democrats and Republicans had [*very similar*](https://gssdataexplorer.norc.org/trends/Current%20Affairs?measure=abany) views of abortion. In 1991, 42 percent of Democrats thought abortion should be legal whenever a woman sought one, compared with 41 percent of Republicans. Although attitudes about abortion have gradually tracked more sharply along partisan lines since then, there are still many voters who hold a mix of views that diverge from party allegiance or affiliation.

Less engaged and moderate voters are especially likely to hold abortion views at odds with their party. According to the 2018 General Social Survey, 92 percent of college-educated liberal Democrats believe it should be possible for women to obtain a legal abortion if she wanted for any reason, compared with just 55 percent of more moderate Democrats. Similarly, 39 percent of moderate Republicans say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, according to Pew Research.

The complexity of Americans’ views on abortion is perhaps a reflection of the role religion plays in it. Only a handful of other political issues are more closely tied to people’s personal religious beliefs.

At least 65 percent of evangelical Christians believe that abortion should be illegal in most or all cases, according to the AP VoteCast data, compared with 29 percent of nonevangelical voters. That 36-point gap is far larger than the 21-point gap between evangelical and nonevangelical support for Joseph R. Biden in the 2020 election.

As a result, the conflicted voters tend to be relatively religious Democrats and less religious Republicans, including Black evangelical Democrats who oppose abortion or relatively secular white ***working-class*** Trump voters who support abortion rights.

The importance of religion brings a clear regional dimension to the political stakes of the issue. Evangelical and religious voters are disproportionately concentrated in the South. That includes conflicted Democrats: Only 59 percent of Southern Democratic-leaning voters say most abortions should be legal, according to Pew Research. Conflicted Republicans, meanwhile, are likeliest to live in the North and especially the Northeast.

For Republicans, the electoral risk might be most pronounced in these Northern battleground states, where a sizable share of their voters believe abortion should be legal. About 37 percent of Donald J. Trump’s supporters in Pennsylvania and Michigan believe that abortion should be mostly legal, according to the AP VoteCast data. It’s a large enough number to create a plausible electoral vulnerability for Republicans advocating abortion restrictions, but it’s a small enough number that the party would most likely support new abortion restrictions if the Supreme Court allowed it.

There’s nothing new about these cultural issues holding Republicans back in the Midwest.

Republicans struggled to break through in the region for a generation, as the religious right helped the party in the South but not in the less evangelical Northern battleground states. It was Mr. Trump’s new brand of incendiary politics, focused on issues like immigration and crime, that helped Republicans gain an advantage in the region by polarizing American politics along educational rather than religious lines.

Although renewed attention on abortion might cut against some Trump-era trends, it could tend to reinforce others, like deteriorating Democratic strength among nonwhite voters. Much like white voters, Black and Hispanic voters are largely divided on abortion, even though they are far more likely to vote Democratic.

Of course, just because voters are conflicted on an issue doesn’t mean they are bound to break to the other party. Many of these voters are partisans, despite their views on abortion, precisely because they care more about other issues.

It’s even possible that many of these conflicted voters aren’t conflicted between their views and their party’s views, but simply conflicted on abortion itself. The number of Americans who support or oppose abortion rights can vary widely, depending on how pollsters phrase the question. And while polls routinely show that a majority of voters think abortion should be mostly legal, polls often show significant support for the kinds of restrictions that might be up for debate if the Supreme Court overturns Roe.

The confusion is perhaps best illustrated in a series of poll questions asked by Gallup. Each result alone could seem to vindicate either side’s view of abortion. Together, however, they raise doubts about whether a majority of voters have a clear position on the issue at all.

According to Gallup, voters [*overwhelmingly*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/235469/trimesters-key-abortion-views.aspx) think abortion should generally be illegal during the second trimester. But a different Gallup poll found that voters [*opposed*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/350804/americans-opposed-overturning-roe-wade.aspx) a ban on abortion after 18 weeks, in the middle of the second trimester.

In another set of perplexing findings, Gallup found that 60 percent of Americans thought abortion should be legal in the first three months of pregnancy, only to see support drop to [*45 percent*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/1576/abortion.aspx) simply by adding the condition: “when the woman does not want the child for any reason.” Apparently, many people who support legal abortion still recoil at the idea of it under many circumstances.

These seemingly incompatible findings suggest that a large number of voters either have complex and nuanced views or are so conflicted that even subtle changes in the wording of a question can yield huge changes in the results.

PHOTO: Attitudes on abortion don’t always align with partisanship. Many voters hold conflicting views. (PHOTOGRAPH BY KENNY HOLSTON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 12, 2021

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[***His Mother Is Terminally Ill. His Father, a Mystery.; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JD-KX51-DXY4-X0NW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 7, 2021 Tuesday 14:59 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 890 words

**Byline:** Andre Dubus III

**Highlight:** In Atticus Lish’s second novel, “The War for Gloria,” a teenage boy shoulders grueling family hardships.

**Body**

THE WAR FOR GLORIA

By Atticus Lish

There is a polished gloss to so much early-career contemporary American fiction, a sense that behind the authorial talents that created these novels and stories, there is also a well-intentioned production team of editors and creative writing professors and various helpers along the way who have passed on the rules of what can and cannot be done on the page. And so one often gets the hollow feeling that these carefully made books are now part of a smoothly running machine whose ultimate purpose seems to be not so much art as commerce. This is not even remotely the case with Atticus Lish’s profoundly affecting novel “The War for Gloria.”

From its hypnotic opening pages, we find ourselves in the sure hands of a roaming omniscient narrator, one who knows intimately the beating hearts of its two central characters: Gloria, a young single mother, and Corey, her only child, a boy who early on shows a passion for sailing from studying books. “Corey showed his mom the islands on the map, Boa Vista and Santiago off the coast of Senegal, telling her that he’d be sailing here someday when he grew up and went to sea,” Lish writes. “He had learned about the concept of a vessel from living in his mother’s car. He had fastened on the concept early. Maybe it was always in his head, one of the basic concepts he was born with — woman, sun, earth, boat.”

He is also born, it soon becomes clear, with a deep and abiding love for his mother, an aspiring writer and intellectual who struggles to pay the bills and is forced to constantly move, a woman whom her young son sees as his advocate at all times, despite the world’s hazards: “He saw her as having a glass jaw that she kept putting up and it kept getting cracked. But when it came to him, she was stalwart.”

Set in and around the ***working-class*** neighborhoods of Boston during Obama’s presidency, the novel takes a dark early turn when Gloria is stricken with a terminal illness and Corey’s father, Leonard, a man he’s never known, comes back into the picture. Leonard works as a security guard at M.I.T. and claims to be a largely self-taught physicist writing his own groundbreaking dissertation. He is also obsessed with one of his neighbors, a man who got away with killing a woman. Leonard’s presence soon becomes sinister, yet he is a fully realized character, just one of many here. There is Adrian Thomas Reinhardt, Corey’s new friend who has been accepted to M.I.T., a boy with a sculpted physique who lifts weights and punches a heavy bag he hangs from a tree in his upper-class Cambridge neighborhood, who wears a leather jacket and a plastic groin cup at all times and reads Nietzsche for leisure. There is Tom Hibbard, a “tin knocker,” and his daughter, Molly, one of Corey’s classmates, for whom he pines. When we meet her, we are given not so much a portrait as we are a feeling for what her appearance incites in Corey:

“He would always remember the sight of Molly standing in front of her house in the summer light when he was a boy of 13 and she was wearing cutoff shorts. The sun had been pouring down on the grass in the rutted yard, turning it verdant electric green. A beach blue sky soared overhead above the points of the treetops. Below the cliff and beyond the trees lay the sparkling ocean.”

Immediately following this light touch comes a full rendering of New England blue-collar culture:

“Charcoal smoke suffused the air. Pickup trucks were parked all over, on the street and on the grass. Rock was playing on a radio — ’80s hits. … A group of older male construction workers stood in a line, staring contentedly out at the street, saying nothing. … Many were heavily tattooed, like bikers or ex-cons, their skin leathered by sun and work. You could see invisible responsibility hanging on them — payments for vehicles and homes, children and women. Steadied by weight, they were further restrained by a shared sense of the right way to act; they had to work with each other. There was no wildness; they were ships with ballasts and keels.”

Lish’s substantial gifts, first shown in his acclaimed debut novel, “[*Preparation for the Next Life*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/21/books/review/preparation-for-the-next-life-by-atticus-lish.html),” are on abundant display here and throughout this gorgeously written book — his ability to render urban landscapes, the weather and its subtle effects on the emotions of his characters, the textural experience of poverty and class stratification in our early-21st-century America, physical labor, as well as physical and psychic violence. All of this is captured by a passionate narrative voice that has clearly been around, one that intimately knows not only the rigors of confined combat in a cage fight but also the bruised and hungry heart of a woman yearning to fulfill her potential before she dies. But at the heart of “The War for Gloria” is the unforgettable character of Corey, a young man who is left to care for his dying mother alone, a boy who is hurled into the hard streets to find his solitary way.

With this, only his second novel, Lish has not only created a work of enduring art, he has distinguished himself as one of our finest writers.

Andre Dubus III’s most recent novel is “Gone So Long.” THE WAR FOR GLORIA By Atticus Lish 452 pp. Alfred A. Knopf. $28.

PHOTO: Atticus Lish (PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN HERMENS)

**Related Articles**

* [*‘Preparation for the Next Life,’ by Atticus Lish*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/12/21/books/review/preparation-for-the-next-life-by-atticus-lish.html)

**Load-Date:** October 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Here is a guide to Biden’s three big spending plans — worth about $6 trillion.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62J9-JMR1-DXY4-X252-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 28, 2021 Wednesday 06:39 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 755 words

**Byline:** Glenn Thrush

**Highlight:** President Biden’s spending plans — one passed and two pending — reflect an ambition to restore the federal government to the role it played during the New Deal and Great Society.

**Body**

President Biden’s spending plans — one passed and two pending — reflect an ambition to restore the federal government to the role it played during the New Deal and Great Society.

President Biden is a man with a plan. Three plans, actually.

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden announced the [*third blockbuster domestic funding proposal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html) of his presidency, hours before his first speech before a joint session of Congress. Mr. Biden’s plans add up to about $6 trillion and reflect an ambition to restore the federal government to the role it played during the New Deal and Great Society.

Here is what the plans — one passed and two pending — would do.

[*The American Rescue Plan, $1.9 trillion.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html)

Mr. Biden’s coronavirus relief bill, [*passed in the Senate by a 50-to-49, party-line vote*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html) in March, was a sequel to the [*$2.2 trillion pandemic relief bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html) enacted during the Trump administration a year ago.

The centerpiece of the bill was a one-time direct payment of up to $1,400 for hundreds of millions of Americans, along with a $300 weekly federal supplement to unemployment benefits through the summer, and money for distributing vaccines.

It included $350 billion in emergency funding for localities — $195 billion for states, $130 billion for local governments, $20 billion for tribal governments and $4.5 billion for territories.

But it was also aimed at reducing long-term poverty. The plan provides $21.6 billion for federally subsidized housing, an enormous infusion of cash into a long-stagnant sector, with billions in [*emergency rental assistance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html) and longer-term capital projects.

[*The American Jobs Plan, $2.3 trillion.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html)

Mr. [*Biden’s infrastructure plan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html), unveiled on March 31, includes $621 billion for transportation projects, including bridges, roads, mass transit, ports, airports and electric vehicle development.

It would also funnel $111 billion into improving drinking-water infrastructure, and provide billions more for expanding broadband access and upgrading electric grids.

It adds $20 billion worth of tax credits for the construction and renovation of 500,000 units of affordable housing, an additional $40 billion for public housing capital improvements, and $100 billion for building and upgrading public schools.

About $300 billion is slated for assisting manufacturers and small businesses, and improving access to capital and investment in clean energy, along with $100 billion for work force development.

The most transformational and polarizing element of the plan is $400 billion for “home- or community-based care for aging relatives and people with disabilities” — an attempt by Mr. Biden to expand the definition of infrastructure to include the fast-growing network of workers responsible for caring for the country’s aging population.

How he would pay for it: [*raising the corporate tax rate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html), which Republicans have cut in recent years, to 28 percent from 21 percent and forcing multinational corporations to pay significantly more in taxes.

[*The American Families Plan, $1.8 trillion.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html)

The Biden administration on Wednesday detailed a collection of spending increases and tax cuts that seeks to expand access to education, reduce the cost of child care and support women in the work force.

While some details remain vague, the plan includes $1 trillion in new spending and $800 billion in tax credits.

It includes a $225 billion investment in federally subsidized child care and a paid family and medical leave program that will cost about $225 billion over the next decade as well as a $200 billion reduction in premiums for people enrolled in the Affordable Care Act.

It would also provide $200 billion in new education funding that would include free universal preschool for 5 million children in low-income and ***working-class*** families. In addition, Mr. Biden is also requesting funding for two free years of community college education to all Americans, including young immigrants known as the Dreamers.

How he would pay for it: The plan includes $80 billion in enhancements to the I.R.S., which the administration estimates could raise $700 billion from high earners and corporations that evade taxes.

Mr. Biden also wants to increase the marginal income tax rate for the top 1 percent of American income earners, to 39.6 percent from 37 percent and raise [*capital gains and dividend tax rates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/28/us/politics/biden-american-families-plan.html) for those who earn more than $1 million a year.

PHOTO: President Biden at the White House on Tuesday. He is scheduled to address a joint session of Congress on Wednesday night. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Scott for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***G.O.P.'s Full-Court Press on Voting Rights***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6244-DX21-DXY4-X45B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 2, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 799 words

**Byline:** By David Leonhardt

**Body**

Thanks. Here you are...

In dozens of states, the Republican Party has responded to Donald Trump's defeat by trying to change election laws, often to make voting more difficult.

The Democratic Party is struggling to figure out how to respond.

And voting-right experts are worried that the result could be the biggest infringement on Americans' voting rights since the demise of Reconstruction in the 19th century.

First, some background: Trump did not start this trend. For more than a decade, Republican politicians -- often worried about their ability to win elections in a diversifying country -- have tried to reduce voting access. But Trump's defeat and his repeated claims about voter fraud (almost all of them false) have lent new energy to the effort to change elections laws.

Legislators in Georgia are pushing bills that would make it harder to register, harder to vote on Sundays and harder to vote by mail. Arizona, Pennsylvania and several other states are also considering new restrictions on mail voting. The Brennan Center for Justice, a think tank in New York, has counted 253 bills across 43 states seeking to tighten voting rules.

It's a reflection of a widespread belief among Republican officials that high voter turnout hurts their chances of winning elections. They may be wrong about that: As the Republican Party has become more ***working class***, it has attracted many supporters who vote only occasionally. Still, Republican candidates would almost certainly benefit from some of the proposed changes, because they would disproportionately affect Black and Latino voters, who lean Democratic.

Democrats, along with any Republicans and independents who favor wider voting access, have three possible ways to respond. One of those three will be on display today at the Supreme Court.

[subhed]

The court will hear a case from Arizona in which Democratic officials are challenging two state provisions. One requires the disposal of any ballots cast at the wrong precinct, and another forbids people -- like church leaders or party organizers -- from collecting absentee ballots for submission. The Democrats argue that these provisions especially affect minority voters and thus violate the Voting Rights Act.

The Arizona lawsuit is an example of the main way that advocates have tried to protect voting rights over the past few decades: through the courts. Along the way, they have won some victories, including in a recent case from North Carolina.

But they have usually lost. The Supreme Court under Chief Justice John Roberts has generally ruled against voting-rights advocates, and most court observers expect the justices to allow Arizona's restrictions to stand.

If anything, the justices may use the case to issue a broader ruling that endorses other voting restrictions. ''I think the real question here is not what happens to these particular restrictions,'' said my colleague Emily Bazelon, who's covered fights over election laws. ''It's the test the Supreme Court imposes for future challenges to more onerous restrictions, more of which are coming down the pike.''

Richard Hasen, an election-law expert at the University of California, Irvine, told me that he thought Democrats had made a mistake bringing this case. ''If you're a voting-rights lawyer, the last place you want to be right now is the Supreme Court,'' Hasen said.

[subhed]

Other than the courts, the other two voting-rights battlegrounds are state governments and Congress.

But most state governments are a long shot because Democrats control only 15 of them -- and none in swing states like Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania or Wisconsin. Increasingly, Democrats have become a party of college graduates in major metropolitan areas whose message does not resonate in many blue-collar and rural areas. And Republicans have often managed to increase their advantage in state legislatures through aggressive gerrymandering, including in Michigan, North Carolina and Wisconsin.

The remaining option for voting-rights advocates is Congress -- and Democrats now control both Congress and the White House.

The House of Representatives has passed a bill that would expand voting rights, and President Biden supports it. It would guarantee automatic voter registration and widely available early voting and mail voting, among other steps. For the bill to have any chance in the Senate, however, Democrats would need the unanimous support of their 50 senators -- and they would need to scrap or alter the filibuster.

The debate over the filibuster can sometimes seem theoretical. But voting rights is one of the tangible ways in which it matters. If the filibuster remains in place, voting rights in the United States will probably be in retreat over the coming decade.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/us/02morning.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/01/us/02morning.html)

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Rebel Rapper Doesn't Dare Hold Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6573-WT41-JBG3-64H6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 14, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1505 words

**Byline:** By Isabelia Herrera

**Body**

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic -- On a mid-March evening here in the capital, a crowd of hundreds of festivalgoers wearing fairy wings, rhinestones and rainbow face paint began to chant. ''Po-po-la!'' they shouted, deploying the local slang for vagina. The scene resembled the summoning of a cult leader, and the Dominican firebrand Tokischa, a rapper known for her prurient lyrics and high-profile collaborations, emerged onstage.

For the next hour, the 26-year-old performer rapped about her bisexuality, carnal pleasures and doing drugs, all over speaker-frying dembow and trap beats. It was raining at the Isle of Light festival that night, the kind of Caribbean deluge that arrives in a flash. ''I want to get wet with you guys!'' she shrieked, walking out from under the stage awning and into the crowd. She unbuttoned her periwinkle blouse, revealing a hot-pink conical satin bra underneath, and the audience squealed.

The ground, once covered in grass, was now an obstacle course of mud puddles. No one seemed to care. Fans belted every word, their voices audibly hoarse. One woman climbed a metal fence, twerking above the crowd. When her set ended, Tokischa, beaming, pulled her panties off from under her miniskirt and tossed them to a woman in the audience.

Consider this a minor example of the provocation that defines Tokischa Altagracia Peralta. Her audacious lyrics, which revel in the linguistic rebellion of Dominican slang and embrace the euphoria of sex, are mostly unprintable. In ''Tukuntazo,'' she brags about sleeping with other women alongside her man. In her anthem ''Yo No Me Voy Acostar,'' she proclaims, ''I've got a bunch of molly in my head/I have a girlfriend who kisses me.''

Tokischa collects scandals like vacation souvenirs. Last year, she was forced to pay a municipal fine and issue a public apology after she posted risqué photos in front of a mural of the Virgin of Altagracia, the patron saint of the Dominican Republic. In the fall, she showed up to an awards show in a full-size vagina costume, dressed as a character she called ''Santa Popola.'' In a now deleted op-ed, a columnist for the Dominican newspaper La Información claimed her explicit lyrics ''disrespect people who fight to conserve family values.''

But there is also an entire generation of young Dominicans who see themselves in Tokischa's gleeful refusal of respectability. To them, she is a sex-positive queer rebel, the kind of cultural figure whose performances gesture toward liberation from oppressive, retrograde politics.

On a tucked-away street off the Malecón, the seafront esplanade that lines the coast of Santo Domingo, Tokischa reflected on her irreverent reputation. It was a few days before the festival, and the rapper had just arrived at the offices of Paulus Music, the label and creative team behind her videos. She wore olive green joggers and a matching T-shirt with a familiar, eternally memed image: the GIF of Homer Simpson retreating into a bush.

''They say a lot of things about me,'' she said. '''Oh, she's not an artist, she's crazy, she's a drug addict,''' she continued. ''It doesn't offend me, because I'm sure of who I am. I know who Tokischa is. I know what Tokischa's doing.''

Tokischa Altagracia Peralta was born in Los Frailes, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Santo Domingo Este, but had an itinerant youth. Her parents separated, and she lived with her mother until she was 3 years old. When her mother relocated to the United States, Tokischa moved around often, living with aunts, godparents or other relatives. Her father was incarcerated when she was young.

Tokischa is the first to admit that she was rowdy in school. ''I would fight. They'd find me making out -- someone always found me making out!'' she said with a laugh. She talked back to her teachers and was expelled from schools -- and was often punished physically, she added.

''Aside from that, I was always creative,'' she recalled. ''I'd draw, I'd write. I'd lock myself in my room and act in front of the mirror.'' She grew up surrounded by Dominican genres like merengue, dembow and bachata, but when she was around 14, she discovered a whole new musical universe online: Pink Floyd, Bob Marley, Nicki Minaj, Rihanna.

''I lived dreaming up my life, imagining what I'd become,'' she said. ''I didn't know in what field, but I did know I was going to be a big artist.''

When she turned 18, a friend introduced her to Craigslist, and she said she became a sugar baby, receiving gifts from older, wealthy American sex tourists. One bought her Fenty Pumas, her first pair of sneakers. ''This one guy had photos of himself on a camel,'' she said impishly. ''I was like, 'He's got money!'''

Even though she's playful as she talks about it, Tokischa didn't like the work, especially when clients crossed the lines of consent. She transitioned to OnlyFans, the subscription-based platform where people can charge for access to photos and videos, and eventually started modeling and incorporating herself into the creative community in Santo Domingo. She learned how to write and record music after meeting producers in the scene through her manager, Raymi Paulus. She swiftly cultivated her vocal style, now her central weapon: an unmistakable, high-pitched, coy moan that oozes sex and allows her devilish, sensual raps to land with precision.

Her first official single was ''Pícala,'' a trap song featuring Tivi Gunz that dropped in 2018. Then came a torrent of equally racy dembow singles: ''Desacato Escolar,'' with Yomel El Meloso; ''El Rey de la Popola,'' with Rochy RD; and last year's ''Yo No Me Voy Acostar,'' among many others.

The major labels soon came running: Last summer, she released ''Perra'' with the Colombian reggaeton star J Balvin. Then came ''Linda,'' and more recently ''La Combi Versace,'' both with the Spanish experimentalist Rosalía. In March, she completed her first U.S. tour, selling out Terminal 5 in New York in 30 minutes. She has a single with the EDM producer Marshmello arriving at the end of the month, and plans to record a full album over the next two years.

''She's different than people imagine. She's very professional, very disciplined,'' said LeoRD, the superstar dembow producer who's collaborated with Tokischa on several tracks. In a phone call, he said that her climb has been unprecedented in the world of dembow. ''In so little time, with just a few songs, I've seen her evolution go from zero to 100.''

Tokischa's rapid rise has been divisive. For some, she is a sexual deviant endangering children, or a victim of neglect and difficult circumstances. To others, she's a self-objectifying woman who's just satisfying male fantasies. And to still others, she is a fearless feminist whose insurgent spirit is breaking ground. Last summer, she performed in Santo Domingo at the Dominican Pride parade, and featured trans women as extras and dancers in the video for ''Linda,'' which drew praise from across the L.G.B.T.Q. community. The beauty blog Byrdie wrote that she's ''actively moving the needle away from the male gaze and towards female liberation,'' and doing so in a Latin music industry that often favors white artists.

It hasn't all been rosy, though. Last fall, feminist activists and Colombia's vice president condemned the portrayal of Black women in Tokischa and J Balvin's video for ''Perra,'' in which Black women wear prosthetics that depict them as dogs, and Balvin, a white Colombian, walks one actress, who is on all fours with a chain around her neck.

After the video was removed from YouTube, Balvin issued an apology. Tokischa later told Rolling Stone that she was ''truly sorry people felt offended,'' but that the visual was conceptual, intended to illustrate the song's metaphors. ''We were in the Dominican Republic; over there, we're all Black,'' she said of the backlash in a December podcast interview. ''It wasn't like we went to Africa or the United States to find those women.'' Unsurprisingly, the comment drew criticism from some fans on Twitter for dismissing valid concerns about the animalistic depiction of Black women.

The reaction illustrated how fans increasingly demand progressivism from pop stars, especially disrupters like Tokischa. ''Since the first day I started making music, I said, 'I'm going to speak my truth,''' she said. In a radio interview last year, she made the point a different way: ''I only talk about me, my life,'' she said. ''I don't feel like I'm responsible for fixing society.''

Tokischa is still an agitator, and a necessary one. ''Not being afraid to express my sexuality, my way of thinking -- it's a beautiful thing,'' she said. ''There's a lot of people who are scared to say who they are, because they're kicked out of their houses, they're fired from their jobs, they lose friends. But you're not bad -- you're doing what your heart is telling you.''

''I have a lot of other messages to offer,'' she continued. ''But now is the moment for this message, and I'm loving it.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/arts/music/tokischa.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/arts/music/tokischa.html)

**Load-Date:** April 14, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Pandemic Has Pulled Reading Skills Down Into 'New Territory'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YF-3R81-DXY4-X32F-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 9, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1486 words

**Byline:** By Dana Goldstein

**Body**

The fallout from the pandemic is just being felt. ''We're in new territory,'' educators say.

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. -- The kindergarten crisis of last year, when millions of 5-year-olds spent months outside of classrooms, has become this year's reading emergency.

As the pandemic enters its third year, a cluster of new studies now show that about a third of children in the youngest grades are missing reading benchmarks, up significantly from before the pandemic.

In Virginia, one study found that early reading skills were at a 20-year low this fall, which the researchers described as ''alarming.''

In the Boston region, 60 percent of students at some high-poverty schools have been identified as at high risk for reading problems -- twice the number of students as before the pandemic, according to Tiffany P. Hogan, director of the Speech and Language Literacy Lab at the MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston.

Children in every demographic group have been affected, but Black and Hispanic children, as well as those from low-income families, those with disabilities and those who are not fluent in English, have fallen the furthest behind.

''We're in new territory,'' Dr. Hogan said about the pandemic's toll on reading. If children do not become competent readers by the end of elementary school, the risks are ''pretty dramatic,'' she said. Poor readers are more likely to drop out of high school, earn less money as adults and become involved in the criminal justice system.

The literacy crisis did not start with the pandemic. In 2019, results on national and international exams showed stagnant or declining American performance in reading, and widening gaps between high and low performers. The causes are multifaceted, but many experts point to a shortage of educators trained in phonics and phonemic awareness -- the foundational skills of linking the sounds of spoken English to the letters that appear on the page.

The pandemic has compounded those issues.

Children spent months out of the classroom, where they were supposed to learn the basics of reading -- the ABCs, what sound a ''b'' or ''ch'' makes. Many first and second graders returned to classrooms needing to review parts of the kindergarten curriculum. But nearly half of public schools have teaching vacancies, especially in special education and the elementary grades, according to a federal survey conducted in December and January.

Even students with well-trained teachers have had far fewer hands-on hours with them than before the pandemic, which has been defined by closures, uneven access to online instruction, quarantine periods and -- even on the best days -- virus-related interruptions to regular classroom routines. Now, schools are under pressure to boost literacy as quickly as possible so students gain the reading skills they need to learn the rest of the curriculum, from math word problems to civics lessons. Billions of federal stimulus dollars are flowing to districts for tutoring and other supports, but their effect may be limited if schools cannot find quality staff members to hire.

At Capital Preparatory Harbor Lower School, a charter elementary school in the ***working-class*** coastal city of Bridgeport, Conn., about half of the first graders did not set foot inside a classroom during their crucial kindergarten year. Though the school building reopened in January 2021 on a hybrid schedule, many families, concerned about the virus, opted to continue full-time remote learning.

At the beginning of this school year, when all students returned to in-person learning, more than twice as many first graders as before the pandemic tested at kindergarten levels or below in their literacy skills, according to the administration.

Teachers started with the basics: how to orient and hold a book, and where the names of the author and illustrator could be found. The school is using federal stimulus dollars to create classroom libraries filled with titles that appeal to the largely Black and Hispanic students there, like ''Firebird,'' about a young, Black dancer by the ballerina Misty Copeland, and ''Hair Love,'' about a Black father styling his daughter's hair.

The stimulus money is also paying for a new structured phonics curriculum called Fundations. Given the depth of many students' struggles with reading, the work has taken on ''a level of urgency,'' said Garensha John, a first-grade teacher at the school. ''Let's get it done. As soon as they know this, they'll excel.''

From the start of the pandemic, when schools abruptly shuttered in March 2020, math skills were clearly affected, while some early research suggested that students' reading skills were holding steady, perhaps because more parents read with their children at home than practiced math.

But now, ''What we're seeing is that there are a lot of children who didn't get the stimulation they need'' during the pandemic to adequately develop early speech and reading skills, which are closely linked, Dr. Hogan said.

On a Wednesday morning in February, Mrs. John arrayed 13 6- and 7-year-olds on a rug in front of her, and led them through a series of well-rehearsed exercises sounding out simple written letter combinations and words. The children, clad in uniforms, chanted and clapped as they read in unison. The word of the day was a difficult one for many children to read and pronounce: ''ships.''

Cameron Segui, 7, wearing a blue surgical mask and black glasses, placed his hand under his chin, a strategy students use to check if their mouths are positioned correctly. The sound ''puh'' should be made with the jaw relatively high up, for example, with the cheeks puffing out. ''Zh'' makes the jaw vibrate, but the ''sh'' and ''s'' sounds in ''ships'' should not.

Some parents and educators have argued that masks are partially responsible for language and literacy deficits. But researchers say that unlike the well-documented connection between school closures and decreased achievement, there is not yet strong evidence that masking has hindered the development of reading skills.

Such conclusions ''would just be conjecture at this point,'' said Nathan Clemens, a dyslexia expert at the University of Texas, Austin.

Later that day in Mrs. John's class, students broke into small groups to practice writing and segmenting words into different sounds. Cameron, in one of the more advanced groups, was working on full sentences, and pointed proudly to his writing: ''Ben had a red and tan hat,'' he read.

The biggest problem for Capital Prep, and many other schools, is a shortage of educators like Mrs. John, 30, a Tufts University graduate who received formal training in phonics instruction in a previous job. Many graduates of teacher-preparation programs lack this skill set, and some of the nation's most popular reading curriculums do not emphasize it, despite a large body of research showing it is crucial.

States like Mississippi, Alabama and Massachusetts have begun retraining teachers in phonics and decommissioning outdated curriculum materials. But some efforts were interrupted or slowed by the pandemic.

At Capital Prep, Mrs. John's students have made big leaps since September. She serves as a model for colleagues, and the school is providing professional development. Still, in February, there were seven open teaching jobs out of 23 at the school, with some students being taught by inexperienced substitutes. Steve Perry, the founder of the Capital Prep charter school network, which has schools in both Connecticut and New York, recently took a trip to Puerto Rico to recruit educators.

Dr. Hogan, the Boston researcher, has a federal grant to provide intensive, small-group tutoring to children at high-poverty schools who are behind on early reading skills. She, too, has struggled to fill open positions, despite pushing the pay to up to $40 per hour from $15 per hour.

''I'm running on fumes,'' she said.

It does not help that there is surging demand for private reading and speech therapy for children from affluent families. Fees can run up to $200 per hour, allowing some educators to leave the classroom entirely.

Tamara Cella, a phonics specialist who holds a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, left the New York City public school system in 2016, frustrated by the strain of principal turnover. In addition to a job at a New Jersey private school, she now moonlights as a phonics tutor for Brooklyn Letters, a company that provides in-home sessions.

''Tutoring pays extremely well,'' Dr. Cella acknowledged.

She tutors children facing some of the same challenges as those at Capital Prep -- missing core phonics skills, and difficulty transitioning from simple reading exercises to comprehending books. But Dr. Cella worries more about the students she no longer sees.

''That feeling of guilt comes over me,'' she said. ''What about the kids in the Bronx?''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/pandemic-schools-reading-crisis.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/us/pandemic-schools-reading-crisis.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Garensha John, a first-grade teacher in Bridgeport, Conn., said phonics instruction had taken on ''a level of urgency.'' About half of the first graders at her school did not attend kindergarten in person.

Mrs. John, who is formally trained in phonics instruction, has found effective strategies to work with students in masks. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER CAPOZZIELLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Blockchain's Strange Allure***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64MP-9801-JBG3-6137-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 27, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; TRESSIE MCMILLAN COTTOM

**Length:** 1365 words

**Byline:** By Tressie McMillan Cottom

**Body**

My family managed to get together for a small Thanksgiving dinner last year. It was our first gathering since April 2020. After a big meal, my cousin only wanted to talk about one thing: cryptocurrency. He is a middle-aged Black man from New York, just a few years older than I am, but those years make a huge difference in his job security. When he came of age, he got a blue-collar job working for the city. He has worked at that job since he was 17 years old, so he will be able to retire as a relatively young man. And since the job is unionized, my cousin will retire with a pension and health benefits -- the kind of pathway to economic security that is becoming increasingly rare.

These days, ours is an information economy that likes credentials, which involves going to some kind of postsecondary school. Even with high wages for skilled trades, like the one my cousin used to get that union job straight after high school, blue-collar trades are a hard sell to young workers. My cousin is not exactly a dinosaur, but he is not the kind of guy you imagine day-trading or actively managing an investment portfolio.

Yet he is absolutely enthused about Bitcoin. While he is figuring out his second act, he views crypto as the way to build ''generational wealth'' and ''freedom.'' I put those words in quotes because you hear them a lot in conversations around financial-sector schemes, and I am not sure they mean anything in those contexts. This week, the New York mayor, Eric Adams, is living up to his campaign promise to get his first three paychecks converted to cryptocurrency. My blue-collar cousin has a lot in common with his mayor. The allure of the next American frontier crosses all kinds of lines, including class lines. I'll get to that in a second.

Bitcoin is the most well-known cryptocurrency, but there are many others, like Ethereum, Dogecoin, and Tether, which come up a lot among my peers. Some people talk about crypto as being revolutionary because it promises to democratize access to financial markets and give individual investors control of their destiny. In an adjacent space, nonfungible tokens -- or NFTs -- promise something similar. NFTs are like coupons that represent an underlying object, like a piece of artwork, although they could represent almost anything.

For my part, the discussion over Thanksgiving leftovers brought home a data point about women's and people of color's interest in cryptocurrency. A 2021 survey found that the people who trade crypto are a far cry from the young, white, male image of a techbro:

The average cryptocurrency trader is under 40 (mean age is 38) and does not have a college degree (55 percent). Two-fifths of crypto traders are not white (44 percent), and 41 percent are women.

That survey captured a lot of people, like my cousin.

What fascinates me is how widely crypto and NFT talk has diffused, and so quickly. It is not often that I hear the same branding from lower-income people of color that I also hear from high-earning white peers with advanced degrees. Depending on your consumer profile -- biographical data like your age, race and gender, plus your purchasing habits -- you probably hear about these financial instruments from online ads, social media groups, and peers who are early adopters.

I hear about crypto from my educated, high-income academic and writing friends who also shop at Target a lot. I also hear about crypto from financial advisers and college classmates who share stories about making a lot of money mining crypto and trading NFTs. But because of my racial and geographic identities, I also hear about crypto from my ***working-class*** friends and family. They are getting messages about crypto from Facebook and Instagram and their friends who have moved on from candle-leggings-timeshare-jewelry multilevel marketing schemes to trading Dogecoin. Crypto and NFTs might be the only thing these diverse groups share in common. For that reason alone, the explosion of these technologies deserves some sociological attention.

All of the branded cryptos and NFTs were born out of the invention of the blockchain. I don't think of blockchain as a technological innovation so much as it is a cultural iteration. Blockchain is about solidarity among strangers. That's the kind of thing we have been striving for since the first mechanical age. On a purely technical level, blockchain is a ledger. That ledger is decentralized (although we will complicate that a bit in future discussions) and that decentralization makes it hard to manipulate. Now, the point of decentralization is that ideally no one who records information in the ledger has to trust anyone else when they exchange information based on that ledger. If I buy something, I can list my ownership in the ledger that assigns my ownership rights a unique identifier. If someone challenges my ownership, the ledger's record is the god tier of ownership. I have something that no one can take away from me! You start to see why this idea would appeal to a lot of people, but especially to groups of people whose right to ownership has been encoded in legal precedent and cultural norms for generations. If I live in a community where the police absolutely use eminent domain to claim my private property and I cannot do anything about it, that sense of everyday powerlessness would make the promise of blockchain sound pretty good. To me, though, it presents more questions than answers.

Those questions are about the culture of blockchain, not about its technical innovation. Blockchain promises to decouple trust in our financial transactions from institutions. I do not have to trust that someone owns something, or trust that an institution will defend my ownership of something. Blockchain says trust moves from institutions -- like banks and regulators -- to the apolitical ledger. In theory, no one owns the ledger. That means no one can undermine your bargaining power in an exchange. But is that actually how the ledger works? Is an apolitical platform possible in a world where everything we do has a political cause and effect? I'm skeptical on that front. And healthy skepticism is a good place to start when deciding whether something is a scam or merely risky.

Last week I did something I wish I had done before that Thanksgiving dinner conversation. I talked with some people about cryptocurrencies and NFTs. First was a far-ranging conversation with Anil Dash, a writer and entrepreneur best known, perhaps, as the C.E.O. of Glitch, a software development company. He has taken a lot of heat for having a nuanced assessment of blockchain, crypto and NFTs. We used to write together on a culture and technology vertical on Medium, where Anil has blogged about tech for years now. Anil is thoughtful and erudite on the cultural history of internet technologies. He is also pragmatic and has a keen interest in inequality. That mix of expertise and sensibility made him the first person I wanted to talk to about the intersection of citizen consumers and the alternative financial technologies infiltrating our everyday lives. The conversation was so rich that I will write about it in a two-part discussion starting next week.

My friend Darrick Hamilton, an economist, has warned that we shouldn't be too aggressive on replacing the danger of unjust financial systems with wildly risky alternative currencies. That sounds about right to me. It reminds me of another legitimate scheme in higher education, which I researched and wrote about for years: Telling people that their very expensive, low-quality degrees from these schools may not be a good solution for them rarely worked. That is the power of culture. And that's the reasoning behind my first question to Anil: What social problem is blockchain trying to solve? I'll ask this time and time again as we talk about the idea of institutional failures and the unsatisfying stop-gaps we create to navigate them.

Tressie McMillan Cottom (@tressiemcphd) is an associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science, the author of ''Thick: And Other Essays'' and a 2020 MacArthur fellow.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/24/opinion/crypto-blockchain-nfts.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/24/opinion/crypto-blockchain-nfts.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Diana Ejaita FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2022

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[***Tokischa, Latin Music’s Newest Rebel, Isn’t Holding Back***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656Y-SD51-DXY4-X1J5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 13, 2022 Wednesday 11:55 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; music

**Length:** 1563 words

**Byline:** Isabelia Herrera

**Highlight:** The gleefully raunchy Dominican rapper, who’s collaborated with J Balvin and Rosalía, has been hailed as an iconoclast. Her own goal is simple: Speaking her truth.

**Body**

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic — On a mid-March evening here in the capital, a crowd of hundreds of festivalgoers wearing fairy wings, rhinestones and rainbow face paint began to chant. “Po-po-la!” they shouted, deploying the local slang for vagina. The scene resembled the summoning of a cult leader, and the Dominican firebrand [*Tokischa*](https://www.instagram.com/tokischa.popola/?hl=en), a rapper known for her prurient lyrics and [*high-profile collaborations*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmmTz3W-JO0), emerged onstage.

For the next hour, the 26-year-old performer rapped about her bisexuality, carnal pleasures and doing drugs, all over speaker-frying dembow and trap beats. It was raining at the Isle of Light festival that night, the kind of Caribbean deluge that arrives in a flash. “I want to get wet with you guys!” she shrieked, walking out from under the stage awning and into the crowd. She unbuttoned her periwinkle blouse, revealing a hot-pink conical satin bra underneath, and the audience squealed.

The ground, once covered in grass, was now an obstacle course of mud puddles. No one seemed to care. Fans belted every word, their voices audibly hoarse. One woman climbed a metal fence, twerking above the crowd. When her set ended, Tokischa, beaming, pulled her panties off from under her miniskirt and tossed them to a woman in the audience.

Consider this a minor example of the provocation that defines Tokischa Altagracia Peralta. Her audacious lyrics, which revel in the linguistic rebellion of Dominican slang and embrace the euphoria of sex, are mostly unprintable. In [*“Tukuntazo,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y8jyhfaoly8) she brags about sleeping with other women alongside her man. In her anthem [*“Yo No Me Voy Acostar,”*](https://open.spotify.com/track/1Ie9lRC5qMuzigUQLIvJEu?si=k2g8SapoTaGri9oOzYQn2w&amp;nd=1) she proclaims, “I’ve got a bunch of molly in my head/I have a girlfriend who kisses me.”

Tokischa collects scandals like vacation souvenirs. Last year, she was [*forced*](https://hoy.com.do/felix-portes-aclara-tokischa-no-tiene-prohibido-visitar-santuarios-en-la-vega/) to pay a municipal fine and issue a public apology after she posted risqué photos in front of a mural of the Virgin of Altagracia, the patron saint of the Dominican Republic. In the fall, she showed up to an awards show in a [*full-size vagina costume*](https://acento.com.do/entretenimientos/tokischa-con-su-atuendo-de-santa-popola-se-robo-la-noche-en-los-billboard-8988760.html), dressed as a character she called “Santa Popola.” In a now deleted op-ed, a columnist for the Dominican newspaper La Información claimed her explicit lyrics “disrespect people who fight to conserve family values.”

But there is also an entire generation of young Dominicans who see themselves in Tokischa’s gleeful refusal of respectability. To them, she is a sex-positive queer rebel, the kind of cultural figure whose performances gesture toward liberation from oppressive, retrograde politics.

On a tucked-away street off the Malecón, the seafront esplanade that lines the coast of Santo Domingo, Tokischa reflected on her irreverent reputation. It was a few days before the festival, and the rapper had just arrived at the offices of Paulus Music, the label and creative team behind her videos. She wore olive green joggers and a matching T-shirt with a familiar, eternally memed image: the GIF of Homer Simpson retreating into a bush.

“They say a lot of things about me,” she said. “‘Oh, she’s not an artist, she’s crazy, she’s a drug addict,’” she continued. “It doesn’t offend me, because I’m sure of who I am. I know who Tokischa is. I know what Tokischa’s doing.”

Tokischa Altagracia Peralta was born in Los Frailes, a ***working-class*** neighborhood in Santo Domingo Este, but had an itinerant youth. Her parents separated, and she lived with her mother until she was 3 years old. When her mother relocated to the United States, Tokischa moved around often, living with aunts, godparents or other relatives. Her father was incarcerated when she was young.

Tokischa is the first to admit that she was rowdy in school. “I would fight. They’d find me making out — someone always found me making out!” she said with a laugh. She talked back to her teachers and was expelled from schools — and was often punished physically, she added.

“Aside from that, I was always creative,” she recalled. “I’d draw, I’d write. I’d lock myself in my room and act in front of the mirror.” She grew up surrounded by Dominican genres like merengue, dembow and bachata, but when she was around 14, she discovered a whole new musical universe online: Pink Floyd, Bob Marley, Nicki Minaj, Rihanna.

“I lived dreaming up my life, imagining what I’d become,” she said. “I didn’t know in what field, but I did know I was going to be a big artist.”

When she turned 18, a friend introduced her to Craigslist, and she said she became a sugar baby, receiving gifts from older, wealthy American sex tourists. One bought her Fenty Pumas, her first pair of sneakers. “This one guy had photos of himself on a camel,” she said impishly. “I was like, ‘He’s got money!’”

Even though she’s playful as she talks about it, Tokischa didn’t like the work, especially when clients crossed the lines of consent. She transitioned to OnlyFans, the subscription-based platform where people can charge for access to photos and videos, and eventually started modeling and incorporating herself into the creative community in Santo Domingo. She learned how to write and record music after meeting producers in the scene through her manager, Raymi Paulus. She swiftly cultivated her vocal style, now her central weapon: an unmistakable, high-pitched, coy moan that oozes sex and allows her devilish, sensual raps to land with precision.

Her first official single was [*“Pícala,”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PFCN8-7V8Ls) a trap song featuring Tivi Gunz that dropped in 2018. Then came a torrent of equally racy dembow singles: “Desacato Escolar,” with Yomel El Meloso; “El Rey de la Popola,” with Rochy RD; and last year’s “Yo No Me Voy Acostar,” among many others.

The major labels soon came running: Last summer, she released “Perra” with the Colombian reggaeton star J Balvin. Then came “Linda,” and more recently “La Combi Versace,” both with the Spanish experimentalist [*Rosalía*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/arts/music/rosalia-motomami.html). In March, she completed her first U.S. tour, selling out Terminal 5 in New York in 30 minutes. She has a single with the EDM producer Marshmello arriving at the end of the month, and plans to record a full album over the next two years.

“She’s different than people imagine. She’s very professional, very disciplined,” said LeoRD, the superstar dembow producer who’s collaborated with Tokischa on several tracks. In a phone call, he said that her climb has been unprecedented in the world of dembow. “In so little time, with just a few songs, I’ve seen her evolution go from zero to 100.”

Tokischa’s rapid rise has been divisive. For some, she is a sexual deviant endangering children, or a victim of neglect and difficult circumstances. To others, she’s a self-objectifying woman who’s just satisfying male fantasies. And to still others, she is a fearless feminist whose insurgent spirit is breaking ground. Last summer, she performed in Santo Domingo at the Dominican Pride parade, and featured trans women as extras and dancers in the video for “Linda,” which drew praise from across the L.G.B.T.Q. community. The beauty blog Byrdie wrote that she’s “actively moving the needle away from the male gaze and towards [*female liberation*](https://www.byrdie.com/tokischa-challenging-latinx-norms-5200873),” and doing so in a Latin music industry that often favors white artists.

It hasn’t all been rosy, though. Last fall, feminist activists and Colombia’s vice president condemned the portrayal of Black women in Tokischa and J Balvin’s video for “Perra,” in which Black women wear prosthetics that depict them as dogs, and Balvin, a white Colombian, walks one actress, who is on all fours with a chain around her neck.

After the video was removed from YouTube, Balvin issued an apology. Tokischa later [*told*](https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-latin/j-balvin-tokischa-perra-video-1247217/amp/) Rolling Stone that she was “truly sorry people felt offended,” but that the visual was conceptual, intended to illustrate the song’s metaphors. “We were in the Dominican Republic; over there, we’re all Black,” she [*said*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAibHLrYw4g) of the backlash in a December podcast interview. “It wasn’t like we went to Africa or the United States to find those women.” Unsurprisingly, the comment drew [*criticism*](https://twitter.com/ramsesprashad/status/1504877044286607361?s=27) from some fans on Twitter for dismissing valid concerns about the animalistic depiction of Black women.

The reaction illustrated how fans increasingly demand progressivism from pop stars, especially disrupters like Tokischa. “Since the first day I started making music, I said, ‘I’m going to speak my truth,’” she said. In a radio interview last year, she made the point a different way: “I only talk about me, my life,” she said. “I don’t feel like I’m responsible for fixing society.”

Tokischa is still an agitator, and a necessary one. “Not being afraid to express my sexuality, my way of thinking — it’s a beautiful thing,” she said. “There’s a lot of people who are scared to say who they are, because they’re kicked out of their houses, they’re fired from their jobs, they lose friends. But you’re not bad — you’re doing what your heart is telling you.”

“I have a lot of other messages to offer,” she continued. “But now is the moment for this message, and I’m loving it.”

PHOTOS: Tokischa’s audacious lyrics revel in the linguistic rebellion of Dominican slang. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JOSEFINA SANTOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C1); Above: “They say a lot of things about me,” Tokischa said. “It doesn’t offend me, because I’m sure of who I am.” Left, Tokischa (left center) and the Spanish singer Rosalía performing in Coral Gables, Fla. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSEFINA SANTOS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; JOHN PARRA/TELEMUNDO AND NBCU PHOTO BANK, VIA GETTY IMAGES) (C6)

**Load-Date:** April 15, 2022

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[***We Should Not Fear Feeling Bad***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656W-XK71-DXY4-X0R9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 13, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; TRESSIE MCMILLAN COTTOM

**Length:** 1543 words

**Byline:** By Tressie McMillan Cottom

**Body**

In the old comic strip ''The Family Circus,'' four precocious children blamed invisible goblins -- ''Not me,'' ''Nobody'' and ''Ida Know'' -- for their messes. In the real world, adults who should be too old for invisible friends are doing the same deflection with a goblin named ''Shame!''

The shame goblin has friends in places both high and low. Last month, Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene told a conservative podcast audience that Democrats ''tried to shame'' her for supporting the Jan. 6 insurrection. The Times editorial board recently implicated fear of shame as cause for Americans' ''losing hold of a fundamental right as citizens of a free country.''

That's not to minimize how bad shame feels. Shame can be excessive -- toxic shame, it is called -- but it can also be functionally good, like when it keeps your pants on in public. Despite the bad rap that shame gets in our overly psychoanalyzed culture, it is merely a feedback loop that tells you something about your behavior as well as the expectations of others. Psychologists often refer to shame as a secondary emotion, one that can be positive or negative, depending on the primary emotions that generate it. Those primary emotions are more dangerous to public life. Anger or contempt, for example. Yet we have chosen to turn shame into a social problem. It is bizarre to think that we should legislate, regulate or condition away an emotion or that we should do so for shame when contemptuous, irrational anger is right there.

Shame. Shamed. Ashamed. Shunned. We use these interchangeably to describe myriad fears, but shunning comes closest to the public problem that we are actually trying to name. Shunning is a close cousin to stigma in that they are both about what we do to people rather than how people feel about themselves. It isn't shame but stigma that jeopardizes our constitutional rights, our human agency and our collective well-being. Stigma sorts and stratifies people, assigning them to categories against their will. Powerful forces then attach moral and political value to those categories that cut some people out of public life. If we ask not who is ashamed to speak but who is stigmatized for speech, it is easier to diagnose what is a crisis and what is fearmongering.

Greene is an example of why it matters that we get that diagnosis right. She operates like a classic disinformation artist. She elides feelings of shame with the moral clarion of stigmatization. She suggests that being a pro-white American conservative politician makes others treat her like an immoral or unserious person. She calls that being ''shamed,'' but her rhetoric argues that she has been pushed from feeling shame and into the realm of stigmatization. Of course, Greene navigates public life with a trail of shame in her wake, but if she were to change her behavior tomorrow or next year, history suggests that her life would not be ruined. Bad-faith actors want the moral superiority of being stigmatized. But some behavior is, well, shameful. Being ashamed is not cause for alarm in these circumstances.

Not everyone is a bad actor when it comes to concerns about shame. There absolutely is an online outrage machine that targets people, exploits the way internet platforms work and causes psychological terror in the process. Much has been said about Justine Sacco, arguably the first person to lose her job because of the internet outrage machine, in 2013. She told a bad joke on Twitter, boarded an international flight and was fired soon after she landed. It was harsh. Sacco took a hit professionally. But today she is working in the profession for which she trained. If she was ever truly stigmatized, her very public shaming does not appear to have erased her from society.

Meanwhile, Black professionals without a hint of shame chemtrails are stigmatized for their hair, their names, their complexions and their speech patterns. Stigma -- appropriately levied or not -- may cause shame, but shame is not the reason Black professionals experience discrimination in the labor market. Sacco was shamed. Black workers are stigmatized. Both of those situations may feel like a public problem, but no one can credibly argue that they involve the same stakes. When we elevate shame from psychological state to social problem, we value systems of oppression that stigmatize those with the least power.

No matter what some would say about shame, public life is more plural and diverse and democratic than it has ever been. What we took for consensus in a smaller public square was really domination of those who could not afford the price of entry by those who could. The internet has lowered the cost of participation and weakened institutions' control over what constitutes legitimate discourse. This comes with some trade-offs that are not always worth it. But shame, alone, is not evidence of a bad trade. As a secondary emotion, it matters what accompanies the shame. If a bigger public square with more equal access is the primary condition, then shame is evidence of a democratic society operating democratically.

Times Opinion and Siena College commissioned a poll in February in an appeal to consider shame a public problem. The poll found that 55 percent of people have ''held their tongue'' at least once over the past year for fear of retaliation or harsh criticism. I am a social scientist. I respect what surveys and polls can tell us about the world -- and what they cannot. An older poll from a different time comes to mind. It is from 1964. By all historical accounts, public life in 1964 was fraught, dangerous and ultimately important to every debate we have today. The feminist movement was meeting the Black civil rights movement and the progressive left movement against a dangerous global geopolitical backdrop. White backlash to the end of legal segregation was violent, coercive ... and normal. The fight to maintain those norms, no matter how violently oppressive they were for some, made a lot of people feel shamed.

A Times survey that year found that 54 percent of white New Yorkers said the civil rights movement was going too fast. The argument went that Black enfranchisement caused white resentment. It was a Catch-22, since white resentment was the reason the civil rights movement was necessary. Polls and surveys are snapshots. As with a photograph, we can see only what is in the frame. At their best, most systematic and most mathy, polls can only ever capture who we are and not who we should be.

I take the difference seriously. I must also now take it personally. After partnering with The New York Times for a newsletter, I have joined the paper as a regular columnist. It is an unqualified achievement that is not without challenges. As a sociologist, I am far more comfortable critiquing power than wielding it. Many would convincingly argue that you cannot do both. I hear that. I have said that. I am keeping that in mind, always.

But I am not only a sociologist. I tell my first-generation university students that I was not born getting a Ph.D. For much of my life, I labored with the idea that my life would not be much different from my parents'. I am a Black woman from the American South born into a ***working-class*** rural family who marched in the civil rights movement, organized with the Black Panther Party and raised me on the middle-class respectability of ''The Cosby Show.'' Mine is a complex mélange of influences. That complexity taught me that context changes everything. It also taught me that public discourse is where we hash out our values. It can be a contentious fight but is one worth having.

I hope it matters that I am in that fight, with careful arguments and the best of intentions. I trend more left than some of my new colleagues and not far enough left for some of my intellectual comrades. At my core, I am a pragmatist -- the Fannie Lou Hamer kind, not the John Dewey kind. I bring that pragmatic perspective to bear on a wide range of issues: higher education, labor, inequality, the internet and popular culture. My Times newsletter covered cryptocurrency and political fashion in the space of several weeks. I am a cultural omnivore with a dogged interest in a common thread: how we enact the everyday theater of an unequal society.

In 1964 when that poll of attitudes about the civil rights movement was taken, there was no commonly held notion of a Black female columnist at the nation's paper of record. From the civil rights movement to the feminist movements, a lot of people expanded the public's imagination at great personal cost. They made me possible as an idea and as a person. That involved a little shame, yes, and for that I am in their debt.

Tressie McMillan Cottom (@tressiemcphd) is an associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science, the author of ''Thick: And Other Essays'' and a 2020 MacArthur fellow.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY ''LAPSE,'' DIONNE LEE, 2022. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND ET AL. GALLERY, SAN FRANCISCO)

**Load-Date:** April 13, 2022

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[***Rising Gas Prices Have Drivers Asking, ‘Is This for Real?’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y7-5VY1-DXY4-X2DG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 11:56 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1385 words

**Byline:** Michael Corkery, Emma Goldberg and Erin Woo

**Highlight:** The average price of a gallon of gasoline is up more than 10 percent in the last week, leading some consumers to rethink their routines and spending.

**Body**

The average price of a gallon of gasoline is up more than 10 percent in the last week, leading some consumers to rethink their routines and spending.

After months of working from home, Caroline McNaney, 29, was excited about going back to work in an office, even if her new job in Trenton, N.J., meant commuting an hour each way.

But when she spent $68 filling the tank of her blue Nissan Maxima this week, she felt a surge of regret about switching jobs.

“Is this for real?” Ms. McNaney recalled thinking. “I took a job further from home to make more money, and now I feel like I didn’t do anything for myself because gas is so high.”

The recent rise in gas prices — which the war in Ukraine has pushed even higher — has contributed to her sense of disappointment with President Biden. “I feel like he wants us to go out and spend money into the economy, but at the same time everything is being inflated,” she said.

Americans everywhere are feeling the sting of rising gasoline, which reached a national average of $4.07 a gallon on Monday, up more than 10 percent from a week ago. The last time consumers dealt with such a period of sharp price increases was when the global economy came undone during the 2008 financial crisis. (At that time, the average price per gallon reached roughly $5.37 when adjusted for inflation.)

This time, the high gasoline prices are hitting during multiple crises, including Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, a pandemic that is receding but still not over, and the highest inflation levels in 40 years.

Gas prices were already increasing before the invasion last month, as oil suppliers scrambled to keep up with rising demand from consumers and businesses recovering from Covid disruptions. But calls in recent days from U.S. lawmakers and others to ban Russian oil imports have spurred worries about another hit to global supplies. Prices at the pump, in turn, soared rapidly.

The sticker shock is creating a conundrum for the Biden administration, which is trying to isolate Russia’s leader, Vladimir V. Putin, without squeezing the United States economy in the process.

The extreme prices — which for some types of gas have hovered near $6 a gallon in parts of California — could be fleeting. Accelerating production in the shale oil fields of Texas and other regions is expected to begin replenishing supplies soon.

Michael Feroli, chief U.S. economist at J.P. Morgan, said he expected consumer spending to slow over the next few months as Americans pay more to fill up their tanks. Some people will be able to draw on savings to partly cushion the blow, he said.

“The long-term impact should be somewhat minimal,” Mr. Feroli said.

Gasoline accounts for only a fairly small share of consumers’ overall spending, but because gas prices are so visible — posted in giant numbers alongside every highway in the country — they have an outsize influence on people’s perceptions of inflation and the economy.

That perception is an increasingly dark one, according to drivers interviewed filling up on Monday. They said the higher prices had already caused them to cut back on expenses and small pleasures like going out to eat.

For many, the high prices are another hurdle frustrating their efforts to return to normalcy after the pandemic.

Since moving to the United States from Torreón, Mexico, in 2007, Jesús López, 36, was used to gas prices rising steadily for a few days, but eventually coming back down. Mr. López said this time felt different because he wasn’t seeing a stop to the climb when he filled up the tank of his 2008 Ford Expedition.

Mr. López, who works as a school janitor in Dallas, said that if prices kept skyrocketing, he would have to cut back on leisure activities.

“It’s sad that if I stop going to a restaurant, a toxic cycle will be created,” said Mr. López. “If I stop spending money on a restaurant, they’ll get less income and people could lose their jobs.”

Mr. López said he empathized with Ukrainians, but lamented that the conflict overseas was also affecting ***working-class*** people in the United States.

“If I have to spend more to go to work, then I’ll do it,” he said. “I’ll just have to administer and budget my money more if I want to keep having a decent lifestyle.”

Sandy Ramos, 24, who lives in Cerritos, Calif., says much of the money she makes at her part-time job as a research and development engineering intern now goes to food and gas.

She has looked into taking public transportation to work instead of driving, but that would add time to her already hourlong commute. Instead she is saving money in other ways, like cutting back spending on clothing.

Ms. Ramos said she didn’t know where to direct her frustration over gas prices. “I don’t know who to blame or what to blame,” she said. “I feel like someone needs to be responsible for it.”

While oil prices worldwide have shot up since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, President Biden and Democrats, who hold control of Congress, have faced consumers’ ire.

Cat Abad, 37, who lives in the San Francisco area, where prices have hit nearly $6 for the highest-grade gas, said she saw stickers on the pumps at one local station saying that Mr. Biden was responsible for the rise. She took the stickers off, she said, believing that he was not at fault.

Still, she said, “It’s a good time to have a Prius,” as she filled up for her commute down the peninsula to Foster City.

Inflation is already proving a perilous issue for Mr. Biden and fellow Democrats as the midterm elections approach, with many voters blaming them for failing to control the rising cost of living. The higher gas prices add further political complexity for Mr. Biden, who has vowed to curb the nation’s dependence on fossil fuels.

In light of the war in Ukraine, the energy industry is pushing the Biden administration to support more domestic oil production by opening up drilling in federal lands and restarting pipeline projects.

“This moment is a reminder that oil and natural gas are strategic assets and we need to continue to make investments in them,” said Frank Macchiarola, a senior vice president at the American Petroleum Institute, a trade group.

There is a chance that the strain on consumers may be temporary as global oil supply and demand are rebalanced. And, in the near term, lower consumer spending may have some benefits. Reduced spending could help constrain inflation, but at the expense of slower economic growth.

Even before Russia invaded Ukraine, rapidly rising energy prices were contributing to the fastest inflation in 40 years. Energy prices — including not just gasoline but home heating and electricity as well — accounted for more than a sixth of the total increase in the Consumer Price Index over the 12 months ending in January.

The recent jump in energy prices will only make the problem worse. Forecasters surveyed by FactSet expect the February inflation report, which the Labor Department will release on Thursday, to show that consumer prices rose 0.7 percent last month, and are up 7.9 percent over the past year. The continued run-up in gasoline prices over the past week suggests overall inflation in March will top 8 percent for the first time since 1982.

Some drivers said the higher gas prices were a necessary result of taking a hard line on Mr. Putin.

Alan Zweig, 62, a window contractor in San Francisco, said: “I don’t care if it goes to $10 a gallon. It’s costing me dearly, but not what it’s costing those poor people in Ukraine.”

Destiny Harrell, 26, drives her silver Kia Niro hybrid about 15 minutes each day from her home in Santa Barbara to her job at a public library. She is now considering asking her boss if she can spend some days working from home.

She said the rise in prices has contributed to her anger at Mr. Putin and his decision to invade Ukraine.

“It’s super frustrating that a war that shouldn’t even really affect us has global reach.”

Ben Casselman, Coral Murphy Marcos and Clifford Krauss contributed reporting.

Ben Casselman, Coral Murphy Marcos and Clifford Krauss contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: A station in Carlsbad, Calif. Gas prices are especially high in the state. (B1); Cars lining up for gas at a Costco in San Marcos, Calif. Prices in some parts of the state have hovered around $6 a gallon, but the spike could be fleeting. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS) (B5)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

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[***Urbanizing the Corporate Campus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64MG-B201-JBG3-64KR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 26, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 6; SQUARE FEET

**Length:** 1316 words

**Byline:** By Keith Schneider

**Body**

TYSONS, Va. -- After World War II, corporations moved to exclusive gated suburban campuses to escape traffic, crowds and big-city clamor. Now companies are designing a little city hubbub back into suburban headquarters by adding shops, restaurants, hotels, residences and public parks.

The change in the concept of the corporate campus reflects two related trends that executives say appear to be unaffected by the pandemic. The first is the public and private investment in communities across the country that is making suburbs more dense, walkable, bike-friendly and less dependent on cars. The second is the competition to attract the brightest young employees who want to live and work in lively places.

''It's urbanization of the suburban experience,'' said Alex Krieger, professor of urban design at Harvard and a principal at NBBJ, an architecture and planning firm in Boston. ''Companies are bringing some of the characteristics of the city to their suburban campuses.''

One prominent example is in Tysons, Va., a Washington suburb where Capital One has expanded its 24-acre campus with a performing arts hall, a Wegmans supermarket, a 300-room hotel and a rooftop park, all for corporate and public use. Across the street, a 30-story office building under construction will include ground-floor retail and restaurant space.

''As a company, we think, 'What can we offer to our associates or to potential associates?''' said Jonathan Griffith, Capital One's managing director. ''We wanted vibrant mixed-use amenities that are public-facing to bring in that energy that we all kind of thrive off of.''

Other examples are appearing across the country. Walmart is building a 350-acre headquarters in Bentonville, Ark., that includes 2.4 million square feet of office space, a hotel, a food truck plaza, a walking and biking trail and retail shops open to visitors.

''The connection and integration of our new home office into the surrounding northwest Arkansas community is a primary principle of our design strategy,'' said Cindi Marsiglio, senior vice president for corporate real estate at Walmart.

In 2018, JPMorgan Chase opened a regional headquarters in a $3 billion mixed-use development in Plano, Texas, called Legacy West, which has apartments, stores, restaurants and hotels. Two years later, the bank opened another office in Legacy West close to offices of companies like Liberty Mutual Insurance, Toyota and FedEx.

''JPMorgan chose a site that's adjacent to this massive, really cool, mixed-use environment with food and restaurants and an urban vibe,'' said Michael Nicolaus, principal and director of commercial and residential mixed use at HKS Architects, which designed the bank's first office and Capital One's global headquarters. ''It's all about being a part of something bigger than yourself, which is the kind of environment that they think they need to attract and retain the best and the brightest people.''

Microsoft spent $149.5 million last year to buy 90 acres on the western edge of Atlanta to build a regional headquarters. The company said its plan for the parcel was not fully formed, with one exception. In February, the company revealed that it would invite residents of Grove Park, a neighboring African American ***working-class*** community, to help design 25 percent of the site for ''construction of affordable and empowered housing and other local community services and needs.''

''Looking outside as well as within is an important step in our campus and office design,'' Michael Ford, Microsoft's corporate vice president for global workplace services, said in an email. ''We take pride in designing spaces that help us connect with our neighbors.''

The company's strategy is to become an integral part of the community, said Ellen Dunham-Jones, the director of the Urban Design Program at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

''Microsoft is asking, 'What can we do for equity and to mitigate gentrification that is the most progressive thing that no one else is doing?''' she said.

Such concerns are a sharp departure from the expansive, private, single-use suburban headquarters built in the 20th century that featured large parking lots and typically included cafeterias. Urban history specialists trace the design trend to 1942 when AT&T Bell Telephone Laboratories moved from Manhattan to a 213-acre campus outside Summit, N.J.

Others took the same path out of the city. In 1958, General Mills opened its suburban headquarters, a statement of glass-enclosed modernism, eight miles outside Minneapolis. IBM moved from Manhattan and opened its gated headquarters in 1964 in Armonk, N.Y., on land that was once an apple orchard. Allstate opened its headquarters in 1967 on 122 acres in Northbrook, Ill., outside Chicago.

Capital One's plan for a new headquarters fit the 20th-century model in 1999 when it bought 26 acres in Tysons Corner, a four-square-mile commercial center near the intersection of the Capital Beltway and the Dulles Toll Road, two of the busiest highways in suburban Washington. At the time, Tysons Corner was the embodiment of what the author Joel Garreau called an edge city -- a concentration, outside a big city, of daytime shopping, entertainment and business that emptied at night.

Capital One initially planned four matching 14-story office buildings. Each would have connecting parking decks with space for 1,600 cars. A barbed-wire security fence ringed the perimeter, and guardhouses were stationed at the entrances.

''What was the thinking behind that?'' said Mr. Griffith, the bank's managing director. '''We didn't want people here on our secured campus. You know, stay away.'''

In 2003, the company completed the first of the four office towers, but promptly abandoned its design plan because the spread-out, guarded corporate campus it envisioned no longer reflected the neighborhood. By then, the Federal Transit Administration, which oversees public transportation systems, and the State of Virginia had approved the extension of the Washington Metro, with four station stops in Tysons Corner, including one on Capital One's doorstep.

Not long after, Fairfax County initiated a plan to transform Tysons Corner into a community with more residences, safer pedestrian connections, public spaces and parks. In 2010, the county unveiled a comprehensive plan to encourage housing for 100,000 residents by 2050, roughly 75,000 more than today. The county helped lead a marketing campaign for the evolution of the planned community with a name change to simply Tysons.

Capital One actively participated in the process because the new plan allowed companies to significantly increase the scale of their developments in return for offering public benefits. For example, Capital One could build taller and larger buildings if it also added a street grid to make walking more inviting.

Capital One easily won county approval for its redesigned headquarters. It includes the region's two tallest office buildings -- a 31-story tower completed in 2018 and a 30-story office tower scheduled to open this year. The two buildings have space for more than 5,000 employees.

A block away is the events center, theater, hotel and grocery store. Among the design innovations is a 2.5-acre rooftop park with an 18-hole miniature golf course, a beer garden and food truck lot, a dog park and a 250-seat amphitheater 11 stories above the street.

Capital One Center is approved for four high-rise apartment buildings and 100,000 more square feet of restaurants and retailing. Mr. Griffith said the bank had not decided on a timetable for the additions.

When it's completed, Capital One Center will encompass enough office, retail, entertainment and residential space to be its own downtown.

''We think about where the world is headed and how to get there,'' Mr. Griffith said. ''Our campus reflects that.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/business/suburban-corporate-campuses.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/business/suburban-corporate-campuses.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: At Capital One's 24-acre campus in Tysons, Va., there is a performing arts venue, top and above left, and a basketball court, as well as other amenities like a supermarket, a 300-room hotel and a rooftop park, all for corporate and public use. The trend is a departure from the private, single-use suburban headquarters that were the standard in the 20th century. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2022

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[***Biden's Punt On Black Voting Rights***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6378-40H1-JBG3-615C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 26, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 19; CHARLES M. BLOW

**Length:** 856 words

**Byline:** By Charles M. Blow

**Body**

Before I turn to President Biden's historic failure to protect voting rights, a couple of stipulations must be made.

First, the No. 1 enemy to our democracy at this point is the Republican Party. It is Republicans at the state level who are proposing and passing regressive voting laws that will disenfranchise primarily voters of color and disempower local election boards. And it is Republicans in Congress who refuse to help defend voting rights. They want a different electorate, less Black and more beige.

Second, the president is not a member of Congress. He has no vote there. He can't single-handedly alter any congressional policy beyond the veto.

Yet for all that, it is still important to recognize that Biden has consciously chosen not to use the full force of the bully pulpit to explicitly and repeatedly call for the protection of voting rights -- and therefore our democracy -- by any and all means necessary, including the elimination of the filibuster.

Biden has a vision of what he wants his legacy to be: the builder, not necessarily the defender. He wants to be the one passing out checks, not the one sticking out his neck. This was on full, contemptible display at a town hall with the president hosted by CNN on Wednesday.

Don Lemon, the moderator, asked Biden, ''Why is protecting the filibuster -- is that more important than protecting voting rights, especially for people who fought and died for that?''

Biden said that it wasn't and that he wanted to see voting rights legislation passed, but then said:

''What I don't want to do is get wrapped up, right now, in the argument of whether or not this is all about the filibuster or -- look, the American public, you can't stop them from voting. You tried last time. More people voted last time than at any time in American history, in the middle of the worst pandemic in American history. More people did.''

This is patently false. You absolutely can stop people from voting. We have seen this over and over again throughout American history. And, these laws won't harm all Americans. They'll harm minorities in America. They are aimed at liberal cities where the populations are often heavily Black and Latino.

Biden is basically saying here what Black America has heard forever: No matter how high they make the hill, your only choice is to climb it. I applaud your ascension. My God, aren't your legs strong.

Black people are eternally disgusted that they always get the hill and others don't. There is nothing glorious in Black people waiting hours in line to vote, sometimes into the wee hours of the morning, while people in whiter precincts breeze in and out. This is wrong. This is outrageous. This is a time tax. Don't pat us on the head; take us down the hill.

Lemon later asked Biden about the filibuster: ''If it's a relic of Jim Crow, it's been used to fight against civil rights legislation historically, why protect it?''

Biden responded, ''There's no reason to protect it other than you're going to throw the entire Congress into chaos and nothing will get done.'' What?! Getting rid of it to protect Black people's ballot access is getting something done. Something enormous.

But Biden is focused on the other elements of his agenda, the ones he tied himself to before the wave of voter suppression became clear.

''For example, wouldn't my friends on the other side love to have a debate about the filibuster instead of passing the recovery act?'' he continued at the town hall. ''Or wouldn't they love doing it instead of being in a position where we provide for -- how many of you have children under the age of 17? Raise your hand. Guess what? You're getting a lot of money in a monthly check now, aren't you?''

Biden wants to be the Robin Hood of the ***working class***, a swashbuckling blue-collar savior. He wants to go down in history as the president who rebuilt America. In that grand vision, risking it all to save voting access for Black people comes up short. It's a nuisance, a horrible inconvenience.

Black people gave all to save Joe Biden's candidacy, but Joe Biden refused to give all to protect their right to vote. Reciprocity is not compulsory.

If Joe Biden clearly, forcefully and repeatedly demanded that the filibuster be scrapped to defend voting rights, it still might not be axed. But Black people like me need to see you go down fighting rather than avoid the fight or grudgingly enter it.

Biden wants to make history with his agenda, but history is already being made by Republicans with this extraordinary voter suppression push.

During Biden's victory speech, he said to his Black supporters, ''You've always had my back, and I'll have yours.'' I'm sorry Mr. President, but that statement rings hollow because in Black people's greatest time of need, you're more concerned about roads than rights.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/25/opinion/joe-biden-voting-rights.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/25/opinion/joe-biden-voting-rights.html)

**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** July 26, 2021

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[***What’s Shame Got to Do With It?; Tressie McMillan Cottom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656P-9XB1-JBG3-62T8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 12, 2022 Tuesday 10:52 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1550 words

**Byline:** Tressie McMillan Cottom

**Highlight:** How and why we confuse shame and stigma.

**Body**

In the old comic strip “The Family Circus,” four precocious children blamed invisible goblins — “Not me,” “Nobody” and “Ida Know” — for their messes. In the real world, adults who should be too old for invisible friends are doing the same deflection with a goblin named “Shame!”

The shame goblin has friends in places both high and low. Last month, Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene [*told*](https://www.rawstory.com/marjorie-taylor-greene-ballot-lawsuit/) a conservative podcast audience that Democrats “tried to shame” her for supporting the Jan. 6 insurrection. The Times editorial board [*recently implicated fear of shame*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/opinion/cancel-culture-free-speech-poll.html) as cause for Americans’ “losing hold of a fundamental right as citizens of a free country.”

That’s not to minimize how bad shame feels. Shame can be excessive — toxic shame, it is called — but it can also be functionally good, like when it keeps your pants on in public. Despite the bad rap that shame gets in our overly psychoanalyzed culture, it is merely a feedback loop that tells you something about your behavior as well as the expectations of others. Psychologists often refer to shame as a secondary emotion, one that can be positive or negative, depending on the primary emotions that generate it. Those primary emotions are more dangerous to public life. Anger or contempt, for example. Yet we have chosen to turn shame into a social problem. It is bizarre to think that we should legislate, regulate or condition away an emotion or that we should do so for shame when contemptuous, irrational anger is right there.

Shame. Shamed. Ashamed. Shunned. We use these interchangeably to describe myriad fears, but shunning comes closest to the public problem that we are actually trying to name. Shunning is a close cousin to stigma in that they are both about what we do to people rather than how people feel about themselves. It isn’t shame but stigma that jeopardizes our constitutional rights, our human agency and our collective well-being. Stigma sorts and stratifies people, assigning them to categories against their will. Powerful forces then attach moral and political value to those categories that cut some people out of public life. If we ask not who is ashamed to speak but who is stigmatized for speech, it is easier to diagnose what is a crisis and what is fearmongering.

Greene is an example of why it matters that we get that diagnosis right. She operates like a classic disinformation artist. She elides feelings of shame with the moral clarion of stigmatization. She suggests that being a pro-white American conservative politician makes others treat her like an immoral or unserious person. She calls that being “shamed,” but her rhetoric argues that she has been pushed from feeling shame and into the realm of stigmatization. Of course, Greene navigates public life with a trail of shame in her wake, but if she were to change her behavior tomorrow or next year, history suggests that her life would not be ruined. Bad-faith actors want the moral superiority of being stigmatized. But some behavior is, well, shameful. Being ashamed is not cause for alarm in these circumstances.

Not everyone is a bad actor when it comes to concerns about shame. There absolutely is an online outrage machine that targets people, exploits the way internet platforms work and causes psychological terror in the process. Much has been said about Justine Sacco, arguably the first person to lose her job because of the internet outrage machine, in 2013. She [*told*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/15/magazine/how-one-stupid-tweet-ruined-justine-saccos-life.html) a bad joke on Twitter, boarded an international flight and was fired soon after she landed. It was harsh. Sacco took a hit professionally. But today she is working in the profession for which she trained. If she was ever truly stigmatized, her very public shaming does not appear to have erased her from society.

Meanwhile, Black professionals without a hint of shame chemtrails are stigmatized for their hair, their names, their complexions and their speech patterns. Stigma — appropriately levied or not — may cause shame, but shame is not the reason Black professionals experience discrimination in the labor market. Sacco was shamed. Black workers are stigmatized. Both of those situations may feel like a public problem, but no one can credibly argue that they involve the same stakes. When we elevate shame from psychological state to social problem, we value systems of oppression that stigmatize those with the least power.

No matter what some would say about shame, public life is more plural and diverse and democratic than it has ever been. What we took for consensus in a smaller public square was really domination of those who could not afford the price of entry by those who could. The internet has lowered the cost of participation and weakened institutions’ control over what constitutes legitimate discourse. This comes with some trade-offs that are not always worth it. But shame, alone, is not evidence of a bad trade. As a secondary emotion, it matters what accompanies the shame. If a bigger public square with more equal access is the primary condition, then shame is evidence of a democratic society operating democratically.

Times Opinion and Siena College commissioned a poll in February in an appeal to consider shame a public problem. The poll found that [*55 percent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/opinion/cancel-culture-free-speech-poll.html) of people have “held their tongue” at least once over the past year for fear of retaliation or harsh criticism. I am a social scientist. I respect what surveys and polls can tell us about the world — and what they cannot. An older poll from a different time comes to mind. It is from 1964. By all historical accounts, public life in 1964 was fraught, dangerous and ultimately important to every debate we have today. The feminist movement was meeting the Black civil rights movement and the progressive left movement against a dangerous global geopolitical backdrop. White backlash to the end of legal segregation was violent, coercive … and normal. The fight to maintain those norms, no matter how violently oppressive they were for some, made a lot of people feel shamed.

A Times survey that year [*found*](https://www.nytimes.com/1964/09/21/archives/poll-shows-whites-in-city-resent-civil-rights-drive-majority.html) that 54 percent of white New Yorkers said the civil rights movement was going too fast. The argument went that Black enfranchisement caused white resentment. It was a Catch-22, since white resentment was the reason the civil rights movement was necessary. Polls and surveys are snapshots. As with a photograph, we can see only what is in the frame. At their best, most systematic and most mathy, polls can only ever capture who we are and not who we should be.

I take the difference seriously. I must also now take it personally. After partnering with The New York Times for a newsletter, I have joined the paper as a regular columnist. It is an unqualified achievement that is not without challenges. As a sociologist, I am far more comfortable critiquing power than wielding it. Many would convincingly argue that you cannot do both. I hear that. I have said that. I am keeping that in mind, always.

But I am not only a sociologist. I tell my first-generation university students that I was not born getting a Ph.D. For much of my life, I labored with the idea that my life would not be much different from my parents’. I am a Black woman from the American South born into a ***working-class*** rural family who marched in the civil rights movement, organized with the Black Panther Party and raised me on the middle-class respectability of “The Cosby Show.” Mine is a complex mélange of influences. That complexity taught me that context changes everything. It also taught me that public discourse is where we hash out our values. It can be a contentious fight but is one worth having.

I hope it matters that I am in that fight, with careful arguments and the best of intentions. I trend more left than some of my new colleagues and not far enough left for some of my intellectual comrades. At my core, I am a pragmatist — the Fannie Lou Hamer kind, not the John Dewey kind. I bring that pragmatic perspective to bear on a wide range of issues: higher education, labor, inequality, the internet and popular culture. My Times newsletter covered [*cryptocurrency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/07/opinion/crypto-nfts-folk-economics.html) and [*political fashion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/05/opinion/the-politics-of-a-sleeveless-silhouette.html) in the space of several weeks. I am a cultural omnivore with a dogged interest in a common thread: how we enact the everyday theater of an unequal society.

In 1964 when that poll of attitudes about the civil rights movement was taken, there was no commonly held notion of a Black female columnist at the nation’s paper of record. From the civil rights movement to the feminist movements, a lot of people expanded the public’s imagination at great personal cost. They made me possible as an idea and as a person. That involved a little shame, yes, and for that I am in their debt.

Tressie McMillan Cottom (@[*tressiemcphd*](https://twitter.com/tressiemcphd)) is an associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science, the author of “Thick: And Other Essays” and a 2020 MacArthur fellow.

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**Load-Date:** April 19, 2022

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[***Two 'Leftist Bros' Study the Right***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y7-5CJ1-JBG3-61C9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1517 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Schuessler

**Body**

The podcast hosted by Matthew Sitman and Sam Adler-Bell offers history lessons that middle-aged liberals, young socialists and even some conservatives can love.

When Matthew Sitman and Sam Adler-Bell sat down in the spring of 2019 to start the podcast ''Know Your Enemy,'' all they had was a microphone, a cheeky title and the vague hope that ''yet another podcast where two leftist bros guide you through the swampy morass of the American right,'' as they put it, might be something other people would actually listen to.

''We had no idea what we were doing,'' Adler-Bell, 31, said during an interview last month in Sitman's apartment in Manhattan, groaning at the mention of that first episode, which featured plenty of awkward fumbling and jokes about Sitman's Leo Strauss tattoos.

Sitman, 40, a self-described ''recovered conservative'' (with no tattoos), offered a somewhat more charitable take.

''We just love talking to each other,'' he said.

Nearly three years and 100 episodes later, ''Know Your Enemy'' has moved from being a cult favorite to something of a must-listen for the sort of person who is as interested in the internal politics of National Review, circa 1957, as in the current jousting on Capitol Hill.

The podcast contextualizes today's hot-button debates like the battles over critical race theory in schools. But it mostly offers deep dives into conservative intellectual history, going into the weeds of the weeds armed with reading lists, reams of footnotes and archival documents.

Its audience of roughly 25,000 to 50,000 listeners per episode (according to the hosts) may be tiny by the standards of Joe Rogan, or even the socialist podcast ''Chapo Trap House.'' But in our hyper-polarized times, ''Know Your Enemy'' has emerged as something middle-aged liberals, young democratic socialists and Gen Z conservatives hungry for deeper perspective on the tumult of the Trump era can all love.

''They really do their homework,'' said Nate Hochman, a 23-year-old writer for National Review who described himself as a fan ''before it was cool.'' ''They've read more conservative political theory than most conservatives.''

While ''enemy'' may give the title its juice, the operative word is ''know'' -- and, possibly, emulate?

Young progressives ''don't understand why the right keeps winning,'' said Sam Tanenhaus, a former editor of The New York Times Book Review who is working on a biography of William F. Buckley.

''What Sam and Matt say is, look at it a different way,'' Tanenhaus continued. ''Don't just see the right as the enemy, pure and simple. See them as brilliant -- and maybe smarter than you are.''

The podcast began at a fortuitous moment in 2019. Early salvos in the fractious (and hard-to-decipher) debate between the conservative writers David French and Sohrab Ahmari had started lighting up the conservative pundit-sphere, and the first National Conservatism Conference, where a Who's Who of the right tried to hash out an ideologically coherent version of Trumpism, was just a few months away.

''By that point, most of the magazines and think-tanks and funders on the right had started making the Trump pivot,'' said Sitman, who is leaving his job at the liberal Roman Catholic magazine Commonweal later this month to write and podcast full time. ''As the dust was settling, you could see where things were at.''

A few months in, the democratic socialist magazine Dissent became sponsors, as listenership steadily grew. (The podcast currently takes in about $17,000 a month from subscribers, who sign up for tiers, ranging from ''Young American for Freedom'' to ''Unreconstructed Monarchist.'') The ''breakthrough,'' Sitman said, came in January 2021, with an episode on the roiling debate over whether President Trump is a fascist.

The Jan. 6 insurrection, Sitman said, felt ''very vindicating'' of ''the penchant for authoritarian minority rule'' on the right, which the podcast had been noting from the beginning.

The (relative) calm of the first year of the Biden presidency created more room for scholarly explorations, like episodes on the friendship between Allan Bloom and Saul Bellow, and on Frank Meyer, the ex-Communist National Review editor and creator of ''fusionism,'' the marriage of free-market economics and social traditionalism that defined postwar conservatism.

And in a particularly head-snapping installment, the hosts, joined by Tanenhaus, examined the conservatism of Joan Didion, who contributed regularly to National Review early in her career (and who in 2001 wrote that she would have voted for Barry Goldwater in every election after 1964, if she'd had the chance).

Those biographical dives explore favorite ''Know Your Enemy'' themes of mentorship and friendship, conversions and trajectories, with a rich sense of psychology and literary surprise. Sitman likes to quote a former professor: ''The relationship between gossip and philosophy is tenuous but real.''

As for his own trajectory, Sitman grew up in a ***working-class***, fundamentalist Baptist family in central Pennsylvania, steeped in ''God and guns conservatism,'' as he put it in a 2016 essay. He graduated from a small Christian college, and after an internship at the Heritage Foundation, enrolled in graduate school at Georgetown, studying political theory with the conservative scholar George W. Carey.

What peeled him away from conservatism, starting in his mid-20s, he said, was disgust at conservatives' support for torture, as well as growing embrace of class politics, which pulled him toward democratic socialism.

He converted to Catholicism in 2015. His faith, and the way he sees human vulnerability as central to politics, is a touchstone on the podcast.

''I feel guilty about making Sam learn so much about the Catholic Church,'' Sitman said. Adler-Bell shot back: ''I'm going to make you read Freud at some point.''

Adler-Bell grew up in a progressive, secular Jewish family in Connecticut. He was active in a student-labor alliance while an undergraduate at Brown, and later worked at the advocacy group Demand Progress and interned at The Nation.

He said his immersion in conservative thought ''defamiliarized the left,'' forcing him to think harder about why he believed what he believed.

''A lot of people on the left only come into contact with the stupidest versions of right-wing arguments -- the least sophisticated, the least interesting, the least literary,'' he said.

On the podcast, and in person, Sitman has a genial professorial vibe, spiking his learned explications with anecdotes about prominent figures, some of whom he knew personally. Adler-Bell is saltier, always eager, as he half-jokingly puts it, to highlight the more ''lurid and prurient'' aspects of the right.

Sitman said the podcast has damaged some ''already frayed'' relationships with former mentors and friends. But he emphasized that, unlike some other apostates from the right, he wasn't ''embittered.''

''I am!'' Adler-Bell interjected, slapping his knee. ''That's why it's good to have me, an argumentative Jew.''

Not all conservative listeners are unqualified fans. Matthew Schmitz, 34, a columnist at The American Conservative and former senior editor at First Things, said Sitman and Adler-Bell were ''extremely good at their jobs,'' calling the podcast ''better than almost anything on public radio.'' That wasn't entirely a compliment.

'''Know Your Enemy' falls into a kind of ideological orientalism, presenting right-wing ideas as a mélange of the backward, regressive and decadent,'' he said.

Which brings up a still-unsettled question for the hosts: How much to talk with conservatives, as opposed to just talking about them?

So far, only a handful of ''enemies'' have appeared as guests, including Ross Douthat, an opinion columnist for The Times. All the conservative guests are ''a little bit heterodox,'' Sitman conceded. Adler-Bell added: ''We have a 'no hacks' policy.''

Still, after an episode with Hochman (one of the young conservative radicals featured in a much-discussed recent article by Adler-Bell in The New Republic), some listeners wrote in with concerns the hosts had ''platformed'' him without pushing back hard enough.

The hosts say they thought they were tough, pressing him, for example, on the role of white racial backlash in fueling postwar conservatism. ''We trust the intelligence of our listeners,'' Sitman said. But they also acknowledged that, ''as two white guys,'' they are less likely to experience some things conservatives say as ''deeply offensive or dehumanizing.''

Their goal isn't any squishy mutual understanding or bipartisan compromise, but clarification -- and the sheer pleasure of conversation. ''It's great to have a chance to talk to people you disagree with, without thinking the project is to find common ground,'' Adler- Bell said.

Sitman, again hitting the more professorial note, paraphrased the British philosopher Michael Oakeshott, from his essay ''On Being Conservative.''

''The point of going fishing isn't to catch fish,'' he said. ''It's to be out on the water.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/07/arts/know-your-enemy-podcast.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/07/arts/know-your-enemy-podcast.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Sam Adler-Bell, near right, and Matthew Sitman are the hosts of the podcast ''Know Your Enemy,'' which bills itself as ''the leftist's guide to the conservative movement.'' (C1)

A collection of books in Matthew Sitman's apartment. His podcast with Sam Adler-Bell takes an unabashedly literary and intellectual approach. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZACK DEZON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C6)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***They Left a Broken U.S. for Outer Space. Now They’re Coming Back.; Fiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64M8-P7M1-JBG3-639D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 25, 2022 Tuesday 23:44 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1216 words

**Byline:** Benjamin Markovits

**Highlight:** Tochi Onyebuchi’s novel “Goliath” imagines what gentrification might look like in a nearly uninhabitable future America.

**Body**

GOLIATH

By Tochi Onyebuchi

In “The Death and Life of Great American Cities,” Jane Jacobs describes her perfect neighborhood — Greenwich Village, circa 1961. Gentrification has begun but not uprooted the ***working-class*** community that preceded it. You get a mix of old and new buildings, some cheap, some expensive, which include apartments, houses, shops, offices, restaurants, cafes. Different kinds of people live there and work there, and the variety itself sustains the new community, because at any point in the day you might have a freelancer typing away in the cafe, or a builder buying tools from the hardware store, or schoolchildren walking home, or drinkers emerging from the bar, which stays open until 3 a.m., so that the street is always busy and the residents feel safe. This is one reason she hated the suburbs — empty streets.

Tochi Onyebuchi credits Jacobs in the acknowledgments of “Goliath,” his new novel, as someone whose books “did more than anything else to reshape how I think about the metropole and all the different ways a city can be occupied.” The story begins with a curious echo of that Greenwich Village moment: Jonathan and David, a gay white couple, have decided to return to Earth from the space colonies. Jonathan, playing pioneer, arrives first and wants to buy a house in New Haven, which has been devastated by a series of political and environmental disasters that predate the novel. Earth and air have become radioactive and cancerous. You need a face mask to breathe safely, unless you’re one of the lucky few who live in a Dome, a kind of filtration bubble. In any case, most of the upper-middle classes have been partly cyberized, “augmented” in ways that allow them to replace cancerous organs and even detox their systems after a drug binge. The real danger, people warn Jonathan, is “gangs.”

It’s an ingenious premise: Onyebuchi suburbanizes outer space and makes battered, almost uninhabitable provincial America the frontier. “Best thing that coulda happened to the planet was all the white folks left it,” thinks one of the men left behind. Except now the white folks are coming back. The novel shifts from Jonathan’s and David’s stories to follow various “stackers” as they go about their daily lives — local wrecking crews, mostly Black, whose job it is to tear down uninhabited houses (using fancy new technology) and rummage through the remains for reusable bricks. The head of one crew is a man named Bishop, an ex-con and a lay preacher, whose moral authority pervades the novel, though his aging body can barely keep up with the work. Even his wisdom has almost been exhausted by dealing with the endless repetitiveness of oppression.

The stackers’ lives soon take over the novel. There’s a brief overlap, when Bishop helps Jonathan electrify his new house, but Jacobs’s Greenwich Village moment never really happens. Of course, you could tell this story without the science-fiction machinery but part of the point is to undermine the consolations of straight realism, the sense of deep roots, things fitting together, even if unhappily. Characters in the novel still wear their favorite Red Sox caps or smoke Newports or refer to an account of a house party that spills out of control as “an Atlanta-ass story.” These fragments of the old world matter to people but there aren’t enough of them to build a meaningful life. They have to start over from scratch.

In its scale and ambition, “Goliath” has the feel of a Tom Wolfe novel, but there isn’t really any central action or plot that forces the different characters, up and down the class ladder, into contact and conflict with one another. The story jumps between points of view and moves backward and forward in time. It also showcases an impressive range of registers — from the painful self-explanations of a Yale-educated Black prison inmate (one of the high points of the book), to the embarrassing but well-meaning reportage of a white journalist who wants to tell the stackers’ story, to the “No Country for Old Men”-style account of marshals on the trail across North Texas for the grave of a murdered boy.

How all this hangs together matters less in the end than the picture of a broken America these stories present. It’s a kind of postapocalyptic “Our Town.” Characters with different back stories wander onstage and reveal themselves. This puts a lot of pressure on each scene to deliver meaningful revelations. Either something terrible happens in it or people tell stories about something terrible that has happened to them in the past. In a strange way, though, the stakes remain low, if only because there’s so little hope that their lives will ever get better. The closest thing to a central plotline begins when one of the stackers discovers wild horses outside New Haven, coming “out of the shoreline mist in answer to a prayer she didn’t even realize she’d uttered.” Somebody decides to retrieve them and start a farm, whose real purpose is more symbolic than practical. Money doesn’t seem to matter much.

The novel’s worldview is based on the idea that the truest thing about people is their pain, and their most important daily task is the management of that pain. Occasionally they even get to escape from it (mostly through love or banter or drugs or horses) but not for long. “When it came to grief,” Onyebuchi writes, “sometimes you ran up the bill and after a while the number just got meaningless.” There’s a lot of power to this idea but it also leaves much out, and sometimes tends to favor the characters’ most sentimental views of themselves. David and Jonathan meet at a space hospital, where David is visiting his mother, who has dementia. Jonathan offers him a cigarette, which David takes, even though he doesn’t really smoke. “I do it because it hurts,” David explains later. “The smoking. … I like it because it damages me.” This is all prelude to a lover’s confession: “Then it all came out, a waterfall of words.”

David reappears briefly at the end, settled in New Haven now, in a town-hall meeting that shows how out of touch the returnees are. (David asks one of the panelists to define “grass roots.”) His pain is not the issue. And as the novel unfolds, the question at the heart of Jacobs’s description of Greenwich Village — how much gentrification is enough? — also turns out to miss the point. Inevitably, tensions between the two communities reach a climax, and the result is a tragedy you don’t need to be a science-fiction writer to imagine. But the speculative machinery offers a nuance here, too. Earlier in the novel, when Bishop assaults the city comptroller (he catches him out jogging and slams a gun against his temple), to demand more food rations, he does so partly because he knows the guy’s “augmented” — no blood comes out, but a “dent did mar the manufactured curvature.” There’s nothing morally ambiguous about the scene, but that also means there’s no possibility of real compromise. The divide has grown too deep.

Benjamin Markovits’s most recent novel is “Christmas in Austin.” GOLIATH By Tochi Onyebuchi 327 pp. Tordotcom. $26.99.

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

**Related Articles**

* [*Visit These Science-Fiction Worlds to Make Sense of Our Own*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/26/books/review/docile-murderbot-otaku-hotspur-shorefall.html)

1. [*It’s the Year 2172: Time to Fight the Bloody Biafran War Again*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/06/books/review/war-girls-tochi-onyebuchi.html)

**Load-Date:** January 31, 2022

**End of Document**



[***At Pump, Drivers Ask, 'Is This for Real?'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y7-5CJ1-JBG3-61DY-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1355 words

**Byline:** By Michael Corkery, Emma Goldberg and Erin Woo

**Body**

The average price of a gallon of gasoline is up more than 10 percent in the last week, leading some consumers to rethink their routines and spending.

After months of working from home, Caroline McNaney, 29, was excited about going back to work in an office, even if her new job in Trenton, N.J., meant commuting an hour each way.

But when she spent $68 filling the tank of her blue Nissan Maxima this week, she felt a surge of regret about switching jobs.

''Is this for real?'' Ms. McNaney recalled thinking. ''I took a job further from home to make more money, and now I feel like I didn't do anything for myself because gas is so high.''

The recent rise in gas prices -- which the war in Ukraine has pushed even higher -- has contributed to her sense of disappointment with President Biden. ''I feel like he wants us to go out and spend money into the economy, but at the same time everything is being inflated,'' she said.

Americans everywhere are feeling the sting of rising gasoline, which reached a national average of $4.07 a gallon on Monday, up more than 10 percent from a week ago. The last time consumers dealt with such a period of sharp price increases was when the global economy came undone during the 2008 financial crisis. (At that time, the average price per gallon reached roughly $5.37 when adjusted for inflation.)

This time, the high gasoline prices are hitting during multiple crises, including Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a pandemic that is receding but still not over, and the highest inflation levels in 40 years.

Gas prices were already increasing before the invasion last month, as oil suppliers scrambled to keep up with rising demand from consumers and businesses recovering from Covid disruptions. But calls in recent days from U.S. lawmakers and others to ban Russian oil imports have spurred worries about another hit to global supplies. Prices at the pump, in turn, soared rapidly.

The sticker shock is creating a conundrum for the Biden administration, which is trying to isolate Russia's leader, Vladimir V. Putin, without squeezing the United States economy in the process.

The extreme prices -- which for some types of gas have hovered near $6 a gallon in parts of California -- could be fleeting. Accelerating production in the shale oil fields of Texas and other regions is expected to begin replenishing supplies soon.

Michael Feroli, chief U.S. economist at J.P. Morgan, said he expected consumer spending to slow over the next few months as Americans pay more to fill up their tanks. Some people will be able to draw on savings to partly cushion the blow, he said.

''The long-term impact should be somewhat minimal,'' Mr. Feroli said.

Gasoline accounts for only a fairly small share of consumers' overall spending, but because gas prices are so visible -- posted in giant numbers alongside every highway in the country -- they have an outsize influence on people's perceptions of inflation and the economy.

That perception is an increasingly dark one, according to drivers interviewed filling up on Monday. They said the higher prices had already caused them to cut back on expenses and small pleasures like going out to eat.

For many, the high prices are another hurdle frustrating their efforts to return to normalcy after the pandemic.

Since moving to the United States from Torreón, Mexico, in 2007, Jesús López, 36, was used to gas prices rising steadily for a few days, but eventually coming back down. Mr. López said this time felt different because he wasn't seeing a stop to the climb when he filled up the tank of his 2008 Ford Expedition.

Mr. López, who works as a school janitor in Dallas, said that if prices kept skyrocketing, he would have to cut back on leisure activities.

''It's sad that if I stop going to a restaurant, a toxic cycle will be created,'' said Mr. López. ''If I stop spending money on a restaurant, they'll get less income and people could lose their jobs.''

Mr. López said he empathized with Ukrainians, but lamented that the conflict overseas was also affecting ***working-class*** people in the United States.

''If I have to spend more to go to work, then I'll do it,'' he said. ''I'll just have to administer and budget my money more if I want to keep having a decent lifestyle.''

Sandy Ramos, 24, who lives in Cerritos, Calif., says much of the money she makes at her part-time job as a research and development engineering intern now goes to food and gas.

She has looked into taking public transportation to work instead of driving, but that would add time to her already hourlong commute. Instead she is saving money in other ways, like cutting back spending on clothing.

Ms. Ramos said she didn't know where to direct her frustration over gas prices. ''I don't know who to blame or what to blame,'' she said. ''I feel like someone needs to be responsible for it.''

While oil prices worldwide have shot up since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, President Biden and Democrats, who hold control of Congress, have faced consumers' ire.

Cat Abad, 37, who lives in the San Francisco area, where prices have hit nearly $6 for the highest-grade gas, said she saw stickers on the pumps at one local station saying that Mr. Biden was responsible for the rise. She took the stickers off, she said, believing that he was not at fault.

Still, she said, ''It's a good time to have a Prius,'' as she filled up for her commute down the peninsula to Foster City.

Inflation is already proving a perilous issue for Mr. Biden and fellow Democrats as the midterm elections approach, with many voters blaming them for failing to control the rising cost of living. The higher gas prices add further political complexity for Mr. Biden, who has vowed to curb the nation's dependence on fossil fuels.

In light of the war in Ukraine, the energy industry is pushing the Biden administration to support more domestic oil production by opening up drilling in federal lands and restarting pipeline projects.

''This moment is a reminder that oil and natural gas are strategic assets and we need to continue to make investments in them,'' said Frank Macchiarola, a senior vice president at the American Petroleum Institute, a trade group.

There is a chance that the strain on consumers may be temporary as global oil supply and demand are rebalanced. And, in the near term, lower consumer spending may have some benefits. Reduced spending could help constrain inflation, but at the expense of slower economic growth.

Even before Russia invaded Ukraine, rapidly rising energy prices were contributing to the fastest inflation in 40 years. Energy prices -- including not just gasoline but home heating and electricity as well -- accounted for more than a sixth of the total increase in the Consumer Price Index over the 12 months ending in January.

The recent jump in energy prices will only make the problem worse. Forecasters surveyed by FactSet expect the February inflation report, which the Labor Department will release on Thursday, to show that consumer prices rose 0.7 percent last month, and are up 7.9 percent over the past year. The continued run-up in gasoline prices over the past week suggests overall inflation in March will top 8 percent for the first time since 1982.

Some drivers said the higher gas prices were a necessary result of taking a hard line on Mr. Putin.

Alan Zweig, 62, a window contractor in San Francisco, said: ''I don't care if it goes to $10 a gallon. It's costing me dearly, but not what it's costing those poor people in Ukraine.''

Destiny Harrell, 26, drives her silver Kia Niro hybrid about 15 minutes each day from her home in Santa Barbara to her job at a public library. She is now considering asking her boss if she can spend some days working from home.

She said the rise in prices has contributed to her anger at Mr. Putin and his decision to invade Ukraine.

''It's super frustrating that a war that shouldn't even really affect us has global reach.''

Ben Casselman, Coral Murphy Marcos and Clifford Krauss contributed reporting.Ben Casselman, Coral Murphy Marcos and Clifford Krauss contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/business/high-gas-prices.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/08/business/high-gas-prices.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A station in Carlsbad, Calif. Gas prices are especially high in the state. (B1)

Cars lining up for gas at a Costco in San Marcos, Calif. Prices in some parts of the state have hovered around $6 a gallon, but the spike could be fleeting. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE BLAKE/REUTERS) (B5)

**Load-Date:** March 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***It’s ‘Alarming’: Children Are Severely Behind in Reading***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y7-FX71-DXY4-X2FB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 8, 2022 Tuesday 10:47 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1533 words

**Byline:** Dana Goldstein

**Highlight:** The fallout from the pandemic is just being felt. “We’re in new territory,” educators say.

**Body**

The fallout from the pandemic is just being felt. “We’re in new territory,” educators say.

BRIDGEPORT, Conn. — The [*kindergarten crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/07/us/covid-kindergarten-enrollment.html) of last year, when millions of 5-year-olds spent months outside of classrooms, has become this year’s reading emergency.

As the pandemic enters its third year, a [*cluster*](https://amplify.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/mCLASS_MOY-Results_February-2022-Report.pdf) [*of*](https://pals.virginia.edu/public/pdfs/login/PALS_StateReport_Fall_2021.pdf) new [*studies*](https://www.curriculumassociates.com/-/media/mainsite/files/i-ready/iready-understanding-student-learning-paper-fall-results-2021.pdf) now show that about a third of children in the youngest grades are missing reading benchmarks, up significantly from before the pandemic.

In Virginia, [*one study found*](https://pals.virginia.edu/public/pdfs/login/PALS_StateReport_Fall_2021.pdf) that early reading skills were at a 20-year low this fall, which the researchers described as “alarming.”

In the Boston region, 60 percent of students at some high-poverty schools have been identified as at high risk for reading problems — twice the number of students as before the pandemic, according to Tiffany P. Hogan, director of the Speech and Language Literacy Lab at the MGH Institute of Health Professions in Boston.

Children in every demographic group have been affected, but Black and Hispanic children, as well as those from low-income families, those with disabilities and those who are not fluent in English, have fallen the furthest behind.

“We’re in new territory,” Dr. Hogan said about the pandemic’s toll on reading. If children do not become competent readers by the end of elementary school, the risks are “pretty dramatic,” she said. Poor readers are more likely to drop out of high school, earn less money as adults and become involved in the criminal justice system.

The literacy crisis did not start with the pandemic. In 2019, results on [*national*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/30/us/reading-scores-national-exam.html) and [*international*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/03/us/us-students-international-test-scores.html) exams showed stagnant or declining American performance in reading, and widening gaps between high and low performers. The causes are multifaceted, but many experts point to a shortage of educators trained in [*phonics and phonemic awareness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/15/us/reading-phonics.html) — the foundational skills of linking the sounds of spoken English to the letters that appear on the page.

The pandemic has compounded those issues.

Children spent months out of the classroom, where they were supposed to learn the basics of reading — the ABCs, what sound a “b” or “ch” makes. Many first and second graders returned to classrooms needing to review parts of the kindergarten curriculum. But nearly half of public schools have teaching vacancies, especially in special education and the elementary grades, according to a [*federal survey*](https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/3_3_2022.asp) conducted in December and January.

Even students with well-trained teachers have had far fewer hands-on hours with them than before the pandemic, which has been defined by closures, uneven access to online instruction, [*quarantine periods*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/28/upshot/schools-covid-closings.html) and — even on the best days — virus-related interruptions to regular classroom routines. Now, schools are under pressure to boost literacy as quickly as possible so students gain the reading skills they need to learn the rest of the curriculum, from math word problems to civics lessons. Billions of federal stimulus dollars are flowing to districts for tutoring and other supports, but their effect may be limited if schools cannot find quality staff members to hire.

At Capital Preparatory Harbor Lower School, a charter elementary school in the ***working-class*** coastal city of Bridgeport, Conn., about half of the first graders did not set foot inside a classroom during their crucial kindergarten year. Though the school building reopened in January 2021 on a hybrid schedule, many families, concerned about the virus, opted to continue full-time remote learning.

At the beginning of this school year, when all students returned to in-person learning, more than twice as many first graders as before the pandemic tested at kindergarten levels or below in their literacy skills, according to the administration.

Teachers started with the basics: how to orient and hold a book, and where the names of the author and illustrator could be found. The school is using federal stimulus dollars to create classroom libraries filled with titles that appeal to the largely Black and Hispanic students there, like “Firebird,” about a young, Black dancer by the ballerina Misty Copeland, and “Hair Love,” about a Black father styling his daughter’s hair.

The stimulus money is also paying for a new structured phonics curriculum called [*Fundations*](https://www.wilsonlanguage.com/programs/fundations/). Given the depth of many students’ struggles with reading, the work has taken on “a level of urgency,” said Garensha John, a first-grade teacher at the school. “Let’s get it done. As soon as they know this, they’ll excel.”

From the start of the pandemic, when schools abruptly shuttered in March 2020, math skills were [*clearly affected*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/28/us/covid-schools-at-home-learning-study.html), while [*some early research*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/02/us/new-data-show-some-children-arent-falling-as-far-behind-as-predicted.html) suggested that students’ reading skills were holding steady, perhaps because more parents read with their children at home than practiced math.

But now, “What we’re seeing is that there are a lot of children who didn’t get the stimulation they need” during the pandemic to adequately develop early speech and reading skills, which are closely linked, Dr. Hogan said.

On a Wednesday morning in February, Mrs. John arrayed 13 6- and 7-year-olds on a rug in front of her, and led them through a series of well-rehearsed exercises sounding out simple written letter combinations and words. The children, clad in uniforms, chanted and clapped as they read in unison. The word of the day was a difficult one for many children to read and pronounce: “ships.”

Cameron Segui, 7, wearing a blue surgical mask and black glasses, placed his hand under his chin, a strategy students use to check if their mouths are positioned correctly. The sound “puh” should be made with the jaw relatively high up, for example, with the cheeks puffing out. “Zh” makes the jaw vibrate, but the “sh” and “s” sounds in “ships” should not.

Some parents and educators have argued that masks are partially responsible for language and literacy deficits. But researchers say that unlike the well-documented [*connection*](https://assets.ctfassets.net/9fbw4onh0qc1/6KGhp4On1LdOy9CvSqfGe1/5325f91241908a0728d2477051defae4/PandemicSchoolingMode_NBER_w29497.pdf) between school closures and decreased achievement, there is not yet strong evidence that masking has hindered the development of reading skills.

Such conclusions “would just be conjecture at this point,” said Nathan Clemens, a dyslexia expert at the University of Texas, Austin.

Later that day in Mrs. John’s class, students broke into small groups to practice writing and segmenting words into different sounds. Cameron, in one of the more advanced groups, was working on full sentences, and pointed proudly to his writing: “Ben had a red and tan hat,” he read.

The biggest problem for Capital Prep, and many other schools, is a shortage of educators like Mrs. John, 30, a Tufts University graduate who received formal training in phonics instruction in a previous job. Many graduates of teacher-preparation programs lack this skill set, and some of the nation’s most popular reading curriculums do not emphasize it, despite a [*large body of research*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/15/us/reading-phonics.html) showing it is crucial.

States like Mississippi, Alabama and Massachusetts have begun retraining teachers in phonics and decommissioning outdated curriculum materials. But some efforts were interrupted or slowed by the pandemic.

At Capital Prep, Mrs. John’s students have made big leaps since September. She serves as a model for colleagues, and the school is providing professional development. Still, in February, there were seven open teaching jobs out of 23 at the school, with some students being taught by inexperienced substitutes. Steve Perry, the founder of the Capital Prep charter school network, which has schools in both Connecticut and New York, recently took a trip to Puerto Rico to recruit educators.

Dr. Hogan, the Boston researcher, has a federal grant to provide intensive, small-group tutoring to children at high-poverty schools who are behind on early reading skills. She, too, has struggled to fill open positions, despite pushing the pay to up to $40 per hour from $15 per hour.

“I’m running on fumes,” she said.

It does not help that there is surging demand for private reading and speech therapy for children from affluent families. Fees can run up to $200 per hour, allowing some educators to leave the classroom entirely.

Tamara Cella, a phonics specialist who holds a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, left the New York City public school system in 2016, frustrated by the strain of principal turnover. In addition to a job at a New Jersey private school, she now moonlights as a phonics tutor for Brooklyn Letters, a company that provides in-home sessions.

“Tutoring pays extremely well,” Dr. Cella acknowledged.

She tutors children facing some of the same challenges as those at Capital Prep — missing core phonics skills, and difficulty transitioning from simple reading exercises to comprehending books. But Dr. Cella worries more about the students she no longer sees.

“That feeling of guilt comes over me,” she said. “What about the kids in the Bronx?”

PHOTOS: Garensha John, a first-grade teacher in Bridgeport, Conn., said phonics instruction had taken on “a level of urgency.” About half of the first graders at her school did not attend kindergarten in person.; Mrs. John, who is formally trained in phonics instruction, has found effective strategies to work with students in masks. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTOPHER CAPOZZIELLO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***After Urban Flight, Corporate Campuses Add a Taste of the City; Square Feet***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64M9-BJ61-DXY4-X41P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 25, 2022 Tuesday 00:27 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1374 words

**Byline:** Keith Schneider

**Highlight:** Suburban headquarters are being redesigned to add more amenities that will integrate better with their communities and attract the skilled workers.

**Body**

TYSONS, Va. — After World War II, corporations moved to exclusive gated suburban campuses to escape traffic, crowds and big-city clamor. Now companies are designing a little city hubbub back into suburban headquarters by adding shops, restaurants, hotels, residences and public parks.

The change in the concept of the corporate campus reflects two related trends that executives say appear to be unaffected by the pandemic. The first is the public and private investment in communities across the country that is making suburbs more dense, walkable, bike-friendly and less dependent on cars. The second is the competition to attract the brightest young employees who want to live and work in lively places.

“It’s urbanization of the suburban experience,” said Alex Krieger, professor of urban design at Harvard and a principal at NBBJ, an architecture and planning firm in Boston. “Companies are bringing some of the characteristics of the city to their suburban campuses.”

One prominent example is in Tysons, Va., a Washington suburb where Capital One has expanded its 24-acre campus with a performing arts hall, a Wegmans supermarket, a 300-room hotel and a rooftop park, all for corporate and public use. Across the street, a 30-story office building under construction will include ground-floor retail and restaurant space.

“As a company, we think, ‘What can we offer to our associates or to potential associates?’” said Jonathan Griffith, Capital One’s managing director. “We wanted vibrant mixed-use amenities that are public-facing to bring in that energy that we all kind of thrive off of.”

Other examples are appearing across the country. Walmart is building a 350-acre headquarters in Bentonville, Ark., that includes 2.4 million square feet of office space, a hotel, a food truck plaza, a walking and biking trail and retail shops open to visitors.

“The connection and integration of our new home office into the surrounding northwest Arkansas community is a primary principle of our design strategy,” said Cindi Marsiglio, senior vice president for corporate real estate at Walmart.

In 2018, JPMorgan Chase opened a regional headquarters in a $3 billion mixed-use development in Plano, Texas, called Legacy West, which has apartments, stores, restaurants and hotels. Two years later, the bank opened another office in Legacy West close to offices of companies like Liberty Mutual Insurance, Toyota and FedEx.

“JPMorgan chose a site that’s adjacent to this massive, really cool, mixed-use environment with food and restaurants and an urban vibe,” said Michael Nicolaus, principal and director of commercial and residential mixed use at HKS Architects, which designed the bank’s first office and Capital One’s global headquarters. “It’s all about being a part of something bigger than yourself, which is the kind of environment that they think they need to attract and retain the best and the brightest people.”

Microsoft spent $149.5 million last year to buy 90 acres on the western edge of Atlanta to build a regional headquarters. The company said its plan for the parcel was not fully formed, with one exception. In February, the company revealed that it would invite residents of Grove Park, a neighboring African American ***working-class*** community, to help design 25 percent of the site for “construction of affordable and empowered housing and other local community services and needs.”

“Looking outside as well as within is an important step in our campus and office design,” Michael Ford, Microsoft’s corporate vice president for global workplace services, said in an email. “We take pride in designing spaces that help us connect with our neighbors.”

The company’s strategy is to become an integral part of the community, said Ellen Dunham-Jones, the director of the Urban Design Program at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

“Microsoft is asking, ‘What can we do for equity and to mitigate gentrification that is the most progressive thing that no one else is doing?’” she said.

Such concerns are a sharp departure from the expansive, private, single-use suburban headquarters built in the 20th century that featured large parking lots and typically included cafeterias. Urban history specialists trace the design trend to 1942 when AT&amp;T Bell Telephone Laboratories moved from Manhattan to a 213-acre campus outside Summit, N.J.

Others took the same path out of the city. In 1958, General Mills opened its suburban headquarters, a statement of glass-enclosed modernism, eight miles outside Minneapolis. [*IBM moved from Manhattan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/business/ibm-campuses-new-york.html) and opened its gated headquarters in 1964 in Armonk, N.Y., on land that was once an apple orchard. Allstate opened its headquarters in 1967 on 122 acres in Northbrook, Ill., outside Chicago.

Capital One’s plan for a new headquarters fit the 20th-century model in 1999 when it bought 26 acres in Tysons Corner, a four-square-mile commercial center near the intersection of the Capital Beltway and the Dulles Toll Road, two of the busiest highways in suburban Washington. At the time, Tysons Corner was the embodiment of what the author Joel Garreau called an edge city — a concentration, outside a big city, of daytime shopping, entertainment and business that emptied at night.

Capital One initially planned four matching 14-story office buildings. Each would have connecting parking decks with space for 1,600 cars. A barbed-wire security fence ringed the perimeter, and guardhouses were stationed at the entrances.

“What was the thinking behind that?” said Mr. Griffith, the bank’s managing director. “‘We didn’t want people here on our secured campus. You know, stay away.’”

In 2003, the company completed the first of the four office towers, but promptly abandoned its design plan because the spread-out, guarded corporate campus it envisioned no longer reflected the neighborhood. By then, the Federal Transit Administration, which oversees public transportation systems, and the State of Virginia had approved the extension of the Washington Metro, with four station stops in Tysons Corner, including one on Capital One’s doorstep.

Not long after, Fairfax County initiated a plan to transform Tysons Corner into a community with more residences, safer pedestrian connections, public spaces and parks. In 2010, the county unveiled a comprehensive plan to encourage housing for 100,000 residents by 2050, roughly 75,000 more than today. The county helped lead a marketing campaign for the evolution of the planned community with a name change to simply Tysons.

Capital One actively participated in the process because the new plan allowed companies to significantly increase the scale of their developments in return for offering public benefits. For example, Capital One could build taller and larger buildings if it also added a street grid to make walking more inviting.

Capital One easily won county approval for its redesigned headquarters. It includes the region’s two tallest office buildings — a 31-story tower completed in 2018 and a 30-story office tower scheduled to open this year. The two buildings have space for more than 5,000 employees.

A block away is the events center, theater, hotel and grocery store. Among the design innovations is a 2.5-acre rooftop park with an 18-hole miniature golf course, a beer garden and food truck lot, a dog park and a 250-seat amphitheater 11 stories above the street.

Capital One Center is approved for four high-rise apartment buildings and 100,000 more square feet of restaurants and retailing. Mr. Griffith said the bank had not decided on a timetable for the additions.

When it’s completed, Capital One Center will encompass enough office, retail, entertainment and residential space to be its own downtown.

“We think about where the world is headed and how to get there,” Mr. Griffith said. “Our campus reflects that.”

PHOTOS: At Capital One’s 24-acre campus in Tysons, Va., there is a performing arts venue, top and above left, and a basketball court, as well as other amenities like a supermarket, a 300-room hotel and a rooftop park, all for corporate and public use. The trend is a departure from the private, single-use suburban headquarters that were the standard in the 20th century. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALYSSA SCHUKAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Suozzi Ignores Calls From Top Democrats To End Campaign for New York Governor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65F3-2XD1-JBG3-6197-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 12, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 14

**Length:** 1675 words

**Byline:** By Nicholas Fandos

**Body**

In the New York Democratic primary, Representative Tom Suozzi is fighting Gov. Kathy Hochul for moderate voters, with a focus on fighting crime and cutting taxes.

Representative Thomas R. Suozzi is not the kind of person to be swayed by the advice of fellow Democrats. But as he runs for governor of New York this year, he sure has gotten his share.

There was Representative Hakeem Jeffries, a favorite to be the next Democratic House speaker, who counseled him not to give up his House seat on Long Island.

Eliot Spitzer, the former governor who trounced him in a 2006 primary, warned he had no clear lane to victory. Even Hillary Clinton weighed in, urging Mr. Suozzi to forgo a messy primary and help Democrats fight to keep the House majority.

It doesn't take a political science degree to understand the argument. Gov. Kathy Hochul is enjoying a double-digit lead, a mountain of campaign cash rivaling the Adirondacks and the full muscle of a Democratic establishment eager to see New York's first female governor win a full term.

None of it has deterred Mr. Suozzi, 59. As potential opponents like Letitia James and Bill de Blasio dropped out of the race, the three-term congressman and outspoken centrist from Nassau County has flouted the advice of allies, tossing aside a coveted House seat to embark on a frenetic attempt to spoil Ms. Hochul's potential coronation.

The race undoubtedly remains Ms. Hochul's to lose. But with less than two months until Primary Day, there are signs that weeks of public appeals may finally be finding an audience among New Yorkers who believe they have fresh reasons to doubt the governor or more progressive alternatives.

Ms. Hochul's administration is still fighting off a cloud of scandal, after her handpicked second-in-command, Brian A. Benjamin, resigned in the face of public corruption charges last month. And recent public polling suggests that she is vulnerable to attacks on issues that Mr. Suozzi has put at the center of his campaign, like rising crime and her decision to spend $600 million in taxpayer money on a new stadium for the Buffalo Bills.

''New Yorkers are not just going to forget about this poor judgment she's exercised,'' Mr. Suozzi said the other day, as Ms. Hochul cajoled lawmakers into changing state law to get Mr. Benjamin off the ballot.

''We shouldn't let them forget,'' he added.

Seeking to draw contrasts with his opponents -- Ms. Hochul and Jumaane Williams, the New York City public advocate -- Mr. Suozzi describes himself as a ''common-sense Democrat'' and a ''proven executive.'' His political ads portray him as a centrist in a time of extremes, someone better qualified to lead one of the nation's largest states than Ms. Hochul, a former county clerk, congresswoman and lieutenant governor, who took office last August when Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo resigned in scandal.

Prominent Democrats fear that Mr. Suozzi's hard-charging candidacy could endanger both the swing district he represents and Ms. Hochul's chances against a Republican this fall.

''Tom is making it difficult for Kathy and the other Democrats down ballot,'' said Representative Kathleen Rice, a fellow Nassau County Democrat who has known him for decades.

''He really does have a big heart and believes in traditional Democratic values of taking care of the poor and a big social safety net,'' Ms. Rice added. ''I just think that if he had been able to check his ego earlier in his career, he could have already run for president.''

Political analysts are skeptical he can close the gap.

Insurgents have successfully defeated Democratic incumbents in New York by running to their left, as Mr. Williams is trying to do this year. But there are few cases of a Democratic challenger winning a primary by running to the right, particularly against someone like Ms. Hochul, who shares Mr. Suozzi's general political orientation as a Catholic, suburban moderate.

''He's basically vying for the same voter that she is,'' said Ester Fuchs, a political science professor at Columbia University. ''People have to have a reason to say, 'She's doing a terrible job, she shouldn't continue.' I don't see that happening.''

The position is a familiar one for Mr. Suozzi, who followed his Italian immigrant father into law and politics at a young age, became mayor of his affluent hometown, Glen Cove on the Long Island Sound, at 31 and proceeded to take a series of political moonshots.

It got Mr. Suozzi elected as the first Democratic county executive in a generation in Nassau, where he won plaudits for turning around the county's troubled finances. Yet a long-shot campaign to upset Mr. Spitzer in the Democratic race for governor in 2006 ended badly, and a few years later, Mr. Suozzi unexpectedly lost re-election in Nassau with $2 million unspent.

In an interview, he insisted this year is not a repeat of 2006.

''I was running against Eliot Spitzer, the sheriff of Wall Street,'' Mr. Suozzi said. ''Now, I'm running against Kathy Hochul, who I don't think has any kind of record of accomplishment that anybody could point to.''

Ms. Hochul's allies vigorously dispute that characterization. But while the governor has significantly consolidated party and union support behind her, she does lack the kind of voter enthusiasm that Mr. Spitzer enjoyed at the height of his popularity.

Much of Mr. Suozzi's campaign is a continuation of centrist positions he staked out in Washington, where he joined the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus and crusaded, unsuccessfully, to repeal a state and local tax deduction cap implemented by President Donald J. Trump that hurt well-off suburbanites. He also took liberal stances, starting a labor caucus and racking up an F rating from the National Rifle Association and top scores from Planned Parenthood.

On a recent campaign stretch that took him from suburban diners to a Black church in Queens, the congressman at times sounded like his Republican counterparts, promising to wage an all-out assault on crime (''This is a crime crisis!''), to cut income and property taxes (''People are leaving our state -- it's not the weather'') and to fight the ''socialist'' Democrats who are ''killing our party'' by attacking police. He also reminded voters that Eric Adams, the mayor of New York City, had offered him a deputy mayor post.

''People say, 'That's not a Democratic issue,''' Mr. Suozzi said. ''Yes it is. Democrats are worried about crime and taxes. Democrats are afraid to take the subway.''

The message resonated with suburban voters who showed up in Westchester and Rockland Counties to hear Mr. Suozzi over free plates of eggs. A warm retail campaigner, he greeted potential voters -- as well as some patrons just trying to enjoy a private meal -- in fragments of no fewer than five languages: English, Spanish, Italian, Mandarin and Greek.

''Nothing against Kathy Hochul, but right now I think it's important to have someone in the role that has the credentials and the history of being able to boost the economy,'' said Maria Abdullah, a businesswoman in Westchester who attended one of the gatherings.

The question is whether Mr. Suozzi can attract the broader spectrum of voters needed to defeat Ms. Hochul, particularly when she may outspend him four to one. Mr. Suozzi is clearly targeting Mr. Adams's coalition of ***working-class*** Black and Latinos around New York City, betting that the party faithful are tired of progressive voices.

He chose Diana Reyna, a former city councilwoman who was the first Dominican woman elected in New York State, as his running mate; Fernando Ferrer, the former Bronx borough president, is campaign chairman.

At times, though, Mr. Suozzi seems to be going out of his way to alienate another powerful block of primary voters. Progressives have expressed outrage at anti-crime policies they believe are retrograde and took offense at a radio appearance in which he seemingly approved of a Florida law opponents have branded ''Don't Say Gay.'' (He later said he had been ''inartful'' and opposed the law.)

Lisa Tyson, the director of the Long Island Progressive Coalition, said it's not the time for bipartisanship. ''There's no middle ground between Republicans and Democrats anymore,'' she said. ''This is about fighting for justice and fighting for food.''

Other prominent party figures have winced at the tone Mr. Suozzi has used to attack the state's first female leader, whom he often refers to as an unqualified ''interim governor.''

''What he seems to be saying is, 'I should be governor because I can do it better,''' said Jay Jacobs, the state Democratic Party chairman. ''The underlying implication is that he is a male and she is a female. That's not where this party should be going.''

Mr. Suozzi said Mr. Jacobs, who chaired his 2006 campaign, was ''absolutely wrong.'' He also defended his approach to Ms. Hochul: ''Kathy Hochul has not been elected governor of New York State, and she is serving from now until the end of Andrew Cuomo's term,'' he said. ''The definition of that is interim.''

A spokesman for the governor declined to comment.

Mr. Suozzi does inspire fierce loyalty among his supporters, who say he can be a creative and, at times, groundbreaking leader.

''Tom is a doer. Tom is an administrator. Tom knows what the city needs right now: safety and economic opportunity for all groups of people,'' said Anthony Scaramucci, who said Mr. Suozzi's father gave him a job as a young paralegal years before he briefly served as Mr. Trump's White House communications director.

Mr. Scaramucci and his wife each contributed $22,600 to the campaign.

Mr. Suozzi readily acknowledges that the safe political road would keep him on a path to re-election for a House seat.

''I could stay in Congress the rest of my life if I wanted to and keep on getting re-elected, I believe,'' he said. ''But I'm giving it up because I feel so strongly that people are suffering in my state and something dramatic has to be done -- and because I feel that my party has lost its way.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/11/nyregion/tom-suozzi-governor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/11/nyregion/tom-suozzi-governor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: 2022: Representative Thomas R. Suozzi, center, and his running mate, Diana Reyna, right, greeted patrons at the Lindenwood Diner in Brooklyn in March. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SENG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

2001: Mr. Suozzi announcing his candidacy for Nassau County executive. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZANNE DECHILLO/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

2006: Mr. Suozzi with Eliot Spitzer, a rival in that year's primary for governor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 12, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Mr. President, You’re Just Plain Wrong on Voter Suppression; Charles M. Blow***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6373-HS01-DXY4-X4Y7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 25, 2021 Sunday 15:53 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 860 words

**Byline:** Charles M. Blow

**Highlight:** Black people need their voting rights protected. The president won’t go all out to help them.

**Body**

Before I turn to President Biden’s historic failure to protect voting rights, a couple of stipulations must be made.

First, the No. 1 enemy to our democracy at this point is the Republican Party. It is Republicans at the state level who are proposing and passing regressive voting laws that will disenfranchise primarily voters of color and disempower local election boards. And it is Republicans in Congress [*who refuse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/politics/filibuster-voting-rights.html) to help defend voting rights. They want a different electorate, less Black and more beige.

Second, the president is not a member of Congress. He has no vote there. He can’t single-handedly alter any congressional policy beyond the veto.

Yet for all that, it is still important to recognize that Biden has consciously chosen not to use the full force of the bully pulpit to explicitly and repeatedly call for the protection of voting rights — and therefore our democracy — by any and all means necessary, including the elimination of the filibuster.

Biden has a vision of what he wants his legacy to be: the builder, not necessarily the defender. He wants to be the one passing out checks, not the one sticking out his neck. This was on full, contemptible display at [*a town hall with the president*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/politics/filibuster-voting-rights.html) hosted by CNN on Wednesday.

Don Lemon, the moderator, asked Biden, “Why is protecting the filibuster — is that more important than protecting voting rights, especially for people who fought and died for that?”

Biden said that it wasn’t and that he wanted to see voting rights legislation passed, but then said:

“What I don’t want to do is get wrapped up, right now, in the argument of whether or not this is all about the filibuster or — look, the American public, you can’t stop them from voting. You tried last time. More people voted last time than at any time in American history, in the middle of the worst pandemic in American history. More people did.”

This is patently false. You absolutely can stop people from voting. We have seen this over and over again throughout American history. And, these laws won’t harm all Americans. They’ll harm minorities in America. They are aimed at liberal cities where the populations are often heavily Black and Latino.

Biden is basically saying here what Black America has heard forever: No matter how high they make the hill, your only choice is to climb it. I applaud your ascension. My God, aren’t your legs strong.

Black people are eternally disgusted that they always get the hill and others don’t. There is nothing glorious in Black people waiting hours in line to vote, sometimes into the wee hours of the morning, while people in whiter precincts breeze in and out. This is wrong. This is outrageous. This is a time tax. Don’t pat us on the head; take us down the hill.

Lemon later asked Biden about the filibuster: “If it’s a relic of Jim Crow, it’s been used to fight against civil rights legislation historically, why protect it?”

Biden responded, “There’s no reason to protect it other than you’re going to throw the entire Congress into chaos and nothing will get done.” What?! Getting rid of it to protect Black people’s ballot access is getting something done. Something enormous.

But Biden is focused on the other elements of his agenda, the ones he tied himself to before the wave of voter suppression became clear.

“For example, wouldn’t my friends on the other side love to have a debate about the filibuster instead of passing the recovery act?” he continued at the town hall. “Or wouldn’t they love doing it instead of being in a position where we provide for — how many of you have children under the age of 17? Raise your hand. Guess what? You’re getting a lot of money in a monthly check now, aren’t you?”

Biden wants to be the Robin Hood of the ***working class***, a swashbuckling blue-collar savior. He wants to go down in history as the president who rebuilt America. In that grand vision, risking it all to save voting access for Black people comes up short. It’s a nuisance, a horrible inconvenience.

Black people gave all to save Joe Biden’s candidacy, but Joe Biden refused to give all to protect their right to vote. Reciprocity is not compulsory.

If Joe Biden clearly, forcefully and repeatedly demanded that the filibuster be scrapped to defend voting rights, it still might not be axed. But Black people like me need to see you go down fighting rather than avoid the fight or grudgingly enter it.

Biden wants to make history with his agenda, but history is already being made by Republicans with this extraordinary voter suppression push.

During Biden’s victory speech, he said to his Black supporters, “You’ve always [*had my back*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/politics/filibuster-voting-rights.html), and I’ll have yours.” I’m sorry, Mr. President, but that statement rings hollow because in Black people’s greatest time of need, you’re more concerned about roads than rights.

The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/politics/filibuster-voting-rights.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/politics/filibuster-voting-rights.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/22/us/politics/filibuster-voting-rights.html).

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

**Load-Date:** July 26, 2021

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[***Can Biden Put Workers First in Trade Talks?; On Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62WH-FNR1-DXY4-X3GS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 10, 2021 Thursday 18:30 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 815 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** What the White House will need to do to fulfill its promise to ensure trade’s benefits are spread more equitably.

**Body**

What the White House will need to do to fulfill its promise to ensure trade’s benefits are spread more equitably.

The news on Thursday that consumer prices have risen [*more than expected*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage) in the past year added fuel to a smoldering debate over the threat of inflation as the economy rebounds. It also mostly drowned out another announcement on trade policy, one the Biden administration had hoped would send a major signal that it was breaking from the past.

Katherine Tai, the U.S. trade representative, told the A.F.L.-C.I.O. during a speech on Thursday that the White House was working to put workers first in its negotiations with its trading partners, a shift from the usual focus on macroeconomics and business interests. In her speech, Tai said the previous approach had “created a trust gap with the public about free trade.”

“We want to make trade a force for good that encourages a race to the top,” Tai said. “The first step to achieving this goal is creating a more inclusive process. In order to understand how trade affects workers, we want to come meet with, listen to, and learn from them.”

Our economics reporter [*Jeanna Smialek*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage) interviewed Tai for [*an article published ahead of her speech*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage). After the address this morning, Jeanna (who was also busy covering the inflation news) spoke to me about what the trade representative’s announcement means — and what the administration would need to do to make good on the commitment.

In her speech today, Ambassador Tai said the United States would put a priority on workers in its dealings with other countries. The Obama administration said [*some similar things*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage), but frankly the U.S. trade representative’s priorities have long been driven at least partly by corporate interests — which doesn’t always equal a commitment to American workers. If the Biden administration follows through on Tai’s pledge, how significant would this shift be?

There’s a widespread perception in economics — as Ambassador Tai noted — that for too long policymakers and analysts looked at free trade as something that grows the overall pie, without paying sufficient attention to who was getting a slice. Focusing on the distributional impacts of trade, and especially on what it means for workers at home and abroad, is a shift that has really started in recent years. If the Biden administration can make meaningful changes here, that would be a big deal, but I think how sweeping those could practically be remains a major question.

This lines up with a broader shift in economic priorities that this administration has sought to communicate to the public. That includes [*handing cash payments*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage) directly to Americans through the stimulus, and the Fed’s stated emphasis on [*reaching full employment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage). From a political standpoint, how much does this reflect an attempt to speak directly to the concerns of ***working-class*** voters, in ways that previous administrations haven’t?

The cash payments to American workers and families started under the Trump administration, and the Federal Reserve is politically independent. The central bank’s increased focus on full employment has really been a product of a relatively low-inflation era, which gave it more room to work on labor market outcomes.

But it is clear that a focus on workers has intensified across recent administrations, Democrat and Republican alike. I suspect that some of that is driven by economics and cold hard facts: Labor’s share of the nation’s income has been falling for a long time now, this is a democracy, and voters have taken note. When we talk about economic prosperity, whom that prosperity is accruing to — everyone or just an elite few — is increasingly a big part of the debate.

The Biden administration has already taken some steps in line with Tai’s pledge — insisting on workers’ rights in dealings with Mexico and with the World Trade Organization. But as you mention in the article, it’s not yet clear how the administration plans to live up to its promise on a larger scale. As Tai reworks the country’s approach to trade, what will you be watching for?

Ambassador Tai mentions in the speech that the administration will look to use meetings in Europe next week to make a start on “new standards to combat the harmful industrial policies of China and other countries that undermine our ability to compete.” I think it will be interesting to see what comes of that, and to see how much the administration can do to insist upon worker protections in trading partners, like China, where the United States’ desires and priorities hold less sway.

On Politics is also available as a newsletter. [*Sign up here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage) to get it delivered to your inbox.

Is there anything you think we’re missing? Anything you want to see more of? We’d love to hear from you. Email us at [*onpolitics@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/10/business/consumer-price-index-may-2021.html?action=click&amp;module=Spotlight&amp;pgtype=Homepage).

PHOTO: Katherine Tai in December 2020. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Hilary Swift for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***The Man Who Many Democrats Wish Would Not Run; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65DW-G9B1-DXY4-X485-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 11, 2022 Wednesday 05:03 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1587 words

**Byline:** James Barron

**Highlight:** Representative Tom Suozzi could be re-elected to Congress. But he is running for governor instead.

**Body**

Representative Tom Suozzi could be re-elected to Congress. But he is running for governor instead.

Good morning. It’s Wednesday. We’ll look at Representative Thomas Suozzi, a centrist Democrat who is giving up his House seat to try to unseat another centrist Democrat, Gov. Kathy Hochul. We’ll also look at plans to renovate Penn Station and redevelop the surrounding neighborhood.

“I could stay in Congress the rest of my life if I wanted to and keep on getting re-elected, I believe,” Representative Thomas Suozzi said — and many Democrats wish he would.

Among them: Representative Hakeem Jeffries of Brooklyn, who is widely talked about as a potential speaker of the House. And former Gov. Eliot Spitzer, who beat Suozzi handily in a primary 16 years ago. And Hillary Clinton, who urged Suozzi to do his part to help keep Democratic control of the House.

Running for governor would not further that objective. But Suozzi is building a campaign around fighting crime, cutting taxes and claiming that Gov. Kathy Hochul is not up to the job.

My colleague Nicholas Fandos says [*the race is probably Hochul’s to lose*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/11/nyregion/tom-suozzi-governor.html). She has a double-digit lead in recent polls, far more cash to spend and the support of a Democratic establishment eager to see New York’s first female governor win a full term. But Suozzi seems to be finding an audience among New Yorkers who have doubts about Hochul. “New Yorkers are just not going to forget about this poor judgment she’s exercised,” Suozzi said the other day after Hochul’s handpicked lieutenant governor resigned amid corruption charges.

The question is whether he can attract the broad spectrum of voters needed to win.

Suozzi, a former Nassau County executive whose congressional district stretches across Nassau into Suffolk County and also includes two chunks in Queens, is clearly targeting Mayor Eric Adams’s coalition of ***working-class*** Black and Latino voters around New York City. He chose Diana Reyna, a former city councilwoman who was the first Dominican woman elected in New York State, as his running mate. Fernando Ferrer, the former Bronx borough president, is his campaign chairman.

But at times Suozzi seems to have gone out of his way to alienate another powerful block of primary voters — progressives. Other prominent Democrats dislike the tone of his attacks on the state’s first female leader, whom he often refers to as an unqualified “interim governor.”

“What he seems to be saying is, ‘I should be governor because I can do it better,’” said Jay Jacobs, the state Democratic Party chairman. “The underlying implication is that he is a male and she is a female. That’s not where this party should be going.”

Suozzi said that Jacobs, who chaired his 2006 campaign, was “absolutely wrong.” He also defended his approach on Hochul: “Kathy Hochul has not been elected governor of New York State, and she is serving from now until the end of Andrew Cuomo’s term,” he said. “The definition of that is interim.”

A spokesman for the governor declined to comment.

It’s another mostly sunny day near the high 60s with temps dropping to the mid-50s during the partly cloudy evening.

In effect until May 26 (Solemnity of the Ascension).

The latest Metro news

Crime

* An 85-year-old former member of the Black Liberation Army won parole [*after serving 49 years for the death of a New Jersey state trooper*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/10/nyregion/sundiata-acoli-black-liberation-army-parole.html).

1. Aaron Nathaniel Jr., who was only 14 when he killed a 16-year-old on a Brooklyn playground in 2018, was sentenced after [*delays that frustrated families on both sides*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/09/nyregion/aaron-nathaniel-sentencing-timi-oyebola.html).

Other big stories

* Stoops are coming to the city’s Open Streets program. [*Here’s a first look.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/05/10/nyregion/open-streets-nyc-stoops.html)

1. Andy Warhol’s 1964 silk-screen of Marilyn Monroe’s face sold for about $195 million, [*making it the highest price achieved for any American work of art at auction.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/09/arts/design/warhol-auction-marilyn-monroe.html)

The plan to revitalize Penn Station

New York State wants to [*remake the shabby Penn Station transit hub with a big real estate development*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/09/nyregion/penn-station-revitalization-taxes.html). I asked my colleague [*Matthew Haag*](https://www.nytimes.com/by/matthew-haag), who covered the revitalization with [*Dana Rubinstein,*](https://www.nytimes.com/by/dana-rubinstein) to explain what’s in the works.

How much is it going to cost? Who’ll be on the hook if the project doesn’t go as Gov. Kathy Hochul expects it to?

It’s best to think of the overall project in two parts: Penn Station and the 10 skyscrapers.

The reconstruction of Penn Station, along with cosmetic improvements there and an additional tunnel under the Hudson River, is expected to cost $30 billion to $40 billion. The new towers, with more than 18 million square feet, would be privately financed. Most of the towers would be built on properties owned by Vornado Realty Trust, one of the city’s largest real estate groups.

New York State is leading the upgrades at Penn Station, and state officials said that New York’s share of those costs is expected to be just a fraction of the total — around $10 billion — because New Jersey and the federal government would also contribute. But nothing has been written in stone, so the cost, and how it would be shared across all stakeholders, could change. If it goes as planned, construction would start in 2024 at Penn Station and be completed in 2032.

To pay for the work at Penn Station, Hochul wants to build the 10 skyscrapers around Penn Station, which will mostly contain office space but will also include hotel rooms, retail space and residences. The revenue brought in by the buildings would be used to pay off the construction costs at Penn Station.

The last tower would be finished in 2044, creating a 12-year window between the completion of Penn Station and the last building. If revenue from the new buildings falls short of what would be needed to pay off the debt, taxpayers would be forced to cover the bill.

If there were a shortfall, the city would be protected because the state would cover the costs, state officials said. Still, it would be taxpayers on the hook.

But there are doubts from some quarters. What did the city’s Independent Budget Office fault about the plan? And what is the Independent Budget Office, anyway?

The Independent Budget Office, the agency that monitors city budget and tax revenues, said it was nearly impossible to analyze the plan on its merits. The agency said there was a dearth of information, especially about projected construction costs and estimated revenues from the towers.

State officials told us that they shared the budget office’s desire to get a full accounting of the costs and claimed that all the numbers would be finalized before the project is approved in the coming months by the Empire Development Corporation, the state agency overseeing the project.

The renovations announced by Hochul appeared to be a reduced version of what her predecessor, former Gov. Andrew Cuomo, had envisioned. So New York State is in charge. What about City Hall?

When Cuomo unveiled the scope of the development, there was immediate concern among local residents, elected officials and community leaders that it was too big.

After Cuomo resigned and Hochul took office, she put her imprint on the project with some modest changes. But the broad parameters of the project — 10 towers and a new Penn Station — stayed largely the same as under Cuomo’s plan.

While New York State is leading the project, City Hall has taken a back seat. A spokesman for Mayor Eric Adams told us he still supports the project but “in a fiscally responsible way.”

Community opposition has continued. What do critics of the plan say?

The budget office report echoed many criticisms raised by opponents, including those of Layla Law-Gisiko, a community board member in Midtown Manhattan. Law-Gisiko, who is running to represent the area in the State Assembly, told us “the project needs to be retired.”

What we’re reading

* Grub Street interviewed the “pasta machine” behind [*Nonna Dora’s Pasta Bar, Dora Marzovilla, and listed some of the dishes with her creations.*](https://www.grubstreet.com/2022/05/nonna-doras-pasta-bar-nyc-opening.html)

1. The DiscOasis, a roller disco experience, is [*coming to Wollman Rink in Central Park this summer, Gothamist reports.*](https://gothamist.com/arts-entertainment/the-discoasis-a-70s-themed-roller-disco-experience-will-do-the-hustle-in-central-park-this-summer)
2. Curbed spoke to 10 executives in New York City who are [*encouraging their employees to return to the office.*](https://www.curbed.com/2022/05/return-to-office-nyc-bosses.html)

Rock-paper-scissors

Dear Diary:

It is 2 a.m. I dash up the subway stairs to catch the F back to Manhattan.

Just as I get to the platform, the train doors close and the train begins to pull away. The digital message board says the next one will arrive in 20 minutes.

I wander over to a bench and sit. As I wait for the train, a boy runs merrily up the stairs onto the platform. He has a huge smile on his face while he stares across the tracks at the other platform.

A girl there beams back at him. They start to play rock-paper-scissors. They don’t say a word. They play about six rounds, laughing and giggling at the end of each one.

The train on the opposite track whooshes into the station, cutting the boy and girl off from each other. Seconds later, she appears in the train window, smiling again and waving goodbye.

The boy waves back as he watches her train pull away.

— Pamela Ingebrigtson

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, Olivia Parker and Ed Shanahan contributed to New York Today. You can reach the team at [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:nytoday@nytimes.com)

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

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

**Load-Date:** May 11, 2022

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[***The Republican Party After Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60ND-7WD1-JBG3-654T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 23, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 8; LETTERS

**Length:** 1315 words

**Body**

Readers discuss a column by David Brooks, who argued that a group of senators in their 40s embody the party's future.

To the Editor:

In ''Where Do Republicans Go From Here?'' (column, Aug. 9), David Brooks describes the philosophies of four senators -- Marco Rubio, Josh Hawley, Tom Cotton and Ben Sasse -- regarding the future of the G.O.P. and the country. But a salient point is missing. For three and a half years they have all stood mutely by, or in some cases given credence to Donald Trump, as he has plundered America. These men are abject cowards and deserve no place in Congress.

Mr. Trump is not faring well in the polls lately, so we should not be shocked to see these spineless men suddenly start taking exception to his last-gasp efforts to undercut the election. They are betting that we will have short memories of the carnage they have allowed to take place. But we will not forget. They deserve no voice in a Republican resurrection, which may be an oxymoron, like Fox News.

Linda GleasonLiberty, Mo.

To the Editor:

David Brooks presents a compelling analysis of the challenges facing Republicans in today's America. But he does not go far enough. To stay relevant, the Party of Lincoln must replace its current orthodoxy with a socially responsible platform and broad, cross-party appeal.

I was raised in a solidly middle-class, predominantly Republican New Jersey town. I did not ''leap'' from Republicanism; it left me in slow, agonizing steps, which were never part of conservatism as I had learned it, with growing disregard for the poor, institutionalization of white privilege, personal callousness and lack of empathy for those who have been systematically denied opportunities to share in America's prosperity.

I was an anomaly in the Clinton administration because I believed in capitalism as the engine of private enterprise to serve public purposes, though a heretic to some because I remained registered in the G.O.P.

Mr. Brooks wrote that ''there's also the possibility that Republicans will abandon any positive vision and revert to being a simple anti-government party -- a party of opposition to whatever Biden is doing.'' To rephrase him: ''Can Republicans invent the American counterpart to the British Parliament's 'loyal opposition' whose purpose will be to conscientiously cooperate on the public's business during a Biden administration, rather than reflexively denigrating it?''

Sandy ApgarBaltimoreThe writer was an assistant secretary of the Army in the Clinton administration.

To the Editor:

David Brooks, in describing how the Republican Party needs to change, is more optimistic than I am about maintaining our two-party system. I think it's clear from the fracturing of the Republican Party that the political ''new normal'' will not resemble our current two-party system. What is likely is that we will move to a multiparty political landscape.

The remnants of the ultraconservative wing of the Republican Party will remain. The Lincoln Project, a group of anti-Trump Republicans, will likely evolve into a more moderate conservative-liberal hybrid. The Democratic Party will continue, but will lose some adherents to the Lincolns. The fracturing of the Republican Party will also give strength to the Libertarian Party.

It's likely that each of these parties will be able to capture some congressional seats. This realignment will not yield a majority party in Congress, but a patchwork of minority parties. We are in for a ''new normal'' of coalition-building among different ideologies.

Simon AroninWhite Plains, N.Y.

To the Editor:

David Brooks beautifully presented Republican political ideologies that may take root post-Trump. However, he addressed only one of the two elephants in the room, if you pardon the pun.

Since Reagan, Republicans have used a glossy nationalism and faux religiosity to cover up two evils that represented two wings of the party: science denial (to feed the business wing) and racism (to feed the white ***working-class*** wing), both of which are now laid bare and bringing the country to its knees.

Mr. Brooks mentions racism, but not science denial. Both of these are tied to a false, twisted narrative of individualism and entrepreneurship. Until those lies are faced, everything will be a pale remix of the same old strategies.

Patty ThelPrinceton Junction, N.J.

To the Editor:

I appreciated David Brooks's careful analysis of the future of the Republican Party by examining its younger cohort of politicians. However, it is notable that he mentioned only one woman, Nikki Haley, and she only as a proponent of current Republican ways. Without an entire gender in the mix, it is hard to believe that there will be any new direction for the G.O.P. after the Trump administration.

Sigrid ReynoldsHudson, Ohio

To the Editor:

The Republican Party is indeed in sad shape if David Brooks believes that Senators Marco Rubio, Josh Hawley, Tom Cotton and Ben Sasse will determine the future of the party, as all four men have proven themselves to be political opportunists more concerned with positioning themselves politically than they are with coming up with a new coherent and systematic vision of Republican governance.

Senator Rubio's policies bend and sway with the political winds, Senators Cotton and Hawley parrot the most extreme elements of the party platform and rarely achieve anything of substance, while Senator Sasse's laments about the moral character of the party are often full of sound and fury but have little consequence in the real world.

If the party is to survive the degradation of the Trump era, it will need to convince the American people that it is capable of governing responsibly, which will require a willingness to deal with the problems we face realistically and not according to the dictates of ideological posturing.

Michael ScottSan Francisco

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David Brooks lives in a fantasy world where the G.O.P. at one time was a great, altruistic economic and democratic force for good, now spoiled by Donald Trump.

Those who think Mr. Trump is the reason for the party's downfall are lying to themselves. The modern G.O.P.'s racism, corruption, exploitation and corporate cronyism go back decades. Mr. Trump is just the result of what they built.

What Republicans think they represent -- fiscal responsibility and small government -- is arguably a laudable goal. But they never followed these tenets. G.O.P. presidents have historically ballooned the federal debt. They routinely back corporate welfare for titans of industry while demeaning the ***working class*** for taking ''handouts.'' They signed a pact with the religious right in the 1970s and stoked culture wars and panic while reaping the benefits of their corporate sponsors for the past 50 years.

Yes, there were some exceptions. Richard Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency. George W. Bush helped fund AIDS relief for Africa. But the great lie is that Republicans were ever really for the little people.

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I read David Brooks's column with great interest, hoping to find some light at this end of the tunnel for one of our country's two major parties. There were definitely some promising ideas. But why end it with the suggestion that Republicans replace the current race struggle with a class struggle? Can't we come up with approaches that aren't based on demonizing ''the other,'' in this case college-educated people who live on the coasts?

Until we find a way to fairly compensate and appreciate all who contribute through work, whether in a factory or at a desk, we'll find ourselves in the exact same place we are now, a divided, dysfunctional nation.

Mary McKearinBurlington, Vt.

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In response to David Brooks's query ''Where Do Republicans Go From Here?,'' I suggest: ''Away.''

Dean SchermerhornReno, Nev.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/22/opinion/letters/republican-party-trump.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/22/opinion/letters/republican-party-trump.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tim Enthoven FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 23, 2020

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[***The Future of the G.O.P. After Trump; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60N6-W1R1-JBG3-63X5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 22, 2020 Saturday 12:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 1307 words

**Highlight:** Readers discuss a column by David Brooks, who argued that a group of senators in their 40s embody the party’s future.

**Body**

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Dean Schermerhorn

Reno, Nev.

PHOTO:   (PHOTOGRAPH BY Tim Enthoven FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 22, 2020

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[***Bruce Springsteen’s Son Becomes a Jersey City Firefighter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y0F-F2D1-JBG3-6104-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 15, 2020 Wednesday 11:10 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 386 words

**Byline:** Johnny Diaz

**Highlight:** The musician’s youngest son, Sam Springsteen, was sworn in as a Jersey City firefighter on Tuesday.

**Body**

The musician’s youngest son, Sam Springsteen, was sworn in as a Jersey City firefighter on Tuesday.

If there’s a fire in Jersey City or a cat stuck in a tree, there’s a good chance that Bruce Springsteen’s son may be dispatched to the scene.

Sam Springsteen was one of 15 new firefighters who were sworn in Tuesday by Mayor Steven M. Fulop of Jersey City and the director of public safety, James Shea.

Bruce Springsteen, the rock star whose songs have for decades celebrated New Jersey’s ***working class***, and Patti Scialfa, his wife and [*longtime bandmate*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html), looked on and clapped as their youngest son joined the newest members of the city’s Fire Department, according to TV news coverage of the ceremony.

“It was a long road,” the senior Mr. Springsteen [*told WCBS*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html) at the ceremony held at City Hall. “He was very dedicated for quite a few years and we are just excited for him today.”

When asked by reporters about his journey to becoming a firefighter, the younger Springsteen said that “it wasn’t easy,” according to [*NBC News*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html). He is one of Mr. Springsteen and Ms. Scialfa’s [*three children*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html). (Their daughter, [*Jessica*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html), has gained fame in [*the world of competitive show jumping*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html).)

Mr. Springsteen graduated from the Monmouth County Fire Academy in January 2014, according to an Instagram post by [*Ms. Scialfa*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html). He also worked as a volunteer firefighter in Colts Neck, the New Jersey township where he grew up, according to NBC.

The new recruits bring the number of uniformed firefighters and superiors to 666, a historic high for the city, according to a news release by Mayor Fulop. The new class of firefighters trained at the Morris County Public Safety Training Academy, a county spokesman said. In all, Jersey City has 26 firehouses.

“Our fire department responds to 1,300 fires a year, which is why these 15 recruits have gone through rigorous training necessary to be part of the best fire department this city has ever seen,” Mayor Fulop said in a [*statement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html).

He also posed for photos with the Springsteen family and posted them on Twitter.

“We got to spend some time in my office talking about music but more than that they’re proud parents of a new JC Firefighter,” he said on [*Twitter.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/02/nyregion/nyregionspecial2/02peoplenj.html) “Congrats to all the new FF joining the best FD anywhere.”

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER BROWN/JERSEY CITY MAYOR’S OFFICE, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** July 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***More Than Just Academics and a Slice***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65M7-8GC1-DXY4-X0KW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 5, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 7; LIVING IN

**Length:** 1837 words

**Byline:** By C. J. Hughes

**Body**

After decades of crime, the city is 'coming up' -- with the cuisine and culture of a major metropolis, but the laid-back vibe of a smaller place.

Outsiders often reduce New Haven to two things: pizza and Yale.

It's somewhat true. Places to eat pizza abound in this midsize city of 135,000 residents, which continues to have a large Italian-American population, even as it diversifies. And the Ivy League university, whose students and staff number about 32,500, exerts an influence that can seem far more gravitational than the school's real estate footprint -- just 8 percent of the city's land -- might suggest.

But that misses the big picture, the city's boosters say. New Haven pulls off a balancing act, offering the cuisine, culture and architecture of a major metropolis, they contend, with the laid-back vibe of a smaller town. At the same time, decades of efforts to curb crime, clean sidewalks, convert closed factories and boost homeownership amid a 25 percent poverty rate seem to have given New Haven a new lease on life.

''I had a lot of negative feelings about the way it was in the '80s and '90s,'' said Jim Kenny, 43, who grew up in rural Connecticut and would race through New Haven to catch the train to New York.

But in 2018, Mr. Kenny, who works in scholastic fund-raising, had to reconsider his opinion after accepting a job offer from Yale. Although he was initially tempted by suburban Milford, he took a leap of faith on a two-bedroom, one-bath apartment in a walk-up building in Wooster Square, a rowhouse-lined historic district, for $1,750 a month.

Almost immediately, he was surprised by how wrong he had been about the city. ''My decision to live here unlocked a gem of a place,'' said Mr. Kenny, whose unexpected treats included plays at Long Wharf Theater and Indian food at Sherkaan. This winter, he and Odie, his French bulldog, moved into a new rental building around the corner, with amenities like a fireplace-lined courtyard; his one-bedroom there costs $2,100 a month.

Large rental developments -- which have been mushrooming in recent years in neighborhoods like Wooster Square, East Rock and the Hill -- seem to fill up as quickly as they open, although they aren't universally loved. In a city of Victorians and brick rowhouses, some of the projects are considered too large. But their defenders point out that new buildings are replacing parking lots, helping to reverse the city's troubled legacy of demolitions in the mid-20th-century.

''I don't think people are jumping up and down for joy, but I do think some of these buildings are better than having ugly empty lots,'' said Charlotte Murphy, 78, a retired communications professional who lives in a two-bedroom, two-bath condominium in a converted 1865 mansion with her husband, Charlie Murphy, 80, a retired librarian. The unit, which has a fireplace, cost $189,000 in 2003, when Ms. Murphy left the suburbs for a place with walkability. ''I think a lot of us are ambivalent.''

New Haven's upswing is not citywide. Blighted blocks endure in neighborhoods like Dixwell and Dwight. But some of the city's less affluent areas are also improving.

''It's better here, by buckets,'' said Monika Mittelholzer, 61, a seven-year resident of Newhallville, a ***working-class*** enclave. One reason is that renters, including low-income ones, are taking advantage of programs designed to help them buy, said Ms. Mittelholzer, an immigrant from Guyana who works as an administrative assistant at Yale's medical school and lives with her sister, Sonja, 54.

Home for her is a three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath house that she bought for $140,000 in 2015 from Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, a nonprofit that rehabs and sells distressed properties at low prices to buyers with qualifying incomes. The group, which has turned around some 300 houses since 1979, can seem to be reshaping whole blocks. It restored eight houses on Ms. Mittelholzer's section of Lilac Street alone.

But Yale also helped Ms. Mittelholzer with her down payment and mortgage through its Homebuyer Program, which typically offers employees $30,000 to buy in struggling areas. Since 1994, 1,370 properties have benefited, said Karen Peart, a Yale spokeswoman.

In 2002, when Ms. Mittelholzer moved to the area, ''I thought New Haven was depressed,'' she said. ''But it's coming up.''

What You'll Find

Hugging a harbor between a pair of stone ridges known as East and West Rocks, New Haven is mostly flat, which explains its popularity with walkers and cyclists, residents say.

Many buyers start hunting in East Rock, where colorful houses in late-19th-century Queen Anne and Mediterranean styles relax in shaded yards. Mansion-lined Saint Ronan and Livingston Streets are among the top addresses, but elegant porch-fronted two-family houses, whose mortgages are offset by rents from Yale students, are abundant off Orange Street, a cafe-dotted strip.

With inventory low, there has been renewed attention on Westville, whose retail hub, at Whalley Avenue and Fountain Street, next to Edgewood Park, offers Camacho Garage, an outdoor restaurant. Farther out is East Shore, which mixes beachy and suburban vibes, with colonials on small lots by a sea wall. Neighborhoods now popular with investors include Fair Haven, a one-time oystering area on the Quinnipiac River.

Over the past 30 years, as office buildings near the New Haven Green have shed tenants, developers have grabbed the sites for housing. The Center Court Apartments, at 116 Court Street, for example, are now condos. But downtown is mostly rentals, a trend ignited by the 2010 construction of 360 State Street, a 32-story, 500-unit tower that is among the tallest in the city.

Corsair, a 238-unit project with a pool in its courtyard, occupies a spot where airplane propellers were once manufactured; a second, 75-unit complex will rise across the street. A sprawling former Winchester gun plant, targeted for redevelopment for decades, has added 158 apartments and was approved this spring for 287 more, which will join biotech offices. And Audubon Square, a phased project adding 464 rentals to several large parking lots, is being built by Spinnaker Real Estate Partners, which is also helming the 500-apartment redevelopment of the windswept site where the New Haven Coliseum once stood, with plans to break ground this year.

What You'll Pay

Inventory is scarce. In late May, buyers could choose among 86 homes, according to Zillow. The priciest was a stone-detailed house with seven bedrooms and seven fireplaces in the 185-acre Prospect Hill Historic District, built in 1908 for the owner of a trolley company, and listed for $2.295 million. The least expensive was a Cape Cod-style fixer-upper on 0.12 acres in East Shore, listed for $119,000. There were also 19 condominium units for sale, from $39,900 to $470,000.

As inventory has tightened, sales have slowed, sending prices skyward. New Haven saw 61 single-family houses sell in the first quarter of 2022, according to data from William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty, down from 71 during the same quarter in 2021. The median sale price for a single-family home in the first quarter of 2022 was $278,000, up from $231,000 during the same period the year before, a 20 percent jump.

Multifamily homes -- a big part of the city's housing stock -- also saw values soar. Two- to four-family houses had a first-quarter median sale price of $325,000, up from $285,000 a year ago, according to Sotheby's data. The median sale price of condos increased as well, to $158,000 in the first quarter of 2022 from $135,000 a year ago.

Jack Hill, an agent with Seabury Hill Realtors, who sold about 100 properties in New Haven last year, said the market is resetting. ''I think it's poised to come down a little bit,'' he said. ''Though not anything unusual.''

The Vibe

For years, relations between Yale and New Haven were chilly, largely because the private university kept taking buildings off tax rolls by snapping them up. But a thaw began around 1990, city officials say, as Yale began making voluntary payments to offset those losses. Last year, the school agreed to pay $135 million over six years, a large increase over past rates.

Many residents admit that Yale brings a flood of culture that a former factory town might not enjoy otherwise. Highlights include two world-class art museums; a natural-history museum, the Peabody, which is beloved by children; and Woolsey Hall, a venue for classical music. In recent years, improvements to Yale-owned properties along Broadway have turned a strip once rowdy with nightclubs and diners into a more upscale shopping destination.

Elsewhere, College Street Music Hall holds rock, funk and pop shows; across the street, the Shubert Theater is a destination for ballets and musicals. And while many of the city's green spaces are variations on the quad or the square, looping paths along Mill River, at the base of East Rock, offer space to jog and walk.

The Schools

New Haven's 41 public schools -- 32 of them magnet schools -- enroll about 19,500 students.

On 2019 Smarter Balanced assessment exams, given in third through eighth grades, 55 percent of students met standards in English, compared with 60 percent statewide; 54 percent met standards in math, versus 63 percent statewide.

The high schools' four-year graduation rate last year was 79 percent, versus 90 percent statewide, according to a state report that also found that New Haven spends slightly less per student -- $16,929 annually -- than the $17,838 state average.

The Commute

Metro-North's New Haven line has two stops in New Haven and offers eight trains from Union Station to Grand Central on weekdays between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. The shortest takes an hour and 50 minutes; the longest is just over two hours. Monthly passes are $450.

Amtrak and local Shore Line East trains also serve Union Station. New York-bound trains run a few times a day from New Haven's other station, on State Street, closer to downtown.

Bus service is provided by CT Transit and Yale to those who commute within the city.

The History

From 1701 to 1875, Connecticut enjoyed the unusual distinction of having two state capitals, Hartford and New Haven. The capitol in New Haven -- a Greek temple-type structure on the upper green, between Center Church and Phelps Gate, the entrance to the oldest surviving part of Yale's campus -- was designed by Ithiel Town, the architect behind the similar-looking Federal Hall National Memorial, on Wall Street in Manhattan.

The power-sharing arrangement, which had lawmakers meeting in each city once a year, eventually became too costly, and in 1885, after Hartford became the sole capital, Mr. Town's temple was razed. The marble remains ended up in basement walls around the city, while its mortar was used to fill potholes, according to the New Haven Museum.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/realestate/new-haven.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/01/realestate/new-haven.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The view down Sachem Street toward Yale University in New Haven, Conn. Blighted areas of the city endure, but there are programs meant to help less affluent areas. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In New York, Two Ascending Political Stars Collide; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65DF-7XX1-DXY4-X1GN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 9, 2022 Monday 08:03 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1653 words

**Byline:** James Barron

**Highlight:** Mayor Eric Adams and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who represent divergent wings of the fractured Democratic Party, have not spoken one-on-one in nearly a year.

**Body**

Mayor Eric Adams and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who represent divergent wings of the fractured Democratic Party, have not spoken one-on-one in nearly a year.

Good morning. It’s Monday. We’ll look at the rift between Mayor Eric Adams and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. They have not spoken one-on-one in nearly a year. We’ll also get some fashion advice from the jazz bassist Ron Carter.

They are political stars from divergent wings of the Democratic Party: Mayor Eric Adams, who embodies “pragmatic” moderatism, and Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, an outspoken progressive. Both are ambitious Democrats. Both are people of color who were born and raised by ***working-class*** families in boroughs outside Manhattan, their bootstrap backgrounds informing their politics and personal style.

But [*my colleague Jesse McKinley writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/09/nyregion/aoc-eric-adams.html) that they have not spoken to each other one-on-one since shortly after Adams won the primary for mayor in the summer, according to representatives of both.

They have spoken about each other, trading barbs and brickbats. In September, for example, he questioned her provocative [*“Tax the Rich” statement dress*](https://nypost.com/2021/09/20/eric-adams-says-aocs-tax-the-rich-dress-is-the-wrong-message/) at the Met Gala that year. But at last week’s Met Gala, Adams also had a message on [*his tuxedo: “End Gun Violence.”*](https://nypost.com/2022/05/02/eric-adams-sports-end-gun-violence-tux-at-met-gala-2022/?utm_source=twitter_sitebuttons&amp;utm_medium=site%20buttons&amp;utm_campaign=site%20buttons)

In early January, shortly after his inauguration, Ocasio-Cortez scolded Adams [*on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/AOC/status/1478758105999679490?ref_src=twsrc%5etfw|twcamp%5etweetembed|twterm%5e1478758105999679490|twgr%5e|twcon%5es1_&amp;ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.teenvogue.com%2Fstory%2Faoc-eric-adams-low-skill-workers) for referring to some workers as “low skill.” The mayor shot back that the congresswoman and her followers were acting like the “word police.”

“I know they’re perfect, and there’s not much I can do about that,” [*the mayor said*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/10/nyregion/eric-adams-mayor-covid.html). “I can only aspire one day to be as perfect as they are.”

The friction between Adams and Ocasio-Cortez is not as conspicuous as past feuds in New York politics, such as the prolonged, internecine one between [*former Mayor Bill de Blasio and former Gov. Andrew Cuomo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/22/nyregion/cuomo-deblasio-feud-nyc.html). But it is troubling for some Democrats, who believe that party unity — or at least the appearance of it — is essential to avoid distractions and head off deep losses in this year’s midterms.

The discord [*surfaced last June*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/05/nyregion/aoc-maya-wiley-endorsement-nyc-mayor.html), when Ocasio-Cortez endorsed Maya Wiley in the Democratic mayoral primary, arguing that she was best positioned to lead “a city for and by working people.” Adams fired back, accusing Ocasio-Cortez and Wiley of wanting to “shrink the police force at a time when Black and brown babies are being shot in our streets” and hate crimes were increasing.

Policing was the central issue for Adams as a candidate, and as mayor he has faced a number of high-profile violent crimes. He called for an increase in the police budget during [*his State of the City address*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/26/nyregion/eric-adams-crime-homeless.html). He has also agreed to hire nearly 600 new correction officers.

Even before that announcement, however, Ocasio-Cortez had already rejected many of Adams’s early ideas — including his approach to policing and the [*austerity measures he announced in February*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/nyregion/budget-adams-police-nyc.html). In an [*Instagram post*](https://twitter.com/emmagf/status/1510663244368781313?ref_src=twsrc%5etfw), she noted that the mayor was “cutting virtually every city agency’s budget while raising NYPD’s,” adding, “It’s a no for me.”

Adams, who at 61 is nearly twice the congresswoman’s age, likes to communicate through street corner interviews and tabloid headlines, something he generated regularly with nights on the town, trumpeting [*his swagger*](https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-local-correspondents/eric-adams-says-he-has-swagger-what-else-does-he-have) as a selling point. His administration uses Twitter to amplify policy and city announcements, but he has made clear his disdain for the medium, as when he told a primary night crowd that “social media does not pick a candidate.”

“People on Social Security pick a candidate,” he said.

At 32, Ocasio-Cortez has millions of followers on Twitter, legions of devoted fans and a robust fund-raising operation. Dan Sena, a Democratic consultant in Washington, said she also possesses an uncanny political skill for defining her positions — and her opponents.

“She is always, always, always on message,” he said, adding: “She does a very good job of always creating a bad guy. And in this particular case, it’s the mayor.”

It’s a mostly sunny day near the mid-60s, with wind gusts. At night, it’s mostly clear with temps dropping to the high 40s.

In effect until May 26 (Solemnity of the Ascension).

Hochul tests positive

Gov. Kathy Hochul said she had tested positive for the coronavirus — the worst sort of Mother’s Day surprise for the first governor in New York history who is also a mother. Hochul wrote on Twitter that she was asymptomatic and would isolate and work remotely this week. The news forced her to call off a trip she had planned to see her week-old granddaughter in Washington, D.C.

Her exposure comes as the state copes with yet another variant that is more [*transmissible*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/08/well/covid-timeline-ba2.html?name=styln-coronavirus&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=LegacyCollection&amp;variant=show&amp;is_new=false) than previous versions of the coronavirus. She is not the only New York official to test positive — [*Mayor Eric Adams spent a week working remotely from Gracie Mansion last month*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/nyregion/eric-adams-covid-positive.html) after waking up with a raspy voice. A rapid test was negative, but his P.C.R. test came back positive.

The latest New York news

Rikers Crisis

* A 25-year-old was found hanging from a window in his cell on Rikers Island. He is [*the fourth inmate to die at the city’s prison complex this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/nyregion/fourth-inmate-dies-at-rikers.html).

1. Louis Molina, the Department of Correction commissioner, has less than two weeks to present a detailed solution for a problem no other commissioner has solved, or [*risk a federal takeover of the Rikers Island jail complex*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/07/nyregion/rikers-island-louis-molina.html).

In case you missed it …

* The National Labor Relations Board said Friday that it had [*found merit in allegations that Amazon and Starbucks had violated labor law — Amazon by requiring workers on Staten Island to attend anti-union meetings*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/06/business/economy/nlrb-amazon-starbucks.html).

1. Amazon informed more than half a dozen [*senior managers involved with its Staten Island warehouse that they were being fired*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/06/technology/amazon-fires-managers-union-staten-island.html).
2. Although for-profit theater owners and operators agreed to stop checking proof of vaccination this week, [*several nonprofit Broadway theaters continue to require it*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/06/arts/broadway-vaccine-mandate.html).

From a jazz great, fashion advice

With more than 2,200 recording sessions to his credit, Ron Carter is said to be the most-recorded jazz bassist in history. And although he made his reputation on bandstands and in recording studios, there he was one morning last week with a group of young jazz musicians in a public school in Manhattan. Our Corey Kilgannon was on hand. Here’s what he saw and heard:

When two pint-size trumpeters began trading blues licks in front of an auditorium of roughly 200 students ranging from pre-K to fourth grade, the children stopped fidgeting and became absorbed in the music, even echoing the trumpeters’ licks back to them.

Afterward, Carter emphasized to the students the most important element in becoming a jazz musician: practice.

“I’ve been playing as long as all your ages combined, it seems to me,” he said, adding that he still cannot practice enough.

Looking snazzy in a dark blazer, he added another jazz prerequisite.

“Get a great tie,” he said, “and some great socks.” He was wearing a dark blue tie with a white pattern and bright, multicolored socks.

Carter said he believed that music in schools could nurture music awareness and help the social and emotional well-being of students. That’s why he visited the Riverside School for Makers and Artists on West 61st Street, not far from his Upper West Side apartment. His visit was arranged by Counseling in Schools, a nonprofit organization that sends mental health professionals into the city’s public schools to support the emotional and social well-being of students, said its executive director, Kevin Dahill-Fuchel.

“In the aftermath of all this drama and strife,” Dahill-Fuchell said, referring to the coronavirus pandemic, which left students isolated at home using remote learning, “music and the arts in schools are something that can help bring the kids some joy and healing and bring us back together.”

With many public schools stripped of music programs, there is a greater need than ever to support it in learning spaces like the Riverside School, where some students live in lower-income neighborhoods, such as the nearby Amsterdam Houses public housing complex, Dahill-Fuchell said.

When the children’s choir belted out a spirited version of Irving Berlin’s “I Love a Piano” — “I know a fine way / to treat a Steinway” — the jazzman beamed. They also sang “Happy Birthday” to Carter, who had just turned 85.

Before leaving, Carter told the students he hoped to be back next year to make sure they had practiced — and to see whether their ties and socks were up to snuff.

What we’re reading

* In kicking off the spring auction season in New York, Christie’s event on Monday is widely viewed as a bellwether for the two weeks of sales ahead. [*Warhol’s 1964 silk-screen of Marilyn Monroe is expected to sell for $200 million*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/08/arts/design/and-warhol-200-million-marilyn-basquiat-christies-auction.html).

1. A growing cohort of young enthusiasts is helping [*to shape the future of the antiquarian book world*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/07/style/rare-used-book-collectors.html).

The Super Sings

Dear Diary:

I often play Latin music when I’m at home in my apartment in Inwood. Once, after he heard La India coming from my stereo while he was at my place fixing a light, my super, Fernando, who mostly speaks Spanish, asked whether I spoke it too.

“Solamente un poco,” I said.

He nodded.

A short time later, Fernando was back for another task. This time, my piano tuner was there and started to play “Che gelida manina” from La Bohème.

Fernando began to sing along. In Italian.

— Tom Beckett

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, Olivia Parker 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 From Left: Stefani Reynolds/The New York Times; Stephanie Keith for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Masters of the Sea***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655V-2N41-DXY4-X4Y3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 8, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 1; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 1453 words

**Byline:** By Jason Farago

**Body**

Britain's commander of the churning waves was also a painter of technology and industry. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston shows how he reshaped an art form.

BOSTON -- Driving rain, salty air; the waves are so loud you can hardly hear the wailing. The weather is dreadful even by English standards, and the harbor-dwellers have rushed down to the beach, anxious to alert a ship in distress. Their clothes are soaked, their hair is bedraggled; they gaze out on the warning flares, bright flecks bursting in air against a small patch of blue.

The ship appears on fire, at least at first. But look closer: the ship is belching fire, from the depths of its engine room and out into the English air. It's not a sailboat but a steamship, and that black fog out in the distance is an acrid tornado from the smokestack. Steam, and coal, have brought us to new shores; steam, and coal, have brought us to ruin.

J.M.W. Turner, prophet of climate change? That would be stretching it. But he was, at the very least, the 19th century's great contriver of atmospheres and accidents, of human technologies and maritime affronts -- and in churning compositions like ''Rockets and Blue Lights (Close at Hand) to Warn Steam Boats of Shoal Water'' (1840), he took the tradition of maritime painting and sailed it right into the storm clouds of the Industrial Revolution.

That's the contention of ''Turner's Modern World,'' an extensive and eruptive reassessment of the most celebrated painter of 19th-century Britain, now on view at the Museum of Fine Arts here. It's not quite a revisionist approach. This exhibition still showcases his extraordinary atmospheric effects -- a sunset in a wash of mauve oils, a squall rendered with a few strokes of a palette knife. It retains the full respiratory grandeur of his large seascapes, the nearly abstract polychromes of his late whaling pictures. Yet Turner (1775-1851) also appears here in the sharper light of contemporary history: a painter of war and independence, commerce and slavery, and the technological innovations that would split the sky in two.

''Turner's Modern World'' has been organized by Tate Britain in London, which owns the bulk of his paintings. (The artist left to the nation some 300 oils and 100 times as many sketches.) After some pandemic delays it came to the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth last winter. It arrives in Boston in a significantly reshaped form, and with a refreshed exhibition design that puts Turner's modernity in the spotlight. The initial galleries have walls painted the heavy greens and reds of a Pall Mall gentlemen's club. Turner's large military scenes hang cheek-by-jowl, as Georgian spectators would have encountered them at the Royal Academy. Moving forward, the exhibition design modernizes: the wainscoting recedes, the colored walls fade away, and in the last room we encounter Turner in the anachronistic surrounds of a contemporary white cube.

And here alone, the London pictures have been joined by a Turner too fragile and valuable to travel: the M.F.A.'s grand and gruesome ''Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On),'' depicting a slaver rocking in the sun-scorched Atlantic, as Africans in bondage slip beneath the waves. Painted in 1840 to coincide with a major antislavery conference in London, Turner's ultimate seascape imbued the sublime with the ferocity of colonialism and imperialism. ''Slave Ship'' appears here alongside other agitated scenes of shipwrecks, drownings, fires and disasters, including a fearful vision of the 1834 fire at London's Houses of Parliament, souped up to a world-ending conflagration.

Turner was born in 1775 smack in the middle of London, on Maiden Lane in Covent Garden; he was the son of a barber, and retained his ***working-class*** speech patterns and suspicion of luxury long after he was being collected by high society. At age 14 he enrolled at the Royal Academy. It was 1789; across the Channel, a revolution was getting underway. ''Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,'' Wordsworth would write of those days; ''But to be young was very heaven!''

Did Turner find it so? He was certainly no revolutionary, and his correspondence and his (rather tedious) verse offer a mixed spectacle. His subjects, from the slave trade to the war of Greek independence, suggest a man on the side of reform. But his particular political convictions aren't the principal interest here. What matters is how larger political forces -- and, even more, economic ones -- shape the life and times of an ambitious artist, who reshapes an art form in turn.

Look, in the first gallery, at two little sketchbooks from his early 20s. Instead of the streaky seas and skies familiar from the Tate permanent collection, you'll see a pencil drawing of workers in a tilt forge. Large, outlined gears and waterwheels trigger hammers that clang down on sheets of iron. A more carefully worked gouache depicts another forge, where blacksmiths are crafting anchors in a smoldering central kiln. Hot places, noisy places; places of human genius and elemental danger. We are building a new world. We may not all survive it.

A student at the Royal Academy would have learned to avoid contemporary subjects like this. To reach artistic heights, you had to look past the events of the day. But Turner kept gravitating to new iron bridges and freshly dug canals, then to steamships, and eventually to locomotives. As the Napoleonic Wars raged on, the artist filled his sketchbooks with soldiers and seamen, observed captured ships in Portsmouth, and crossed the channel to visit the battlefield of Waterloo. In this show's salon-style presentation of Turner's war pictures (which this most competitive of painters would have loved; a Royal Academy all for him!), a ripped-from-the-headlines glorification of Nelson's fatal victory at Trafalgar has been clustered with the much darker ''Field of Waterloo'' (1818), which sure doesn't look like a propaganda piece. Bodies lie tangled on the Belgian soil. Moonlight barely peeks through the gloom.

What Turner was accomplishing, first with ''The Field of Waterloo'' and later with his large, soaking pictures of whalers and wreckers, was a layering of traditional landscape and seascape with themes debated in the coffee houses. The need for reform could be seen in the sunsets, and history floated on the water -- nowhere more than in ''Slave Ship,'' his awesome indictment of the Atlantic slave trade, and the crux of this exhibition. The setting sun seems to set the ocean ablaze, while to its left, the tossing slaver appears to be swallowed up by a knifed spray of white. (The slaver has been identified as the Zong, whose crew threw 130 Africans overboard in 1781 before reaching Jamaica; the owners applied for insurance money, on the grounds that this mass murder was legally a loss of cargo.)

Only after a moment do you see the iron manacles between the waves -- a Romantic liberty Turner took. And the hands stretching from the ocean, desperate for rescue. And the flesh of the victim at lower right, mobbed by a school of fish. So beautiful and so atrocious, ''Slave Ship'' now stands as the most enduring of all abolitionist works of art, although, in its time, it was the coloring and paint handling that shocked at the Royal Academy. John Ruskin, who owned it, defended the work in ''Modern Painters'' for how it evoked the tempestuous Atlantic in its ridges and tones -- and then, in the most notorious footnote in art history, exiled to the bottom of the page a passing mention that ''the near sea is encumbered with corpses.''

That blindness to what Turner actually painted endured for long decades thereafter, though there is today the danger of making him too contemporary. (Britain's principal award for contemporary art, after all, is called the Turner Prize.) It's easy to enlist him in 21st-century engagements with race and technology and climate, especially when so many museums now treat subject matter as art's principal appeal, and color, line and shape as expendable.

Turner was something more precise than a figure ahead of his time, and more interesting than that too. He was a Romantic artificer of worlds in motion, who saw before anyone else that the economy itself had the majesty of a mountain range, that a steam engine had the power of a riptide. And all the brutality and repugnance of the slave trade could be made visible right in the sunlit water: in ''the intense and lurid splendor,'' as Ruskin had it, ''which burns like gold, and bathes like blood.''

Turner's Modern WorldThrough July 10, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Avenue of the Arts, 465 Huntington Ave., Boston; 617-267-9300; mfa.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/arts/design/turner-painter-mfa-museum-boston.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/arts/design/turner-painter-mfa-museum-boston.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART) (C1)

Above, the salon-style showing of Turner's works at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Left, ''Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On),'' from 1840. Below, ''Fall of the Rhine at Schaffhausen,'' from about 1805--06. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT COSBY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C9)

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Worrying That Failure Is An Option***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YW1-9R31-DXY4-X38C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 10, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 2

**Length:** 405 words

**Byline:** By Nikole Hannah-Jones

**Body**

I always had unwavering confidence in my mind, my work ethic, and my ambition. But having a child made that certainty slip out of my hands.

I grew up in a dysfunctional household because my father was an alcoholic, and when I was young, I would lie in my twin bed next to the window and write out the life I planned to lead when I grew up and gained control. I still have the battered, sunshine-colored notebook in which I plotted my future.

Our family was ***working class***. We had no wealth and no family connections to open doors, but the one advantage I can claim was an unwavering confidence in my ability to change my circumstance. I did not trust many people, but I trusted myself absolutely.

Even as a young child, I believed in my mind, my work ethic and my ambition. And so, my journal did not record my hopes for the future. It recorded what would be.

I have been afraid of many things in my life, but failure was not one of them. Until I had my daughter.

Because of my childhood, I have spent an inordinate amount of time thinking about all the things I would never do as a parent, all the ways I would be better. I had a determination to create the home life for my child that I wished I had growing up.

Yet before she breathed her first breath, when she was just a flutter in my stomach, I began to feel a tightness in my chest driven by a fear that I would not be up to the task. That no matter how much I loved her, I would make so many mistakes, mistakes I likely would not even know I was making, mistakes that would somehow scar my child the way that I feel scarred. The confident control I have exercised over my entire life feels so tenuous now that I am in charge of raising another human being who is witnessing me and all of my flaws while her personhood is being formed.

Even as I now have more empathy for my own parents, I am consumed by the fear that in the most important venture in my life, I will fail. So when my daughter was just a baby, I started writing a journal to her. Over pages and pages, I tell her how much I love her, how much she means to me, how she has changed my life, and own up when I make mistakes.

My hope is that one day when she is grown, this journal will allow her to extend me some grace for the failures I know I will make. It is a strange conversion. As a child, I did not find hope a useful thing. But now that I have my own, I often feel as if hope is all that I have.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/09/parenting/i-started-to-worry-about-failure.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/09/parenting/i-started-to-worry-about-failure.html)

**Load-Date:** May 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***It Contains Multitudes***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62G5-9K51-JBG3-64BP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 18, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 18; NONFICTION

**Length:** 785 words

**Byline:** By Rubén Gallo

**Body**

HORIZONTAL VERTIGOA City Called MexicoBy Juan Villoro

Mexico City, a vast megalopolis of over 20 million, founded 500 years ago and erected on what was once a lake bed, is above all a place of contradictions: It is home to some of the world's richest billionaires as well as to Indigenous migrants who live on the streets; it is one of the most progressive capitals in the Americas (same-sex marriage was legalized over a decade ago and businesses are required by law to display notices stating they do not discriminate based on race, gender or handicap) and also a place where, on average, five people are murdered every day. It boasts more museums than Paris (over 150) as well as tens of thousands of illiterate residents.

With its intensity and penchant for hyperbole, the city has also attracted the attention of writers. ''Where the Air Is Clear'' (1958), Carlos Fuentes's most ambitious novel, seeks to portray the myriad social classes, professions and places that made the capital into one of the most modern urban centers in 1950s Latin America. In the 1970s and '80s, Carlos Monsiváis explored the city's marginal areas -- from sleazy gay bars to ***working-class*** cabarets -- and narrated the rise of a civic movement in the wake of the 1985 earthquake.

Juan Villoro -- an accomplished novelist and journalist -- has followed in their footsteps. Villoro was born in 1956 and came of age in the 1970s, a dark decade marked by corruption, economic crises and state violence against students and social activists. In his 20s, he hosted a radio program devoted to rock music and published nonfiction in La Jornada, the country's most politically engaged newspaper. He attended concerts by the Rolling Stones, joined a radical leftist party and, when Mexico City became the country's 32nd state, he was invited to participate in drafting the city's constitution.

In ''Horizontal Vertigo'' Villoro recounts his remarkable engagement with Mexico City in chapters devoted to a wide array of topics: U.F.O.s (a taxi driver eloquently explains the different shapes these objects can take and details his encounters with them); the subway (opened in 1969, it transports over five million passengers per day, and functions as a full-fledged underground city); the rag-wielding franeleros who illegally rent out street parking spaces and charge a few pesos to ''watch your car''; the church of Santo Domingo, where an erudite, aging priest spent decades denouncing political violence as he quoted Giorgio Agamben and the Gospels in his sermons; the 2009 swine flu pandemic; and the 2017 earthquake, which leveled dozens of buildings and left over 300 dead.

Villoro recounts his adventures with a mix of irony and empathy, with a sense of humor and a feeling for the absurd. He is exquisitely attuned to the capital's contradictions and nuances, and he knows how to listen to its inhabitants. There are deeply moving moments in this book, such as the recollection of a social justice activist who once visited a woman in a shack: She asked him if he wanted to wash his hands or have some tea. He said he'd like both. ''But I only have one cup of water,'' the woman answered.

For those of us who have witnessed the evolution of Mexico City from what Monsiváis described as a ''postapocalyptic'' megalopolis in the 1980s to the global city of the 2020s, Villoro's book is like a time machine. In its pages, the reader revisits a place that is no longer there: an urban center where the avenues were once jammed with VW bugs; a city where the secretaries of government officials would send an email, then phone the recipient to make sure it had arrived; a place where a visit to a city office could turn into a Kafkaesque ordeal after an employee announced that the matter required summoning el encargado, the higher-up.

Despite his unwavering upbeat tone, Villoro offers some glimpses of the recent transformations that have turned the city into a much darker and less humane place as the capital ''became the hostage of drug dealers, tribes of vendors, distributors of pirated goods, the most speculative real estate interests, and an economy that privileged international franchises and augmented social inequality.''

One could add to this list the ravages produced by the sudden embrace of screens, apps and social media. In a city where every single person seems to be staring at a phone, will Villoro be the last of Mexico City's chroniclers?Rubén Gallo is the author of ''Freud's Mexico: Into the Wilds of Psychoanalysis'' and ''Proust's Latin Americans.'' He teaches literature at Princeton University.HORIZONTAL VERTIGOA City Called MexicoBy Juan VilloroTranslated by Alfred MacAdam350 pp. Pantheon. $35.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/books/review/horizontal-vertigo-mexsico-city-juan-villoro.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/06/books/review/horizontal-vertigo-mexsico-city-juan-villoro.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Chapultepec Park in Mexico City. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MEGHAN DHALIWAL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 18, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Far-Right Pundit Makes French Presidential Run Official***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:646H-YTY1-JBG3-6250-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 1, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1150 words

**Byline:** By Aurelien Breeden and Constant Méheut

**Body**

After months of speculation, Mr. Zemmour, an anti-immigration writer and right-wing television star, said he was running in the presidential elections next year to ''save'' France.

PARIS -- Éric Zemmour, a polarizing far-right writer and television star, announced on Tuesday that he was running for French president in elections next year, ending months of speculation over a bid that upended the race before he had even made it official.

Mr. Zemmour, 63, is a longtime conservative journalist who rose to prominence over the past decade, using prime-time television and best-selling books to expound on his view that France was in steep decline because of Islam, immigration and leftist identity politics, themes he returned to in his announcement.

''It is no longer time to reform France but to save it,'' Mr. Zemmour said in a video with dramatic overtones that was published on social media, conjuring images of an idealized France and then warning about outside forces that threatened to destroy it.

He has fashioned himself as a Donald J. Trump-style provocateur lobbing politically incorrect bombs at the French elite establishment -- saying, for instance, that the law should require parents to give their children ''traditional'' French names -- and rewriting some of the worst episodes from France's past. He has been charged with inciting racial or religious hatred several times over his comments, and twice convicted and fined.

Mr. Zemmour spoke over 1950s footage full of men in hats and vintage Citroën cars, contrasted with recent clips of crowded subways, crumbling churches, burning cars and violent clashes with the police.

''You feel like a foreigner in your own country,'' Mr. Zemmour said, reading from notes at a desk in front of old bookshelves in a way that seemed intent on replicating Charles de Gaulle's posture when he issued a call to arms against Nazi Germany from London in June 1940.

Mr. Zemmour said he was running ''to prevent our children and our grandchildren from experiencing barbarity, to prevent our daughters from being veiled and our sons from being subdued.''

He accused elites -- journalists, politicians, judges, European technocrats -- of failing France, which he said was represented by a long list of illustrious men and women, including Joan of Arc, Louis XIV and Napoleon.

''We will not be replaced,'' added Mr. Zemmour, who has espoused the theory of a ''great replacement'' of white people in France by Muslim immigrants -- a conspiracy theory that has been cited by extremists in several mass shootings.

The announcement, after months of barely veiled hints that Mr. Zemmour intended to run, surprised no one. It also came after the yet-to-be-declared candidate had endured a dip in the polls and a series of setbacks in recent days -- including a disastrous visit to Marseille, in southern France, that ended with him making a crude gesture at a protester. The vulgar gesture gave ammunition to critics who say Mr. Zemmour is not fit to be president.

''One may have doubts as to his ability to represent our country and serve in its highest office,'' Gabriel Attal, a French government spokesman, told Europe 1 radio on Tuesday.

Mr. Zemmour has already reshuffled the political calculus for several candidates in the presidential elections, which will be held in April next year.

French presidential elections use a two-round system, with the top two candidates in the first round advancing to a runoff. Recent polls have put Mr. Zemmour in third place, with roughly 14 to 15 percent support, behind President Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Rally party, who met in the runoff of the last presidential election in 2017.

Even so, Mr. Zemmour has drawn in some of Ms. Le Pen's supporters with his hard-line stance on immigration and identity. He has also pushed Les Républicains, France's traditional conservative party, further to the right. The party is expected to pick its own candidate this week.

Mr. Zemmour's latest book, ''France Has Not Said Its Last Word Yet,'' which he released in September to mark his unofficial entry into the presidential race, has sold more than 250,000 copies.

Some of his books have contained incendiary statements about women and minorities. They have also contained historical inaccuracies as Mr. Zemmour attempted to clear France of wrongdoing in some of the worst episodes of its past, including in World War II and Algeria's war for independence from France.

Mr. Zemmour is the son of parents from Algeria, and styles himself as a defender of France's Christian civilization against the influence of Muslim immigrants. But he himself is Jewish, and his repeated attempts to rehabilitate France's collaborationist government and its leader, Marshal Philippe Pétain, have been condemned in vigorous terms by leaders of the French Jewish community, even as some Jews have identified with his anti-Islam message.

Olivier Faure, the head of France's Socialist Party, quipped on Twitter that Mr. Zemmour had used ''De Gaulle's microphone but Pétain's speech'' for his announcement.

''Beethoven's music but the wrong notes of a fantasized past for a caricatured present,'' he added, referring to the soundtrack Mr. Zemmour used in Tuesday's video.

Mr. Zemmour has excelled as a right-wing television pundit deploying virulent nationalist, anti-immigrant rhetoric. In 2019, he joined CNews, a Fox-style news network, which provided a platform for him to express his ideas to hundreds of thousands of viewers.

Mr. Zemmour experienced a rapid rise in the polls over the past few months, fueled by feverish media coverage of his latest book tour, but he has stumbled in recent weeks.

Several supporters, including a key French financier who had lent him money, have distanced themselves, describing his campaign as disorganized and amateurish.

Mr. Zemmour is not backed by a powerfully established political force, as Mr. Trump was with the Republican Party, and it remains unclear whether he can gather the official support of 500 elected representatives -- a requirement to run for president in France.

Some recent moves have also cast doubt on Mr. Zemmour's ability to handle the challenges and pressures of the campaign trail.

He was widely criticized for making political statements to journalists in front of the Bataclan concert hall in Paris on the sixth anniversary of the terrorist attacks there, and in Marseille, he was heckled by protesters and was photographed making the crude gesture toward a woman who had done the same thing toward him.

''He has a lot of qualities as a polemicist, a lot less as a presidential candidate,'' Ms. Le Pen, the far-right leader, told Sud Radio on Tuesday, accusing Mr. Zemmour of being ''disconnected'' from the French ***working class*** and of dividing voters. ''If you want to be president, you have to unite.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france-president.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france-president.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Éric Zemmour, center, said he will run ''to prevent our children and our grandchildren from experiencing barbarity, to prevent our daughters from being veiled and our sons from being subdued.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY YOAN VALAT/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** December 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Los Angeles Police Underestimated Weight of Fireworks Before Blast That Hurt 17***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6362-DH11-JBG3-62JV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 20, 2021 Tuesday 01:04 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 874 words

**Byline:** Isabella Grullón Paz

**Highlight:** An apologetic police chief said the bomb squad had determined the explosives to weigh 16.5 pounds without using a scale. Investigators found the weight was over 42 pounds.

**Body**

An apologetic police chief said the bomb squad had determined the explosives to weigh 16.5 pounds without using a scale. Investigators found the weight was over 42 pounds.

Los Angeles police bomb technicians attempting to safely dispose of 42 pounds of illegal fireworks they seized at a home in June vastly underestimated the weight of the explosives before their armored containment vessel was breached by a powerful blast, a contrite police chief announced Monday.

The [*explosion injured 17 people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/la-fireworks-explosion.html?searchResultPosition=1), including 10 law enforcement officers, and caused extensive damage to more than 20 homes and over a dozen businesses.

[*Chief Michel Moore*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/la-fireworks-explosion.html?searchResultPosition=1) of the Los Angeles Police Department said at a news conference on Monday that instead of weighing the fireworks with a scale, the bomb squad personnel estimated their weight based on a physical inspection and arrived at 16.5 pounds — 60 percent less than the weight of the fireworks later determined during an investigation by the federal [*Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/la-fireworks-explosion.html?searchResultPosition=1).

“I want to personally express my apologies to every resident, business operator and customer that was traumatically impacted by this incident,” Chief Moore said. “I’m sorry that this occurred.”

He assured that the officers involved were acting in “good faith” and following protocol when handling the explosives.

The miscalculation is the first major revelation from a continuing investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives into the cause of the blast, which occurred after the police discovered more than 32,000 pounds of illegal fireworks in a June 30 raid at a home in South Los Angeles.

At the news conference, Chief Moore said that during the raid, officers found some leaky homemade fireworks that were deemed too unstable to transport. The officers decided to eliminate the fireworks in a chamber known as a total containment vessel, in accordance with the department’s protocol. Total containment vessels are armored vehicles designed to keep people and property safe from the blast effect of an explosion, Chief Moore said.

The police department’s bomb squad put 280 M-80s — fireworks that pack powerful explosives — and 40 soda-can-size fireworks into the vessel. They calculated the explosives to weigh 16.5 pounds without using a scale, Chief Moore said. The vessel is designed to handle, at most, 25 pounds for a single use and 15 pounds for multiple uses. The investigation by the federal explosives bureau’s National Response Team found that the actual weight of the explosives was more than 42 pounds.

“That amount in itself could have taken out the entire neighborhood,” Michael Hoffman, assistant special agent in charge of the bureau’s Los Angeles office, said during the news conference.

Agent Hoffman said his agency hypothesized that this significant underestimation, along with the failure of some components in the vessel, could have resulted in the powerful uncontrolled blast. The full findings of the team’s investigation will be released in a month or two, he estimated, pending the report’s peer review.

Chief Moore said that five members of the bomb squad had been removed as a result of the explosion while they await the full investigation.

After the blast, which left many displaced without access to their homes, the Los Angeles police came under heavy scrutiny, with many questioning whether the department could have done more to protect residents in such a densely populated area, [*according to The Los Angeles Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/la-fireworks-explosion.html?searchResultPosition=1).

Residents and activists in South Los Angeles have demanded full accountability from the Police Department for the blast and the extensive property damage. Some have accused the L.A.P.D. of showing disregard for the neighborhood by handling the fireworks in the middle of a lower-income residential area.

City Councilman Curren D. Price Jr., who represents the district where the explosion occurred, called the explosion an “act of negligence” and “one of the L.A.P.D.’s largest blunders in recent history, which has further betrayed the trust of our South L.A. community,” in a [*statement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/la-fireworks-explosion.html?searchResultPosition=1) after Monday’s news conference.

Others said the police would not have acted as they did in a wealthier neighborhood.

“We believe, as so many believe, that if this had been another neighborhood, not a ***working-class*** Black and brown neighborhood in South L.A., they would not have detonated those explosives,” Paula Minor of the Los Angeles chapter of Black Lives Matter said in a news conference[*held Tuesday*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/la-fireworks-explosion.html?searchResultPosition=1).

On July 5, [*the South Central Neighborhood Council passed a resolution*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/la-fireworks-explosion.html?searchResultPosition=1) demanding that the city financially compensate those affected by the explosion. The council called the act a “reckless decision by the L.A.P.D.” as it primarily hurt the well-being of a Black and Latino community.

“As we wait for the final report to be released, I hope L.A.P.D. is taking the actions now to address their shortcomings and are making plans to step up and support the victims of the devastation who have been traumatized and will be suffering from the effects for years to come,” Mr. Price said.

PHOTO: The remains of an armored containment vessel that the Los Angeles police used to dispose of illegal fireworks in June. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DAMIAN DOVARGANES/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** July 22, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Read These Books About the Black Experience: One Old, One New, One Coming Soon; John McWhorter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65T5-S3J1-JBG3-61G3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 28, 2022 Tuesday 15:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1908 words

**Byline:** John McWhorter

**Highlight:** ‘American Skin,’ ‘Agency’ and the Oxford Dictionary of African American English are on my mind.

**Body**

I want to explore, and recommend, three books about the Black experience that are on my radar — one of the future, one out right now and one from the past. Each enriches (or will) an understanding of our moment and our ongoing discussions about race in America.

Here and elsewhere, you may have read and heard the argument that Black English is a legitimate form of speech with its own rules of grammar and usage — and not merely, as it is sometimes thought of or described, “broken” English. And we expect that if something is a legitimate form of speech, if it is a separate dialect of English rather than a mere degradation of it, then it would have a dictionary recognized in the academy and beyond as a definitive source. Soon, Black English will. Oxford University Press has in the works a [*dictionary*](https://public.oed.com/oxford-dictionary-of-african-american-english/) of the dialect, the Oxford Dictionary of African American English, edited by Harvard University’s director of the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research, Henry Louis Gates Jr.

There have been some fine collections of Black English vocabulary in the past, written by diligent researchers taking on the task by themselves: Ones by the scholars Clarence Major, who wrote “Black Slang: A Dictionary of Afro-American Talk,” and Geneva Smitherman, who wrote “Black Talk: Words and Phrases From the Hood to the Amen Corner,” are among the most consulted. However, this new volume will be the product of an aggregation of hands, including a board of several scholars (of which I am an unpaid adviser). And it will be a historical dictionary along the lines of the Oxford English Dictionary. Entries will be chronicled with examples from texts, recordings and performances over time, illustrating the dialect’s lexicon as situated both in time and geographical space.

We will learn much: The chocolate-covered peanuts called Goobers sold at movie-theater concession stands aren’t as popular as they once were, but the word “goober” is derived from the Kongo language. When people chant “Who dat say dey gonna beat dem Saints?” at New Orleans Saints football games, they’re [*channeling*](https://books.google.com/books?id=H-ChDwAAQBAJ&amp;pg=PT102&amp;lpg=PT102&amp;dq=who+dat+saints+mcwhorter&amp;source=bl&amp;ots=YHZX-q_JDP&amp;sig=ACfU3U0PUkAMb9Zf-MnjL96qBOr-4ENwPQ&amp;hl=en&amp;sa=X&amp;ved=2ahUKEwjIo8G4mcH4AhUPd98KHQ47CsgQ6AF6BAgUEAM#v=onepage&amp;q=who%20dat%20saints%20mcwhorter&amp;f=false) a “who dat” that speakers of Gullah Creole in the Sea Islands would find familiar, one of many mementos of that language in today’s Black English. This project will also furnish an opportunity to unearth the origin of terms that have so far resisted casual analysis. “Seditty” (or “[*saditty*](https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/saditty)”), a term familiar to most Black Americans, at least of a certain age, describing a snooty person, is likely a playful distortion of the word “sedate,” just as the Philadelphia colloquialism “jawn,” an “[*all-purpose noun*](https://www.phillymag.com/news/2021/09/15/jawn-origin-philadelphia/),” is a playful take on the word “joint.” But “seditty” only dates to the 1940s; before this, an equivalent term was “dicty” — in the musical “Show Boat,” Queenie [*sings*](https://www.allmusicals.com/lyrics/showboat/queeniesballyhoo.htm), “What fo’ you gals dressed up dicty?” — the etymology of which is quite up for grabs!

Critics of my views on race sometimes point out that my formal training is in linguistics, not Black studies, sociology or a related field. Frankly, I think my views should be evaluated on whether I have done my homework, regardless of academic credentials. But there certainly were things about race scholarship that I had to learn on the fly when I first started commenting publicly about such things, years ago.

One was the sociologist’s conception of the term “[*agency*](https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/231294).” From critics, I learned early on of the position, never quite explicit but somehow nearly unquestioned among progressive thinkers, holding that it is unfair and unrealistic to expect Black Americans in the aggregate to have the agency — the initiative and power — to significantly change their lives or to overcome structural racism’s barriers. This is why so much of the response to conservative or heterodox Black thinkers is the charge that we either deny the existence of this racism or underplay it.

However, a more accurate rendition of, for example, my perspective is that while racism and obstacles certainly exist, we overplay their power and tend to assume that Black Americans have less agency than we actually do. Ian V. Rowe’s [*new book*](https://templetonpress.org/books/agency/), “Agency: The Four Point Plan (F.R.E.E.) for All Children to Overcome the Victimhood Narrative and Discover Their Pathway to Power,” is an eloquent argument to this effect.

Rowe, who is Black, has been the C.E.O. of two charter school networks and is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. He proposes that Black America could truly overcome via a framework he titles with the acronym “F.R.E.E.” — family, religion, education and entrepreneurship — stressing an overcomer’s mind-set within which we work from a mantra: “We can do hard things.”

At this point, some will think Rowe is simply one more Black conservative calling moralistically for Black people to pull up their proverbial bootstraps, but he isn’t. He is interested, yes, in utilizing agency, but in combination with societal policies enabling us to do so. For his family prescriptions, for example, Rowe stresses that we have the agency to accomplish three things that, in combination, make poverty quite unlikely: graduation from high school, getting a job and marrying before having children. To dismiss that counsel on its face as patronizing or recycled bootstrapping is to have some explaining to do to the 72 percent of parents and 60 percent of school board members who felt that schools should explicitly teach this three-part “success sequence” in [*a survey*](https://www.heritage.org/education/report/the-culture-american-k-12-education-national-survey-parents-and-school-board) conducted in 2020, commissioned by the Heritage Foundation. But coupled with that proposition, Rowe calls on the government to eliminate what is in essence a marriage penalty. In “Agency,” he writes:

Because of the many federal benefits — Medicaid (government-provided health insurance), SNAP (food stamps), and many tax credits — lower-income couples with children often face a financial penalty if they choose to marry rather than cohabitate. For ***working-class*** couples, these taxes on marriage can slash their income by as much as 30 percent.

Similarly, on education, Rowe both calls for parents to exercise agency to operate within an environment of school choice (taking advantage of charter schools especially dedicated to helping disadvantaged children learn and excel) and affirmative action in admissions — although based on socioeconomics rather than crude racial taxonomies purporting to seek diversity, which, he writes, “are twice as likely to go to nondisadvantaged Black applicants as to disadvantaged ones.”

Rowe is a product of New York City’s public schools who got his master&#39;s degree in business administration at Harvard and is now trying to give back to the Black community. Successful Black people like him are often told that presenting the strategies that got him ahead as a blueprint for other Black people to follow is highhanded and futile, pretending that all people can be superstars.

He is calling not for superstar behavior but an adjustment in normal ways of going through normal lives. He wants to make life better for Black people and sees many of his choices as ones that others would benefit from. “I wrote this book so that the rising generation — those aged 24 and under — will have a decision-making framework to help them lead productive lives of their own choosing,” he writes, “That is how we will know that our work today has ushered in a new age of agency.”

If you were to chart what was important in Black American history between the founding of the Black Panthers and the presidency of Barack Obama, what would you focus on? The elevation of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court? The O.J. Simpson trial? There is a certain resonance missing; it can look like a period of churn rather than one of clear progress. But one thing that forged a new sense of life experience for all of America happened, as such things often do, under the radar: the “browning” of American culture that accelerated in the 1980s.

This was masterfully covered in a book now 20 years old by the journalist Leon Wynter, “American Skin: Pop Culture, Big Business and the End of White America.” Appearing in the summer of 2002, the book and its subject matter got somewhat lost amid the discussion of the aftermath of 9/11 (and Wynter died at 57 in 2011).

Wynter chronicled different ways that the culture was browning, noting how refreshingly unremarkable it was that in the 1990s Britney Spears was singing and dancing in styles originated by Black Americans, and Brandy Norwood was cast as the lead in a network TV reboot of Rodgers and Hammerstein’s “Cinderella.” He wrote:

It’s taken a long time, but American identity has finally begun to reach the truth of its composition. The artificial walls between being American and being like an African or Hispanic or Asian American are coming down faster than anyone imagined even ten years ago. Today, we wouldn’t think of trying to describe “American” by first excluding what is “nonwhite.” The speech impediment that stops a phrase like “as American as Ray Charles” from tripping off the tongue has been almost entirely lifted.

And I think what I [*wrote*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB1028854738618491680) about “American Skin” for The Wall Street Journal two decades ago holds up:

Wynter pegs the beginning of transracial America to the [1979] commercial where football star “Mean” Joe Greene gives an admiring white boy his jersey in return for a cold Coke. The notion of a white boy adoring a Black athlete simply for his prowess on the field was portentous. The watershed moment came four years later: Vanessa Williams broke the color barrier in the Miss America pageant, Eddie Murphy’s sassy “Beverly Hills Cop” was just shy of the top-grossing movie of the year, and “The Cosby Show” became the most popular show on television shortly after its debut. All this would have sounded like science fiction just 20 years before.

The browning has continued apace since the early aughts. In 2002, the year Wynter’s book came out, the actress Regina King was plunked into an ill-fated and short-lived sitcom called “Leap of Faith,” as the lone Black friend among an otherwise white group of friends. But from 2009-13, she starred in the fine cop drama “Southland,” and in 2019 she starred in the acclaimed series “Watchmen,” for which she won an Emmy. No one today is surprised that King, who as a teenager began her career co-starring on the long-running Black sitcom “227,” is now a marquee Hollywood name, or that “Watchmen” is not processed as a Black show.

Wynter, no Pollyanna, noted, “I have never claimed that transracial pop culture represents a trend toward political racial equality.” But what he wrote of mattered in terms of what America has come to be, and it still does. If this cultural browning hadn’t happened, many would call it evidence of lingering segregation and racism, and they would be correct. If culture matters — and it does — the browning has been good news, and a key development in both Black American history and American history overall.

I wish “American Skin” had come out just a few years later. I suspect it would have been more widely read and discussed, and perhaps had more influence on how we see progress on race now.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:McWhorter-newsletter@nytimes.com).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Delcan and Co. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 28, 2022

**End of Document**



[***J.M.W. Turner: The Romantic Turns Reformist; Critic’s Pick***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655N-H051-DXY4-X3S7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 7, 2022 Thursday 22:29 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1503 words

**Byline:** Jason Farago

**Highlight:** Britain’s commander of the churning waves was also a painter of technology and industry. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston shows how he reshaped an art form.

**Body**

Britain’s commander of the churning waves was also a painter of technology and industry. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston shows how he reshaped an art form.

BOSTON — Driving rain, salty air; the waves are so loud you can hardly hear the wailing. The weather is dreadful even by English standards, and the harbor-dwellers have rushed down to the beach, anxious to alert a ship in distress. Their clothes are soaked, their hair is bedraggled; they gaze out on the warning flares, bright flecks bursting in air against a small patch of blue.

The ship appears on fire, at least at first. But look closer: the ship is belching fire, from the depths of its engine room and out into the English air. It’s not a sailboat but a steamship, and that black fog out in the distance is an acrid tornado from the smokestack. Steam, and coal, have brought us to new shores; steam, and coal, have brought us to ruin.

J.M.W. Turner, prophet of climate change? That would be stretching it. But he was, at the very least, the 19th century’s great contriver of atmospheres and accidents, of human technologies and maritime affronts — and in churning compositions like “[*Rockets and Blue Lights (Close at Hand) to Warn Steam Boats of Shoal Water*](https://www.clarkart.edu/artpiece/detail/rockets-and-blue-lights-(close-at-hand)-to-warn-st)” (1840), he took the tradition of maritime painting and sailed it right into the storm clouds of the Industrial Revolution.

That’s the contention of [*“Turner’s Modern World,”*](https://www.mfa.org/exhibition/turners-modern-world) an extensive and eruptive reassessment of the most celebrated painter of 19th-century Britain, now on view at the Museum of Fine Arts here. It’s not quite a revisionist approach. This exhibition still showcases his extraordinary atmospheric effects — a sunset in a wash of mauve oils, a squall rendered with a few strokes of a palette knife. It retains the full respiratory grandeur of his large seascapes, the nearly abstract polychromes of his late whaling pictures. Yet Turner (1775-1851) also appears here in the sharper light of contemporary history: a painter of war and independence, commerce and slavery, and the technological innovations that would split the sky in two.

“Turner’s Modern World” has been organized by Tate Britain in London, which owns the bulk of his paintings. (The artist left to the nation some 300 oils and 100 times as many sketches.) After some pandemic delays it came to the Kimbell Art Museum in Fort Worth last winter. It arrives in Boston in a significantly reshaped form, and with a refreshed exhibition design that puts Turner’s modernity in the spotlight. The initial galleries have walls painted the heavy greens and reds of a Pall Mall gentlemen’s club. Turner’s large military scenes hang cheek-by-jowl, as Georgian spectators would have encountered them at the Royal Academy. Moving forward, the exhibition design modernizes: the wainscoting recedes, the colored walls fade away, and in the last room we encounter Turner in the anachronistic surrounds of a contemporary white cube.

And here alone, the London pictures have been joined by a Turner too fragile and valuable to travel: the M.F.A.’s grand and gruesome “[*Slave Ship*](https://collections.mfa.org/objects/31102) (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On),” depicting a slaver rocking in the sun-scorched Atlantic, as Africans in bondage slip beneath the waves. Painted in 1840 to coincide with a major antislavery conference in London, Turner’s ultimate seascape imbued the sublime with the ferocity of colonialism and imperialism. “Slave Ship” appears here alongside other agitated scenes of shipwrecks, drownings, fires and disasters, including a fearful vision of [*the 1834 fire at London’s Houses of Parliament*](https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1942.647), souped up to a world-ending conflagration.

Turner was born in 1775 smack in the middle of London, on Maiden Lane in Covent Garden; he was the son of a barber, and retained his ***working-class*** speech patterns and suspicion of luxury long after he was being collected by high society. At age 14 he enrolled at the Royal Academy. It was 1789; across the Channel, a revolution was getting underway. “Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,” Wordsworth would write of those days; “But to be young was very heaven!”

Did Turner find it so? He was certainly no revolutionary, and his correspondence and his (rather tedious) verse offer a mixed spectacle. His subjects, from the slave trade to the war of Greek independence, suggest a man on the side of reform. But his particular political convictions aren’t the principal interest here. What matters is how larger political forces — and, even more, economic ones — shape the life and times of an ambitious artist, who reshapes an art form in turn.

Look, in the first gallery, at two little sketchbooks from his early 20s. Instead of the streaky seas and skies familiar from the Tate permanent collection, you’ll see a pencil [*drawing of workers in a tilt forge*](https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-the-interior-of-a-tilt-forge-d01735). Large, outlined gears and waterwheels trigger hammers that clang down on sheets of iron. A more carefully worked gouache depicts another forge, where blacksmiths are crafting anchors in a smoldering central kiln. Hot places, noisy places; places of human genius and elemental danger. We are building a new world. We may not all survive it.

A student at the Royal Academy would have learned to avoid contemporary subjects like this. To reach artistic heights, you had to look past the events of the day. But Turner kept gravitating to new iron bridges and freshly dug canals, then to steamships, and eventually to locomotives. As the Napoleonic Wars raged on, the artist filled his sketchbooks with soldiers and seamen, observed captured ships in Portsmouth, and crossed the channel to visit the battlefield of Waterloo. In this show’s salon-style presentation of Turner’s war pictures (which this most competitive of painters would have loved; a Royal Academy all for him!), a ripped-from-the-headlines glorification of Nelson’s fatal victory at Trafalgar has been clustered with the much darker “[*Field of Waterloo*](https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-the-field-of-waterloo-n00500)” (1818), which sure doesn’t look like a propaganda piece. Bodies lie tangled on the Belgian soil. Moonlight barely peeks through the gloom.

What Turner was accomplishing, first with “The Field of Waterloo” and later with his large, soaking pictures of whalers and wreckers, was a layering of traditional landscape and seascape with themes debated in the coffee houses. The need for reform could be seen in the sunsets, and history floated on the water — nowhere more than in “Slave Ship,” his awesome indictment of the Atlantic slave trade, and the crux of this exhibition. The setting sun seems to set the ocean ablaze, while to its left, the tossing slaver appears to be swallowed up by a knifed spray of white. (The slaver has been identified as the Zong, whose crew threw 130 Africans overboard in 1781 before reaching Jamaica; the owners applied for insurance money, on the grounds that this mass murder was legally a loss of cargo.)

Only after a moment do you see the iron manacles between the waves — a Romantic liberty Turner took. And the hands stretching from the ocean, desperate for rescue. And the flesh of the victim at lower right, mobbed by a school of fish. So beautiful and so atrocious, “Slave Ship” now stands as the most enduring of all abolitionist works of art, although, in its time, it was the coloring and paint handling that shocked at the Royal Academy. John Ruskin, who owned it, defended the work in “Modern Painters” for how it evoked the tempestuous Atlantic in its ridges and tones — and then, in the most notorious footnote in art history, exiled to the bottom of the page a passing mention that “the near sea is encumbered with corpses.”

That blindness to what Turner actually painted endured for long decades thereafter, though there is today the danger of making him too contemporary. (Britain’s principal award for contemporary art, after all, is called the Turner Prize.) It’s easy to enlist him in 21st-century engagements with race and technology and climate, especially when so many museums now treat subject matter as art’s principal appeal, and color, line and shape as expendable.

Turner was something more precise than a figure ahead of his time, and more interesting than that too. He was a Romantic artificer of worlds in motion, who saw before anyone else that the economy itself had the majesty of a mountain range, that a steam engine had the power of a riptide. And all the brutality and repugnance of the slave trade could be made visible right in the sunlit water: in “the intense and lurid splendor,” as Ruskin had it, “which burns like gold, and bathes like blood.”

Turner’s Modern World

Through July 10, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Avenue of the Arts, 465 Huntington Ave., Boston; 617-267-9300; mfa.org.

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART) (C1); Above, the salon-style showing of Turner’s works at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Left, “Slave Ship (Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On),” from 1840. Below, “Fall of the Rhine at Schaffhausen,” from about 1805–06. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MATT COSBY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C9)

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Éric Zemmour, Far-Right Pundit, Makes French Presidential Run Official***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:646B-M001-JBG3-61K8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 30, 2021 Tuesday 23:52 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1177 words

**Byline:** Aurelien Breeden and Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** After months of speculation, Mr. Zemmour, an anti-immigration writer and right-wing television star, said he was running in the presidential elections next year to “save” France.

**Body**

After months of speculation, Mr. Zemmour, an anti-immigration writer and right-wing television star, said he was running in the presidential elections next year to “save” France.

PARIS — Éric Zemmour, [*a polarizing far-right writer and television star*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/17/world/europe/zemmour-france-presidency-trump.html?searchResultPosition=4), announced on Tuesday that he was running for French president in elections next year, ending months of speculation over [*a bid that upended the race*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/12/world/europe/eric-zemmour-macron-france-election.html?searchResultPosition=3) before he had even made it official.

Mr. Zemmour, 63, is a longtime conservative journalist who [*rose to prominence over the past decade*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/06/magazine/eric-zemmour-france-far-right.html), using prime-time television and best-selling books to expound on his view that France was in steep decline because of Islam, immigration and leftist identity politics, themes he returned to in his announcement.

“It is no longer time to reform France but to save it,” Mr. Zemmour [*said in a video*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k8IGBDK1BH8) with dramatic overtones that was published on social media, conjuring images of an idealized France and then warning about outside forces that threatened to destroy it.

He has fashioned himself as a Donald J. Trump-style provocateur lobbing politically incorrect bombs at the French elite establishment — saying, for instance, that the law should require parents to give their children “traditional” French names — and rewriting some of the worst episodes from France’s past. He has been charged with inciting racial or religious hatred several times over his comments, and twice convicted and fined.

Mr. Zemmour spoke over 1950s footage full of men in hats and vintage Citroën cars, contrasted with recent clips of crowded subways, crumbling churches, burning cars and violent clashes with the police.

“You feel like a foreigner in your own country,” Mr. Zemmour said, reading from notes at a desk in front of old bookshelves in a way that seemed intent on replicating Charles de Gaulle’s posture when [*he issued a call to arms*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ung6UiY3YY4) against Nazi Germany from London in June 1940.

Mr. Zemmour said he was running “to prevent our children and our grandchildren from experiencing barbarity, to prevent our daughters from being veiled and our sons from being subdued.”

He accused elites — journalists, politicians, judges, European technocrats — of failing France, which he said was represented by a long list of illustrious men and women, including Joan of Arc, Louis XIV and Napoleon.

“We will not be replaced,” added Mr. Zemmour, who has espoused the theory of a “[*great replacement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/20/world/europe/renaud-camus-great-replacement.html)” of white people in France by Muslim immigrants — a conspiracy theory that has been [*cited by extremists*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/18/technology/replacement-theory.html) in several mass shootings.

The announcement, after months of barely veiled hints that Mr. Zemmour intended to run, surprised no one. It also came after the yet-to-be-declared candidate had endured a [*dip in the polls*](https://www.ifop.com/publication/les-intentions-de-vote-a-lelection-presidentielle-dans-la-perspective-de-la-designation-du-candidat-les-republicains/) and a series of setbacks in recent days — including a disastrous visit to Marseille, in southern France, that ended with him making a crude gesture at a protester. The vulgar gesture gave ammunition to critics who say Mr. Zemmour is not fit to be president.

“One may have doubts as to his ability to represent our country and serve in its highest office,” Gabriel Attal, a French government spokesman, [*told Europe 1 radio*](https://www.europe1.fr/politique/zemmour-cest-un-trump-commande-sur-wish-lance-gabriel-attal-4079795) on Tuesday.

Mr. Zemmour has already reshuffled the political calculus for several candidates in the presidential elections, which will be held in April next year.

French presidential elections use a two-round system, with the top two candidates in the first round advancing to a runoff. Recent polls have put Mr. Zemmour in third place, with roughly 14 to 15 percent support, behind President Emmanuel Macron and [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/16/world/europe/france-le-pen-election.html), the leader of the far-right National Rally party, who met in the runoff of the last presidential election in 2017.

Even so, Mr. Zemmour has drawn in some of Ms. Le Pen’s supporters with his hard-line stance on immigration and identity. He has also pushed Les Républicains, France’s traditional conservative party, further to the right. The party is expected to pick its own candidate this week.

Mr. Zemmour’s latest book, “France Has Not Said Its Last Word Yet,” which he released in September to mark his unofficial entry into the presidential race, has sold more than 250,000 copies.

Some of his books have contained incendiary statements about women and minorities. They have also contained historical inaccuracies as Mr. Zemmour attempted to clear France of wrongdoing in some of the worst episodes of its past, including in World War II and Algeria’s war for independence from France.

Mr. Zemmour is the son of parents from Algeria, and styles himself as a defender of France’s Christian civilization against the influence of Muslim immigrants. But he himself is Jewish, and his repeated attempts to rehabilitate France’s collaborationist government and its leader, Marshal Philippe Pétain, have been [*condemned in vigorous terms by leaders of the French Jewish community*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/25/world/europe/eric-zemmour-france-jewish-bernard-henri-levy.html?searchResultPosition=2), even as some Jews have identified with his anti-Islam message.

Olivier Faure, the head of France’s Socialist Party, [*quipped on Twitter*](https://twitter.com/faureolivier/status/1465662873858883585) that Mr. Zemmour had used “De Gaulle’s microphone but Pétain’s speech” for his announcement.

“Beethoven’s music but the wrong notes of a fantasized past for a caricatured present,” he added, referring to the soundtrack Mr. Zemmour used in Tuesday’s video.

Mr. Zemmour has excelled as a right-wing television pundit deploying virulent nationalist, anti-immigrant rhetoric. In 2019, he joined CNews, [*a Fox-style news network*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/14/world/europe/france-cnews-fox-far-right.html?searchResultPosition=3), which provided a platform for him to express his ideas to hundreds of thousands of viewers.

Mr. Zemmour experienced a rapid rise in the polls over the past few months, fueled by feverish media coverage of his latest book tour, but he has stumbled in recent weeks.

Several supporters, including [*a key French financier*](https://www.liberation.fr/politique/charles-gave-le-financier-dextreme-droite-qui-roule-pour-zemmour-20210905_MMNQJHIB6ZE5NM6AJDBSPCVBMA/) who had lent him money, have distanced themselves, describing his campaign as disorganized and amateurish.

Mr. Zemmour is not backed by a powerfully established political force, as Mr. Trump was with the Republican Party, and it remains unclear whether he can gather the official support of 500 elected representatives — [*a requirement to run for president in France*](https://www.elysee.fr/en/french-presidency/the-president-four-questions-answered).

Some recent moves have also cast doubt on Mr. Zemmour’s ability to handle the challenges and pressures of the campaign trail.

He was widely criticized for making political statements to journalists in front of the Bataclan concert hall in Paris on [*the sixth anniversary of the terrorist attacks there*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/13/world/europe/france-2015-attacks-trial-victims.html?searchResultPosition=2), and in Marseille, he was heckled by protesters and [*was photographed making the crude gesture toward a woman*](https://twitter.com/PaulLarrouturou/status/1464590241386438662) who had done the same thing toward him.

“He has a lot of qualities as a polemicist, a lot less as a presidential candidate,” Ms. Le Pen, the far-right leader, [*told Sud Radio on Tuesday*](https://www.sudradio.fr/politique/zemmour-est-deconnecte-estime-marine-le-pen), accusing Mr. Zemmour of being “disconnected” from the French ***working class*** and of dividing voters. “If you want to be president, you have to unite.”

PHOTO: Éric Zemmour, center, said he will run “to prevent our children and our grandchildren from experiencing barbarity, to prevent our daughters from being veiled and our sons from being subdued.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY YOAN VALAT/EPA, VIA SHUTTERSTOCK)

**Load-Date:** December 1, 2021

**End of Document**



[***How the English Language Conquered the World***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64JV-C841-JBG3-60HV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 18, 2022 Tuesday 17:55 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1464 words

**Byline:** Amy Chua

**Highlight:** Rosemary Salomone’s “The Rise of English” looks at the economic, social and cultural impact of English around the world.

**Body**

THE RISE OF ENGLISH

Global Politics and the Power of Language

By Rosemary Salomone

“Every time the question of language surfaces,” the Italian Marxist philosopher [*Antonio Gramsci*](https://www.britannica.com/biography/Antonio-Gramsci) wrote, “in one way or another a series of other problems are coming to the fore,” like “the enlargement of the governing class,” the “relationships between the governing groups and the national–popular mass” and the fight over “cultural hegemony.” Vindicating Gramsci, [*Rosemary Salomone’s*](https://www.stjohns.edu/academics/faculty/rosemary-c-salomone) “The Rise of English” explores the language wars being fought all over the world, revealing the political, economic and cultural stakes behind these wars, and showing that so far English is winning. It is a panoramic, endlessly fascinating and eye-opening book, with an arresting fact on nearly every page.

English is the world’s most widely spoken language, with some 1.5 billion speakers even though it’s native for fewer than 400 million. English accounts for 60 percent of world internet content and is the lingua franca of pop culture and the global economy. All 100 of the world’s most influential science journals publish in English. “Across Europe, close to 100 percent of students study English at some point in their education.”

Even in France, where countering the hegemony of English is an official obsession, English is winning. French bureaucrats constantly try to ban Anglicisms “such as gamer, dark web and fake news,” Salomone writes, but their edicts are “quietly ignored.” Although a French statute called [*the Toubon Law*](https://www.technologyslegaledge.com/2015/02/toubon-law-20-years-on-the-cyber-economy-and-frances-law-on-the-mandatory-use-of-the-french-language/) “requires radio stations to play 35 percent French songs,” “the remaining 65 percent is flooded with American music.” Many young French artists sing in English. By law, French schoolchildren must study a foreign language, and while eight languages are available, 90 percent choose English.

Salomone, the Kenneth Wang professor of law at St. John’s University School of Law, tends to glide over why English won, simply stating that English is the language of neoliberalism and globalization, which seems to beg the question. But she is meticulous and nuanced in chronicling the battles being fought over language policy in countries ranging from Italy to Congo, and analyzing the unexpected winners and losers.

Exactly whom English benefits is complicated. Obviously it benefits native Anglophones. Americans, with what Salomone calls their “smug monolingualism,” are often blissfully unaware of the advantage they have because of the worldwide dominance of their native tongue. English also benefits globally connected market-dominant minorities in non-Western countries, like English-speaking whites in South Africa or the Anglophone Tutsi elite in Rwanda. In former French colonies like Algeria and Morocco, shifting from French to English is seen not just as the key to modernization, but as a form of resistance against their colonial past.

In India, the role of English is spectacularly complex. The ruling Hindu nationalist Indian People’s Party prefers to depict English as the colonizers’ language, impeding the vision of an India unified by Hindu culture and Hindi. By contrast, for speakers of non-Hindi languages and members of lower castes, English is often seen as a shield against majority domination. Some reformers see English as an “egalitarian language” in contrast to Indian languages, which carry “the legacy of caste.” English is also a symbol of social status. As a character in a recent Bollywood hit says: “English isn’t just a language in this country. It’s a class.” Meanwhile, Indian tiger parents, “from the wealthiest to the poorest,” press for their children to be taught in English, seeing it as the ticket to upward mobility.

Salomone’s South Africa chapter is among the most interesting in the book. Along with Afrikaans, English is one of South Africa’s 11 official languages, and even though only 9.6 percent of the population speak English as their first language, it “dominates every sector,” including government, the internet, business, broadcasting, the press, street signs and popular music. But English is not only the language of South Africa’s commercial and political elite. It was also the language of Black resistance to the Afrikaner-dominated apartheid regime, giving it enormous symbolic importance. Thus, recent years have seen poor and ***working-class*** Black activists pushing for English-only instruction in universities, even though many of them are not proficient in the language. Opponents of English, however, argue that shifting away from Afrikaans instruction disproportionately hurts the poor of all races, including lower-income Blacks, whites and mixed-race “colored” South Africans. Meanwhile, younger “colored activists are challenging the English-Afrikaans binary and exploring alternate forms of expression, like AfriKaaps,” a form of Afrikaans promoted by hip-hop artists. For now, though, “the constitutional commitment to language equality in South Africa is aspirational at best,” and “English reigns supreme for its economic power.”

Learning English pays, with “positive labor market returns across the globe.” Throughout academia today, even in Europe and Asia, “the rule no longer is ‘Publish or perish’ but rather ‘Publish in English … or perish.’” In the Middle East, “employees who were more proficient in English earned salaries from 5 percent (Tunisia) to a stunning 200 percent (Iraq) more than their non-English-speaking counterparts.” In Argentina, 90 percent of employers “believed that English was an indispensable skill for managers and directors.” In every country she surveys, higher income is correlated with English proficiency.

Salomone concludes with a brief discussion of American monolingualism, describing the waves of political angst over threats to English as the national language, while advocating for more multilingualism in Anglophone countries. Beyond the economic benefits of speaking multiple languages in a globalized world, Salomone cites studies that show learning new languages improves overall cognitive function. In addition, she argues, “observing life through a wide linguistic and cultural lens leads to greater creativity and innovation.”

“The Rise of English” has its weaknesses. Most important, the book lacks any clear thesis beyond suggesting “language is political; it’s complicated.” In addition, the book doesn’t tie together or reflect on the divergence of its case studies; I frequently found myself wondering why the experiences of (say) France or Italy or Denmark were different, and what we should take from that fact.

Finally, the book offers no clear evaluative framework. Salomone focuses primarily on straightforward economic factors (which often boil down to the same thing: access to global markets), but there is a smattering of underdeveloped discussion of other, more elusive themes too, like race, equity, colonialism and imperialism. This hodgepodge of incommensurables may trace back to the book’s origins. In her preface, Salomone writes, “My initial plan was to write a book on the value of language in the global economy.” But “the deeper I dug … the more I viewed the issues through a wider global lens and the clearer the connections to educational equity, identity and democratic participation appeared.” Unfortunately, she never quite gets a handle on these deeper issues.

Will Mandarin, with its 1.11 billion speakers, eventually replace English as the world’s lingua franca? Will Google or Microsoft Translate moot the issue? Salomone’s painstakingly thorough book addresses these questions too (concluding probably not).

The justifications for English — or any language — as a global lingua franca are based primarily in economic efficiency. By contrast, the reasons to protect local languages mostly sound in different registers — the importance of cultural heritage; the geopolitics of resistance to great powers; the value of Indigenous art; the beauty of idiosyncratic words in other languages that describe all the different types of snow or the different flavors of melancholia. As Gramsci reminded us, the question of who speaks what language invariably puts all this on the table.

Amy Chua is the John M. Duff Jr. professor of law at Yale Law School and the author of “World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability” and “Political Tribes: Group Instinct and the Fate of Nations.” THE RISE OF ENGLISH Global Politics and the Power of Language By Rosemary Salomone 488 pp. Oxford University Press. $35.

PHOTO: An English-language class in South Carolina, 2015. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MIKE BELLEME FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Related Articles**

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**Load-Date:** February 7, 2022

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[***Where Is the Outcry for Us?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6256-PH11-JBG3-6498-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 7, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 2725 words

**Byline:** By Jay Caspian Kang

**Body**

In the aftermath of the 1992 Los Angeles riots, a dedicated group of community organizers, activists and academics banded together to address what the press had called the ''Black-Korean conflict.'' Their work, which included a march through Koreatown demanding peace and the publication of several studies, aimed to tell a story of mutual misunderstanding and media distortion.

In ''Blue Dreams,'' the first in-depth post-1992 study of the Black-Korean conflict, John Lie, a sociologist, and Nancy Abelmann, an anthropologist, wrote that while the fissures between the two communities had a long history, ''the situation is not simple; the responses are not singular.'' For example, they noted, ''There are Korean-American merchants who work hard to better community life by holding neighborhood picnics, sponsoring sports teams and offering scholarships.'' By casting out a constellation of exceptions, the authors, who certainly were not alone in this type of work, attempted to show that underneath all the media hype, real people were still sharing real community.

One can certainly understand the desire to reduce tensions and provide some path toward mutual understanding, but many of these calls for unity, especially those expressed in the endlessly nuanced, overly caveated language of that era's academy, read in hindsight like desperate attempts to paper over the immensity of the divide.

The commonly observed reality was much more straightforward. It took the form of Latasha Harlins, the 15-year-old girl who, a year before the Rodney King verdict, was shot in the back of the head by a Korean store owner in an argument over a bottle of orange juice; the more than 2,000 Korean stores that were looted or burned to the ground during the riots that followed the verdict; the Korean men who carried rifles onto the roofs of their businesses in Koreatown and shot at looters who came near. And anyone who thought that the national news media had invented a race war out of thin air needed only to listen to Ice Cube's 1991 song ''Black Korea,'' which warned:

So don't follow me up and down your marketOr your little chop suey ass'll be a targetOf a nationwide boycottJuice with the people, that's what the boy gotSo pay respect to the black fistOr we'll burn your store right down to a crispAnd then we'll see yaCause you can't turn the ghetto into Black Korea

Over the past month, as reports of attacks on Asian-Americans, particularly Asian-American elders, have circulated, a new generation of scholars, writers and celebrities have tried to figure out not just what to do, but what exactly is even happening, and how to discuss it.

The public conversations, which have focused on rising xenophobia and what it means for a largely professional class of Asian-Americans, reflect, in many ways, the legacy of the scholarship following the 1992 riots. One can feel the understandable desire to reroute the conversation to safer and more familiar conclusions. The conversations also reflect a disconnect between the people on all sides who experience the violence -- who are often ***working class*** -- and the commentariat.

What's different is the lack of clarity in the story. It's still unclear what, exactly, is happening and even less clear why. This time, there is no easy line to draw from the history of a Korean merchant class setting up in Black neighborhoods to a girl lying dead on the floor of a convenience store; no buildings are being torched in retaliation.

What exists, instead, are videos that show Asians being attacked in cities across the country. Viral outrage usually requires sustained propulsion: One video usually isn't enough because it can be written off as an isolated incident, but two videos released just days apart, both showing horrifying acts of violence, can create a narrative.

Two of the most widely shared of these involved elderly men in the Bay Area who were shoved to the ground by Black assailants. One of the victims, an 84-year old Thai man named Vicha Ratanapakdee, died from his injuries.

It is difficult to put these videos into a context that makes sense of them, leaving us with several unsatisfying interpretations. And not even the videos themselves are reliable -- images of what was described as an attack on a second elderly Asian man, released shortly after the shoving of Mr. Vicha, prompted another round of outrage, including a $25,000 reward from the actors Daniel Dae Kim and Daniel Wu for information that would lead to the capture of the assailant. It turned out that the victim, a 91-year-old man named Gilbert Diaz walking in Oakland's Chinatown, is Latino.

There are claims of a huge national spike in anti-Asian hate crimes, but they largely rely on self-reported data from organizations like Stop AAPI Hate that popped up after the start of the pandemic. These resources are valuable, but they also use as their comparison point spotty and famously unreliable official hate crime statistics from law enforcement. If we cannot really tell how many hate crimes took place before, can we really argue that there has been a surge?

There have also been reports that suggest that these attacks be placed within the context of rising crime nationwide, especially in large cities. What initially appears to be a crime wave targeting Asians might just be a few data points in a more raceless story.

There have also been condemnations of Donald Trump and how his repeated use of the phrase ''China virus'' to describe the coronavirus and his invocation of white supremacy might be responsible. But how does that explain the attacks by Black people? Were they also acting as Mr. Trump's white supremacist henchmen? Do we really believe that there is some coordinated plan by Black people to brutalize Asian-Americans?

And there are writers who argue that Asian-Americans fall outside the accepted discourse about race in this country -- that there's just no available language to discuss bad things that might happen to them.

This last point is only partly true. There are plenty of words to describe discrimination at the hands of white people: white supremacy, microaggressions, the bamboo ceiling, Orientalism. What doesn't exist now, or for that matter, didn't exist in 1992, is a language to discuss what happens when the attackers caught on video happen to be Black.

And so, we are left with the videos, which transcend language and cultural barriers and exist in a space outside mediation and intervention. They have been viewed thousands, or even millions, of times by a people who are not really a people at all. There is no shared history between, say, Thai immigrants who saw images of one of their own attacked in San Francisco, and the Chinese-American population of Oakland alarmed by the assault in Chinatown.

Asian-American identity is fractured and often incoherent because it assumes kinship between people who do not speak the same language, and, in many cases, dislike one another. Solidarity between these groups is rare -- the burning of Korean businesses during the 1992 Los Angeles riots, for example, did not produce a mass response from Chinese- or Japanese-Americans. But because the recent attacks seem aimed at anyone who looks Asian, they have translated across the language, country-of-origin, and perhaps most important, class lines that usually separate one group of Asians from another.

For better or worse, a collective identity can emerge from these moments. Amid the outcry, a new form of Asian-Americanness has begun to stand up, unsteadily, on its legs, still uncertain of where it will go. In private conversations, the foreign language press, and messaging apps like WeChat and KakaoTalk catering to the Asian diaspora, a central question is being asked: Why does nobody care when our people get attacked and killed in the streets? Where is the outcry for us? Do our lives not matter?

This is not to say that all Asian-Americans believe that these attacks are racially motivated, nor does it mean that some silent majority now believes that Black people are waging a race war against them. But the answers to the question ''Why does nobody care?'' has unearthed a series of contradictions that always lurked right beneath the surface, unmentioned in polite company: We are not white, but do we count as ''people of color''? (Not according to the newer literature around school equity, which increasingly doesn't include Asians when discussing diversity.) When people say ''Black and brown folk'' do they also mean yellow? (Probably not.)

These questions are not new, but the attacks have placed them in a discomforting, sometimes maddening, context and heightened their urgency. The videos of the two assaults in the Bay Area, for example, coincided with national scrutiny over the place of high-achieving Asian students in public schools.

The San Francisco Board of Education recently voted to end merit-based admissions to Lowell, the city's premier public high school. The ostensible reason for the change is to address equity concerns within the school system and to make Lowell more representative of the city at large. Like most of the public schools with merit-based admissions that have come under fire over the past few years, Lowell is predominantly Asian, with many students coming from Chinese ***working-class*** families.

For some Asian-American families in San Francisco, the change amounted to discrimination, not from right-wing politicians or white supremacists, but from the liberals who were supposed to be on their side. This change, juxtaposed with the recent attacks, expose, in microcosm, the deep, discomforting tension that sits at the heart of progressive politics around race: Why would we give up our spots at selective schools to benefit the same people who attack us in the streets? And more broadly: If we are the natural enemy of equity and racial progress, then why should we support it? Is the pursuit of a more equitable America a zero-sum game?

The relative truth of this tension can be excavated, debated and examined. The usual explanations, invoking the history of this country, the model minority myth, and the need for solidarity against white supremacy, can be forcefully stated. All these are true and necessary, but they do not tell us why nobody seems to care when Asian people get attacked.

In the fall of 2018, I spent a few days with Yukong Zhao, a Chinese immigrant businessman who had worked on several Asian-American activist campaigns, whether protesting Jimmy Kimmel's show or supporting Asian anti-discrimination initiatives against prestigious universities.

At the time, it seemed that Mr. Zhao was part of an ascendant Asian-American conservative movement whose main appeal came from upending the carefully constructed, nuanced narrative about the place of Asians in the American racial hierarchy. Mr. Zhao, who voted for Donald Trump and made a losing congressional bid as a Republican in 2020, has fashioned himself into an evangelist of pure meritocracy and self-reliance. He believes that Asian-Americans should be politically active like right-wing Cuban-Americans in Florida.

Instead of the capitulations and endless contextualizing offered up by progressive, second-generation Asian-Americans, he and his fellow activists simply asked: What about us? Why does it not count when we're discriminated against? Toward the end of our time together in his home in Orlando, Fla., Mr. Zhao told me he wished Asian-Americans could unite to fight for their own and persuade Americans to protect them in the same way the Black community does.

I disagree with Mr. Zhao on almost every possible substantive point. I do not think America protects Black lives, I support affirmative action, I reject all forms of self-interested, racial chauvinism. But I recognize that in this time of crisis for Asian-Americans, this message of nationalism and self-protection, with all its implied calls for law and order and incarceration, will be heard by millions who are still trying to figure out what ''Asian-American'' even means. Who will sound like the truth-teller, and who will sound like the out-of-touch liberal who talks vaguely about the need for unity?

Last year, a few weeks before the pandemic shut down San Francisco, a video made the rounds on social media. It captured a 68-year-old Chinese man in the Bayview neighborhood in a confrontation with a handful of Black people. The man, who made his living collecting cans, was being harassed and humiliated. The cart he used to carry the day's haul had been taken away from him. His grabber had also been snatched and a Black man was swinging at him with it.

In the video, you can hear a woman off-camera ask the person filming the encounter to help the old man. He responds: ''Hell, no, I'm not helping this [expletive]. I hate Asians.'' As the Chinese man begins to despair and cry, the man filming shoves the camera in his face and mocks him.

Asian-Americans in the area demanded justice from San Francisco's progressive district attorney, Chesa Boudin. Mr. Boudin, who is among a new breed of prosecutors who favor restorative justice over jail whenever possible, dropped charges against the 20-year-old man who filmed the attack, citing the wishes of the victim. The decision prompted people to raise the well-worn questions asked by Asian-Americans conservatives like Mr. Zhao: What would have happened if the attackers were Asian and the victim was Black? Do hate crimes count only when they run one way?

These are not sophisticated questions, but they are being asked over and over again. My fear is that these attacks will also accelerate a trend already underway. Roughly one-third of Asian-American voters supported Donald Trump in 2020, a figure that represented a seven point increase from 2016. As Asian-Americans once again ask themselves where they fit in the country, champions of law and order like Mr. Zhao will provide simple, compelling answers.

They will not care about the decades of efforts by courageous Asian, Black and Latino organizers to build solidarity between ***working-class*** people in the Bay Area and nationwide, nor will they care that the people who have been attacked appear largely to be from the working poor and will certainly bear the brunt of an escalation in racial conflict.

Electoral politics are not everything, nor should they be the basis for how we think about ourselves and how we relate to others. But these past months have also shown the limits of the rote progressive language about race and its assumption, in practice, of a binary between Black and white Americans.

There is an opportunity to reshape that language to address the contradictions inherent in the lives of millions of immigrants and to create a reality that acknowledges the size of the rift between Asian and Black Americans, but does not fall into a zero-sum game in which everyone loses.

These questions and contradictions must be taken up before the narrative around these attacks calcifies into something more sinister. Foot patrols have already formed in Asian neighborhoods around the country. Those of us who, like Mr. Boudin, believe in non-jail solutions to crime, must not bury these concerns about the simplistic way in which race is discussed and then acted upon with a fog of platitudes about white supremacy and Donald Trump.

It has become increasingly clear that in the coming months, the climate of fear and the unsaid conversations could lead to vigilantism or a false accusation against a Black defendant. A militant response, which takes, at least in part, its inspiration from the images of Korean shopkeepers patrolling their rooftops with guns during the 1992 Los Angeles riots, seems possible and should not be dismissed. If left to fester, this reactionary anger will only harden into a reactionary nationalism that will threaten vital community and organizing work and turn one race against another.

Jay Caspian Kang is a writer at large for The New York Times Magazine.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Na Kim FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***When Is a Horror Movie Not Really a Horror Movie?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6464-1M11-JBG3-64GT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 29, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 3; REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

**Length:** 1219 words

**Byline:** By Erik Piepenburg

**Body**

When ''The Humans'' and other new dramas use jump scares and other genre staples, it's a fair question to ask.

A few days before Halloween, the @NetflixFilm Twitter account put out a call: ''What movie isn't technically a horror movie but feels like a horror movie to you?'' Included was a photo of a freaky-eyed Gene Wilder in ''Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory.''

Twitter being Twitter, some of the responses were flip, like ''It's a Wonderful Life'' and ''Cats.'' But there were also heavy hitters like ''2001: A Space Odyssey'' and ''Parasite.'' Children's films, including ''Pinocchio'' and ''Bambi,'' made the cut. It just goes to show, horror is what scares you, not me.

Horror has always been an elastic and regenerative genre. It lifts from and melds with just about every type of cinema: comedy, sci-fi, action, romance, fantasy, documentary. Its flexibility extends as far back as the monstrous love story in ''Bride of Frankenstein'' (1935) and as current as the blood-drenched melodrama of ''Malignant.''

But how do you know if you're watching a horror movie when there's no killer or monster, exorcism or blood? It's a decades-old question that's being asked about new films that blur the line between a movie with horror and a horror movie.

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Among them are ''The Humans,'' Stephen Karam's darkly comic family drama set during a Thanksgiving dinner; ''The Lost Daughter,'' Maggie Gyllenhaal's forthcoming eerie character study of a college professor at a Greek resort who becomes obsessed with a fellow vacationer and her daughter; and perhaps unexpectedly, ''Spencer,'' Pablo Larraín's speculative, dream-logic psychodrama about Princess Diana.

The film follows an unsettled Princess of Wales (Kristen Stewart) as she spends a Christmas holiday on the precipice of a madness that may not be real. In his review for The New York Times, A.O. Scott called it a Christmas movie, psychological thriller, romance and ''a horror movie about a fragile woman held captive in a spooky mansion, tormented by sadistic monsters and their treacherous minions.''

[Video: Watch on YouTube.]

Read reviews and these films sound like Shudder originals. In the Times, the critic Jeannette Catsoulis used the words ''monstrous,'' ''despairing,'' ''eerie,'' ''sinister'' to describe ''The Humans,'' concluding that the family was stuck in a haunted house. IndieWire said the drama ''blurs the line between Chekhov and Polanski -- Broadway and Blumhouse,'' and is ''the first real horror movie about 9/11.'' (Two of the family members were at ground zero that morning.) The Guardian said ''The Lost Daughter'' tells the story of a woman who ''haunts the resort like a ghost while other ghosts are haunting her.''

For some directors, positioning the word ''horror'' anywhere near a film they don't consider a horror movie would be erroneous or provocation. Not Karam. He was riveted by horror movies as a child in Scranton, Pa.; his gateway drug was the Disney ghost story ''The Watcher in the Woods'' (1980), with Bette Davis as the owner of an English mansion who's mourning her missing daughter.

Now 42, Karam remains a devout horror fan, citing Kubrick and Polanski as inspirations for ''The Humans,'' which he directed and adapted for the screen from his 2016 Tony-winning play. Karam takes pride in the film's horror elements because they help viewers visualize ''how people are conquering or coping with their fears in a story that's scary.''

''It's important for me to think of a film or a play or any story I'm telling as having a strong, confident personality,'' Karam said in a video interview. ''I don't get bogged down by whether it's a horror film or family drama because the definitions can upset people who take ownership of what a horror film is.''

''The Humans'' takes place in a seen-better-days duplex newly occupied by Brigid (Beanie Feldstein) and her boyfriend, Richard (Steven Yeun). Visiting from Scranton are Brigid's ***working-class*** parents, Erik and Deirdre (Richard Jenkins and Jayne Houdyshell); and Momo, Erik's mother (June Squibb), who has dementia. Also joining is Brigid's sister, Aimee (Amy Schumer), who lives in Philadelphia and is fresh off a breakup with her girlfriend.

At the family table there's turkey and good-natured ribbing, but also difficult conversations about work, love and depression. This is a family filled with love, but also resentment and heartache. Typical Thanksgiving drama stuff.

But from the start, there's an uneasy feeling, as if something terrible is on its way. Parts of the walls ooze and bubble with pustules like growths on a David Cronenberg mutant. There are eerie portraits of spooky people, like the art from a possessed castle in a Hammer Film. Jump scares, loud sounds, darkness, stillness: They're all heart-pounding. Horror movie stuff.

So what is a horror movie? It comes down to intent, said Wickham Clayton, a film scholar and the editor of ''Style and Form in the Hollywood Slasher Film.'' Horror movies, he said, are about audiences ''being uncomfortable, unsettled and disturbed.''

Sometimes all it takes is a terrifying antagonist or mood, not an entire movie. Think of Robert Mitchum as a scoundrel preacher in the nightmare fairy tale ''The Night of the Hunter'' (1955); Faye Dunaway as a toxic Joan Crawford in the darkly camp ''Mommie Dearest'' (1981); or Robert De Niro as the time-bomb Travis Bickle in ''Taxi Driver'' (1976).

Are they horror movies? Not quite. Are they scary? You bet.

''In each of these movies, there are moments, scenes and sequences that are so precisely and skillfully designed to make us feel unsettled, horrified and afraid,'' Clayton said. ''We are made to feel this way even if there is nothing obvious onscreen, or as far as we know offscreen, to be afraid of.''

What else is scary about ''The Humans'' and ''Spencer''? They're both set during winter holidays. Andrew Scahill, an assistant professor of film at the University of Colorado, Denver, said that wasn't a coincidence: for many people, family reunions and shame-filled year-end assessments are terrifying. It's no wonder that in his class on Christmas cinema he includes both the feel-good movie musical ''White Christmas'' (1954) and the harrowing proto-slasher ''Black Christmas'' (1974).

''Some genres are more elastic than others,'' said Scahill, the author of ''The Revolting Child in Horror Cinema.'' ''A mystery is predicated on surprising its audience,'' he explained. ''A rom-com wants to fulfill every expectation and not violate the contract of genre. Horror forces itself to keep innovating.''

This conversation about definitions will continue, and that's a good thing, as young filmmakers take horror in unexpected directions and forge new shape-shifting films. When ''Scream'' (1996), ''The Blair Witch Project'' (1999) and ''Get Out'' (2017) each made waves, they were saying: It's time for a jolt.

Another reason this discussion isn't going anywhere is that the old debates still have legs. Look what happened earlier this year when the writer Elle Hunt tweeted, ''Horror cannot be set in space,'' and horror fans got all kinds of irate, responding with examples like ''Alien'' (1979) and ''Jason X'' (2001).

''Horror,'' the writer Cory McCullough tweeted, ''can be anything.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/28/movies/the-humans-horror-movies.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/28/movies/the-humans-horror-movies.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Amy Schumer in Stephen Karam's ''The Humans,'' a family drama that borrows horror elements. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WILSON WEBB/A24)

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2021

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[***How Donbas Became Cradle Of Putin's War***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66DM-6X51-JBG3-60J2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 18, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2572 words

**Byline:** By Jeffrey Gettleman

**Body**

CHASIV YAR, Ukraine -- On a clear spring morning eight years ago, Oleksandr Khainus stepped outside his house to go to work at the town factory when he spotted new graffiti scrawled across his fence. ''Glory to Russia,'' vandals had written in angry black spray paint. ''Putin,'' another message said.

Mr. Khainus was perplexed. It was true that Chasiv Yar, the Rust Belt-like town where he has spent his entire life in a region called the Donbas, had long contained many conflicting opinions on its identity. Geographically, the Donbas was part of Ukraine, no question, but it was so close to Russia and so tied to it historically that many maintained that their true home really lay eastward.

''It was the type of stuff you'd argue about over the dinner table,'' he said. ''But nothing that anyone would get violent over.''

Mr. Khainus's optimism now seems almost quaint.

In the next few months in 2014, pro-Russia protests exploded. Armed separatists seized chunks of the Donbas right under the authorities' noses. Two so-called People's Republics were declared. Russian troops stormed in.

Vladimir V. Putin, Russia's leader, turned this patch of Eastern Europe into a personal project, sowing the seeds for an explosion of bloodshed that would spawn the most far-reaching war in generations. It was the Donbas that became Mr. Putin's pretext for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. And now it is heating up again.

The Ukrainians have just pulled off a masterful offensive in the Kharkiv region, in Ukraine's northeast, where town after town fell without a shot. Now they are heading south. Columns of dark green military trucks and American-made rocket launchers are thundering down the long, straight highways into the Donbas. But they will have a much harder fight on their hands.

The Russians have been dug into the Donbas for nearly a decade. They have countless fallback positions, fortified trenches, tens of thousands of soldiers, mercenaries from the notorious Wagner Group and close air cover because of the proximity to the Russian border. They can also rely on separatist fighters and a well-financed network of citizen-spies who relay secret information to the invaders, often with devastating consequences.

''Our walls now shake every day from shelling,'' said one Ukrainian soldier on the front lines who could not be identified because of the sensitivity of his position. He said that the Ukrainian military was taking heavy casualties in the Donbas and that ''the Russians storm us every day and seize our territory by a couple of meters a day.''

In Soledar, an old salt mining town, earsplitting explosions crack in every direction. Black smoke thickens the air. Civilians are refusing to evacuate, disobeying a direct order from the Ukrainian government to get out of the way of the incoming troops. Places like this have become a snake pit. The troops do not trust the people. The people do not trust the troops. Nobody trusts anybody.

''I'm not going,'' declared one woman on a recent afternoon as she clutched the side of her shrapnel-pocked house. Her voice shook at the edge of control. She had a wild look in her eyes. ''I've been here 40 years,'' she yelled over the sounds of the explosions. ''My ancestors are buried here. Where are our boys to defend us? Why aren't they here?''

To understand the Donbas, and how it became the benighted chunk of territory that Mr. Putin wants so badly, is to see it as an integral piece of a grand strategy to resurrect elements of the Soviet world. Some people living here welcome that; others cannot imagine anything worse.

The region is full of contradictions like these, both rustic and industrial, beautiful and blood-soaked, enormously important to the national economy but in terminal decline. For the past eight years, Mr. Putin has poured in money, spies, propaganda and weapons, thoroughly destabilizing this complicated corner of Ukraine.

Then, on Feb. 24, 2022, he turned its problems into a global crisis.

The Wild Field

The Donbas region used to be part of what the Russians called ''Dikoye Polye,'' or the Wild Field. Even today, driving in past millions of sunflowers tracking the sun across huge blue skies, the Donbas still exudes an epic sense of space.

For centuries, the Wild Field was loosely controlled by Asiatic tribes and Cossack groups. But in the late 1700s, Catherine the Great, the Russian empress, colonized it with hearty souls from across the empire. In the 1800s, the Russians built a steel industry here, remaking the landscape. They left enormous mountains of slag on the horizon and dug pits for clay so yawning that they eventually filled with rain and became lakes.

Chasiv Yar became home to a large ceramics plant. It grew into a typical Donbas industrial town -- one that would encapsulate all of this region's warring feelings. Mr. Khainus, who has deep green eyes and permanently tousled hair, took his first job here 23 years ago, sorting bricks. ''It was exhausting,'' he said. ''But my hands got really strong.''

Mr. Khainus is not what I had expected to find in the Donbas. Many people had told me, before I arrived in July, that the only people still living here were those who sympathized with Russia, derisively referred to as ''the Waiters'' because they were believed to be waiting eagerly for the Russians to come.

But Mr. Khainus, who grew up speaking Russian (like many here) and has deep family roots in this part of Ukraine, said, when asked if the Donbas should be part of Russia: ''Are you kidding? That would be a complete disaster. There would be no development, no normal life, no law.''

Instead, he serves as a local representative for Power of the People, a liberal political party trying to pull Ukraine away from Moscow's clutches. He has moved on from the ceramics plant, which shut down a few years ago. Now he farms sunflowers.

Across the street from him stands a yellow brick house where, some other townspeople had complained, a rabidly pro-Russia separatist lived. I knocked on the gate.

An older man hobbled out. When my translator, Oleksandra, told him I was an American journalist, his whole face lit up. ''Amerikanski!'' he blurted and gave me a bear hug. He was shirtless, it was warm, and his skin was damp with sweat.

He introduced himself as Volodymyr Tsyhankov. He talked fast, a huge smile on his face, and said that he used to be a champion sprinter and Chasiv Yar's top arm wrestler. He had a broad chest and thick biceps. At age 70, he looked like he could still do some damage.

Mr. Tsyhankov, too, had worked at the ceramics plant, driving a dump truck, and clearly missed those days. ''We had good work, a decent salary,'' he said.

He and his wife, Liudmyla, said they had built a good life in Chasiv Yar. Fishing for pike, perch and catfish in the man-made lake behind their house; growing grapes, apples, beets and plums in their backyard plot; canning the fruit for the long winter; raising children and grandchildren.

''Life under the Soviet Union might not have been good,'' Ms. Tsyhankova said, looking into her husband's eyes for affirmation. ''But it was stable.''

I heard this a lot.

When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, Ukraine became an independent country. For younger people, this spelled new opportunity. But for Mr. Tsyhankov's generation, it was like a crash of their whole life project.

The Unraveling

In February 2014, protesters in Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, chased Viktor Yanukovych, Ukraine's pro-Russia president, out of office. Mr. Yanukovych came from a Donbas steel town. In one stroke, Russia lost its ally and the Donbas elite its godfather. That is when the trouble started.

People flooded into the Donbas streets waving Russian flags. At first, said Alisa Sopova, a journalist for a Donbas newspaper at the time, ''We were sure they were fake people brought in from Russia to pose for Russian TV.''

''But when we went out and talked to them,'' she said, ''we learned they were locals, ***working-class*** people, mostly. And it was frustrating. They were just falling for manipulation, and we knew they'd suffer for it.''

Ms. Sopova, who is now studying anthropology at Princeton, tried to reason with some of them, including her grandmother. ''I told her: 'You're using banks. You're getting your pension. Do you realize what you're supporting will destroy it all?'''

But they did not listen.

''They didn't know it would turn out this way,'' she said. ''And now it's too late.''

In Chasiv Yar, it was like a poison had been injected into the town's bloodstream. The issue of language suddenly became fractious. Ukrainians have argued forever about whether it is right to speak so much Russian. A critical aspect of Ukrainian independence was reviving the Ukrainian language, marginalized during Soviet times. But those arguments were typically confined to social media posts or intellectual debates, until this moment.

''I'd go into the supermarket to buy some meat, and the shopkeeper tells me, 'If you don't speak Ukrainian, I'm not going to sell you any meat,''' Mr. Tsyhankov said. ''I've been speaking Russian my whole life. How do you think that made me feel?''

He looked down at his hands, humiliated even by the memory.

What became clear only later was that all of this had been orchestrated. Mr. Putin had done something similar in 2008 in South Ossetia and Abkhazia, two regions of Georgia, and before that the Russians had meddled in Moldova, backing the breakaway Transnistria region. The tools were generally the same: bankrolling pro-Russia political parties; deploying intelligence agents to foment protests; sowing disinformation through Russian TV.

Mr. Putin's strategy was to turn strategic slices of the former Soviet Union into separatist hotbeds to hobble young nations like Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, all struggling to break free from Moscow and move closer to Europe.

Under the Kremlin's wing, Donbas's separatists killed Ukrainian officials, took territory and declared the breakaway Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic. When Ukrainian forces rolled in to quell the rebellion, some residents saw them as occupiers. They spoke a different language, hailed from a different region, embraced a different culture -- or so went the pro-Russia narrative. In some villages, babushkas lay down in the roads blocking Ukrainian tanks, officers said, and in one, an especially cunning babushka kept stealing the soldiers' helmets.

''It was frustrating,'' said Anatolii Mohyla, a Ukrainian military commander. ''We'd come to liberate them and they'd give us the finger.''

Mr. Putin dispatched thousands of Russian troops to support the separatists, later saying he had been ''forced to protect'' the Russian-speaking population. Towns like Chasiv Yar were occupied by separatist fighters, then liberated by Ukrainian troops a few months later. By 2015, the heavy fighting had died down. But it was not like Mr. Putin forgot about the Donbas.

He upped the ante in 2021, saying, ''Kyiv simply does not need the Donbas.'' And on Feb. 21 of this year, three days before he invaded Ukraine, Mr. Putin accused the Ukrainian government of perpetrating a ''genocide.'' He justified the most cataclysmic war in decades by citing the very tensions he himself stoked.

The 'Correctors'

In early April, the agricultural land around Chasiv Yar began to thaw. Mr. Khainus, the pro-Ukraine farmer, drove out to check a sunflower field. A Ukrainian military vehicle raced up. A soldier leaned out the window and fired an assault rifle, the bullets skipping up in the dirt. Mr. Khainus slammed on the brakes.

A Ukrainian commander he recognized, a man whom Mr. Khainus said he had complained about before, jumped out. The commander greeted him with a punch to the head, Mr. Khainus said, and then smashed him in the face with a rifle butt.

He does not remember much after that. He shared photographs of himself lying in a hospital bed with two black eyes. Military and law enforcement officials declined to comment.

Mr. Khainus remains a supporter of the military, saying, ''One stupid person doesn't represent the army.''

But, he added wryly: ''It's one thing to be a patriot in Kyiv. It's another to be a patriot in the Donbas.''

At 9 p.m. on July 9, four cruise missiles slammed into a dormitory at the old ceramic plant. The buildings crumbled as if they were made out of sand. Viacheslav Boitsov, an emergency services official, said there were ''no military facilities nearby.''

But according to Mr. Mohyla and Oleksandr Nevydomskyi, another Ukrainian military officer, Ukrainian soldiers were staying in that building. The night before, they said, a mysterious man was seen standing outside flashing light signals, most likely pinpointing the position.

The military calls such spies ''correctors,'' and they relay navigational information to the Russians to make missile and artillery strikes more precise. Ukrainian officials have arrested more than 20 and say correctors are often paid several hundred dollars after a target is hit. The strike in Chasiv Yar was one of the deadliest: 48 killed, including 18 soldiers, the officers said.

''For sure there are Russian agents in this town,'' Mr. Mohyla said. ''There might even be spies in our unit.''

The Days Ahead

Few in Chasiv Yar are confident that the town will stay in government hands.

Mr. Khainus said the Russians were steadily moving closer to his sunflower fields. About a week ago, a friend's house was shelled. A day later, in an online messaging channel, separatist supporters said Mr. Khainus should be next, calling him a ''hero'' -- adding an epithet.

Is he scared?

''Why should I be?'' he said. ''They're nobodies.''

Mr. Tsyhankov, the retired dump truck driver nostalgic for the Soviet times, seemed pained by all of the bloodshed but did not blame the Russians or the separatists. ''They're doing the right thing,'' he said. ''They're fighting for the Russian language and their territory.''

As he said goodbye, insisting that his guests take with them a jug of his homemade apple juice and some fresh green grapes, he shook his head at the enormity of it. ''Why can't we be friends with you guys, the Americans?'' he asked. ''Politics are keeping all of us hostage.''

Every night, the horizon in Chasiv Yar lights up with explosions. Ukrainian soldiers operate here almost as if they are on enemy territory, hiving themselves off from the public, watching their backs, traveling by night in long convoys of cars with the lights blacked out, the drivers wearing night vision goggles. According to separatist messaging channels, the Wagner mercenaries have reached the outskirts of Bakhmut, a major Donbas town. As for Soledar, it is now off limits to journalists, but volunteers there trying to rescue civilians say it is as deadly as ever.

People here used to describe the Donbas in simple terms like ''beautiful,'' ''honest,'' ''unbreakable'' and ''free.''

Now it is destroyed, depopulated, sad and empty.

''It's like the Rust Belt,'' Ms. Sopova said. ''It's not needed anymore. All that industry is obsolete.''

Countless communities have risen in the Donbas. Many are now falling. Ms. Sopova glimpses a perhaps not so faraway future where the Donbas goes back to what it once was: a wild field.

Oleksandra Mykolyshyn contributed reporting.

Oleksandra Mykolyshyn contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/17/world/europe/ukraine-war-donbas-putin.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/17/world/europe/ukraine-war-donbas-putin.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Outside Chasiv Yar, a town in the Donbas, in eastern Ukraine. The war is heating up again in the region, where the Russians have been dug in for nearly a decade.

A family that had refused to leave Soledar, an old mining town in the Donbas, despite heavy shelling recently. ''I'm not going,'' one resident said outside her shrapnel-scarred house. ''I've been here 40 years.''

Oleksandr Khainus at his sunflower farm near Chasiv Yar. In recent days, Russian troops have drawn ever closer. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM HUYLEBROEK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** September 18, 2022

**End of Document**



[***When Is a Horror Movie Not a Horror Movie?; Reporter’s Notebook***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:645Y-6M01-JBG3-63JS-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 28, 2021 Sunday 00:26 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1215 words

**Byline:** Erik Piepenburg

**Highlight:** When “The Humans” and other new dramas use jump scares and other genre staples, it’s a fair question to ask.

**Body**

When “The Humans” and other new dramas use jump scares and other genre staples, it’s a fair question to ask.

A few days before Halloween, the @NetflixFilm Twitter account [*put out a call*](https://twitter.com/netflixfilm/status/1453149444388626436?s=21): “What movie isn’t technically a horror movie but feels like a horror movie to you?” Included was a photo of a freaky-eyed Gene Wilder in [*“Willy Wonka &amp; the Chocolate Factory.”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cBja3AbahY)

Twitter being Twitter, some of the responses were flip, like [*“It’s a Wonderful Life”*](https://twitter.com/noirfly1/status/1453655533089693698) and [*“Cats.”*](https://twitter.com/ElBlackPhillipp/status/1453196485349216263) But there were also heavy hitters like [*“2001: A Space Odyssey”*](https://twitter.com/supervixen28/status/1453156590886916096) and [*“Parasite.”*](https://twitter.com/Jfgg81Juan/status/1453357684690984960) Children’s films, including [*“Pinocchio”*](https://twitter.com/th3m1lesm0rales/status/1453150614427365376) and [*“Bambi,”*](https://twitter.com/JulesOfficial_/status/1453308903303831558) made the cut. It just goes to show, horror is what scares you, not me.

Horror has always been an elastic and regenerative genre. It lifts from and melds with just about every type of cinema: comedy, sci-fi, action, romance, fantasy, documentary. Its flexibility extends as far back as the monstrous love story in [*“Bride of Frankenstein”*](https://youtu.be/VR2uBTMBKVg) (1935) and as current as the blood-drenched melodrama of [*“Malignant.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/10/movies/malignant-review.html)

But how do you know if you’re watching a horror movie when there’s no killer or monster, exorcism or blood? It’s a decades-old question that’s being asked about new films that blur the line between a movie with horror and a horror movie.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/xNq9YOfL0Zs)]

Among them are [*“The Humans,”*](https://youtu.be/dp3Whb77eXc) Stephen Karam’s darkly comic family drama set during a Thanksgiving dinner; [*“The Lost Daughter,”*](https://youtu.be/xNq9YOfL0Zs) Maggie Gyllenhaal’s forthcoming eerie character study of a college professor at a Greek resort who becomes obsessed with a fellow vacationer and her daughter; and perhaps unexpectedly, [*“Spencer,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/movies/spencer-review.html) Pablo Larraín’s speculative, dream-logic psychodrama about Princess Diana.

The film follows an unsettled Princess of Wales (Kristen Stewart) as she spends a Christmas holiday on the precipice of a madness that may not be real. In his [*review*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/movies/spencer-review.html) for The New York Times, A.O. Scott called it a Christmas movie, psychological thriller, romance and “a horror movie about a fragile woman held captive in a spooky mansion, tormented by sadistic monsters and their treacherous minions.”

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](http://youtube.com/embed/WllZh9aekDg)]

Read reviews and these films sound like Shudder originals. [*In the Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/23/movies/the-humans-review.html), the critic Jeannette Catsoulis used the words “monstrous,” “despairing,” “eerie,” “sinister” to describe “The Humans,” concluding that the family was stuck in a haunted house. IndieWire [*said*](https://www.indiewire.com/2021/09/the-humans-review-movie-1234663715/) the drama “blurs the line between Chekhov and Polanski — Broadway and Blumhouse,” and is “the first real horror movie about 9/11.” (Two of the family members were at ground zero that morning.) The Guardian [*said*](https://www.theguardian.com/film/2021/sep/03/the-lost-daughter-review-olivia-colman-maggie-gyllenhaal-elena-ferrante) “The Lost Daughter” tells the story of a woman who “haunts the resort like a ghost while other ghosts are haunting her.”

For some directors, positioning the word “horror” anywhere near a film they don’t consider a horror movie would be erroneous or provocation. Not Karam. He was riveted by horror movies as a child in Scranton, Pa.; his gateway drug was the Disney ghost story [*“The Watcher in the Woods”*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3DFacqQp8uw) (1980), with Bette Davis as the owner of an English mansion who’s mourning her missing daughter.

Now 42, Karam remains a devout horror fan, citing Kubrick and Polanski as inspirations for “The Humans,” which he directed and adapted for the screen from his 2016 [*Tony-winning play*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/19/theater/review-the-humans-depicts-a-family-and-a-country-under-pressure.html). Karam takes pride in the film’s horror elements because they help viewers visualize “how people are conquering or coping with their fears in a story that’s scary.”

“It’s important for me to think of a film or a play or any story I’m telling as having a strong, confident personality,” Karam said in a video interview. “I don’t get bogged down by whether it’s a horror film or family drama because the definitions can upset people who take ownership of what a horror film is.”

“The Humans” takes place in a seen-better-days duplex newly occupied by Brigid (Beanie Feldstein) and her boyfriend, Richard (Steven Yeun). Visiting from Scranton are Brigid’s ***working-class*** parents, Erik and Deirdre (Richard Jenkins and Jayne Houdyshell); and Momo, Erik’s mother (June Squibb), who has dementia. Also joining is Brigid’s sister, Aimee (Amy Schumer), who lives in Philadelphia and is fresh off a breakup with her girlfriend.

At the family table there’s turkey and good-natured ribbing, but also difficult conversations about work, love and depression. This is a family filled with love, but also resentment and heartache. Typical Thanksgiving drama stuff.

But from the start, there’s an uneasy feeling, as if something terrible is on its way. Parts of the walls ooze and bubble with pustules like growths on a David Cronenberg mutant. There are eerie portraits of spooky people, like the art from a possessed castle in a [*Hammer Film*](http://www.hammerfilms.com/). Jump scares, loud sounds, darkness, stillness: They’re all heart-pounding. Horror movie stuff.

So what is a horror movie? It comes down to intent, said Wickham Clayton, a film scholar and the editor of “Style and Form in the Hollywood Slasher Film.” Horror movies, he said, are about audiences “being uncomfortable, unsettled and disturbed.”

Sometimes all it takes is a terrifying antagonist or mood, not an entire movie. Think of Robert Mitchum as a scoundrel preacher in the nightmare fairy tale [*“The Night of the Hunter”*](https://youtu.be/Y8dX6ZKJe2o) (1955); Faye Dunaway as a toxic Joan Crawford in the darkly camp [*“Mommie Dearest”*](https://youtu.be/O0FNSuJ437w) (1981); or Robert De Niro as the time-bomb Travis Bickle in [*“Taxi Driver”*](https://youtu.be/UUxD4-dEzn0) (1976).

Are they horror movies? Not quite. Are they scary? You bet.

“In each of these movies, there are moments, scenes and sequences that are so precisely and skillfully designed to make us feel unsettled, horrified and afraid,” Clayton said. “We are made to feel this way even if there is nothing obvious onscreen, or as far as we know offscreen, to be afraid of.”

What else is scary about “The Humans” and “Spencer”? They’re both set during winter holidays. Andrew Scahill, an assistant professor of film at the University of Colorado, Denver, said that wasn’t a coincidence: for many people, family reunions and shame-filled year-end assessments are terrifying. It’s no wonder that in his class on Christmas cinema he includes both the feel-good movie musical [*“White Christmas”*](https://youtu.be/4K2C0gcEV3Q) (1954) and the harrowing proto-slasher [*“Black Christmas”*](https://youtu.be/k6JuJHmVsh4) (1974).

“Some genres are more elastic than others,” said Scahill, the author of “The Revolting Child in Horror Cinema.” “A mystery is predicated on surprising its audience,” he explained. “A rom-com wants to fulfill every expectation and not violate the contract of genre. Horror forces itself to keep innovating.”

This conversation about definitions will continue, and that’s a good thing, as young filmmakers take horror in unexpected directions and forge new shape-shifting films. When [*“Scream”*](https://youtu.be/tV4PTwciTuQ) (1996), [*“The Blair Witch Project”*](https://youtu.be/MBZ-POVsrlI) (1999) and [*“Get Out”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/16/movies/jordan-peele-interview-get-out.html) (2017) each made waves, they were saying: It’s time for a jolt.

Another reason this discussion isn’t going anywhere is that the old debates still have legs. Look what happened earlier this year when the writer Elle Hunt [*tweeted*](https://www.themarysue.com/this-viral-tweet-on-horror-films-set-in-space-sets-the-internet-ablaze/), “Horror cannot be set in space,” and horror fans got all kinds of irate, responding with examples like [*“Alien”*](https://youtu.be/jQ5lPt9edzQ) (1979) and [*“Jason X”*](https://youtu.be/mF6throuWvo) (2001).

“Horror,” the writer Cory McCullough [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/gorycoryhorror/status/1379488765530447872?ref_src=twsrc%255Etfw), “can be anything.”

PHOTO: Amy Schumer in Stephen Karam’s “The Humans,” a family drama that borrows horror elements. (PHOTOGRAPH BY WILSON WEBB/A24)

**Load-Date:** November 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***We Need to Put a Name to This Violence***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6251-5671-DXY4-X0D0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2021 Saturday 13:53 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 2716 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** The recent attacks on Asian-Americans have unearthed the contradictions and questions beneath America’s impoverished understanding of race. To solve the problem, we must first learn how to talk about it.

**Body**

In the aftermath of the 1992 Los Angeles riots, a dedicated group of community organizers, activists and academics banded together to address what the press had called the “Black-Korean conflict.” Their work, which included a march through Koreatown demanding peace and the publication of several studies, aimed to tell a story of mutual misunderstanding and media distortion.

In “[*Blue Dreams*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058),” the first in-depth post-1992 study of the Black-Korean conflict, John Lie, a sociologist, and Nancy Abelmann, an anthropologist, wrote that while the fissures between the two communities had a long history, “the situation is not simple; the responses are not singular.” For example, they noted, “There are Korean-American merchants who work hard to better community life by holding neighborhood picnics, sponsoring sports teams and offering scholarships.” By casting out a constellation of exceptions, the authors, who certainly were not alone in this type of work, attempted to show that underneath all the media hype, real people were still sharing real community.

One can certainly understand the desire to reduce tensions and provide some path toward mutual understanding, but many of these calls for unity, especially those expressed in the endlessly nuanced, overly caveated language of that era’s academy, read in hindsight like desperate attempts to paper over the immensity of the divide.

The commonly observed reality was much more straightforward. It took the form of [*Latasha Harlins*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058), the 15-year-old girl who, a year before the Rodney King verdict, was shot in the back of the head by a Korean store owner in an argument over a bottle of orange juice; the more than 2,000 Korean stores that were looted or burned to the ground during the riots that followed the verdict; the Korean men who carried rifles onto the roofs of their businesses in Koreatown and shot at looters who came near. And anyone who thought that the national news media had invented a race war out of thin air needed only to listen to Ice Cube’s 1991 song “Black Korea,” which warned:

So don’t follow me up and down your market

Or your little chop suey ass’ll be a target

Of a nationwide boycott

Juice with the people, that’s what the boy got

So pay respect to the black fist

Or we’ll burn your store right down to a crisp

And then we’ll see ya

Cause you can’t turn the ghetto into Black Korea

Over the past month, as reports of attacks on Asian-Americans, particularly Asian-American elders, have circulated, a new generation of scholars, writers and celebrities have tried to figure out not just what to do, but what exactly is even happening, and how to discuss it.

The public conversations, which have focused on rising xenophobia and what it means for a largely professional class of Asian-Americans, reflect, in many ways, the legacy of the scholarship following the 1992 riots. One can feel the understandable desire to reroute the conversation to safer and more familiar conclusions. The conversations also reflect a disconnect between the people on all sides who experience the violence — who are often ***working class*** — and the commentariat.

What’s different is the lack of clarity in the story. It’s still unclear what, exactly, is happening and even less clear why. This time, there is no easy line to draw from the history of a Korean merchant class setting up in Black neighborhoods to a girl lying dead on the floor of a convenience store; no buildings are being torched in retaliation.

What exists, instead, are videos that show Asians being attacked in cities across the country. Viral outrage usually requires sustained propulsion: One video usually isn’t enough because it can be written off as an isolated incident, but two videos released just days apart, both showing horrifying acts of violence, can create a narrative.

Two of the most widely shared of these involved elderly men in the Bay Area who were shoved to the ground by Black assailants. One of the victims, an 84-year old Thai man named [*Vicha Ratanapakdee*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058), died from his injuries.

It is difficult to put these videos into a context that makes sense of them, leaving us with several unsatisfying interpretations. And not even the videos themselves are reliable — images of what was described as an attack on a second elderly Asian man, released shortly after the shoving of Mr. Vicha, prompted another round of outrage, including a $25,000 reward from the actors Daniel Dae Kim and Daniel Wu for information that would lead to the capture of the assailant. It turned out that the victim, a 91-year-old man named Gilbert Diaz walking in Oakland’s Chinatown, [*is Latino*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058).

There are claims of a huge national spike in anti-Asian hate crimes, but they largely [*rely*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058) on self-reported data from organizations like [*Stop AAPI Hate*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058) that popped up after the start of the pandemic. These resources are valuable, but they also use as their comparison point spotty and famously unreliable official hate crime statistics from law enforcement. If we cannot really tell how many hate crimes took place before, can we really argue that there has been a surge?

There have also [*been reports*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058) that suggest that these attacks be placed within the context of rising crime nationwide, especially in large cities. What initially appears to be a crime wave targeting Asians might just be a few data points in a more raceless story.

There have also been condemnations of Donald Trump and how his repeated use of the phrase “China virus” to describe the coronavirus and his invocation of white supremacy might be responsible. But how does that explain the attacks by Black people? Were they also acting as Mr. Trump’s white supremacist henchmen? Do we really believe that there is some coordinated plan by Black people to brutalize Asian-Americans?

And there are [*writers who argue*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058) that Asian-Americans fall outside the accepted discourse about race in this country — that there’s just no available language to discuss bad things that might happen to them.

This last point is only partly true. There are plenty of words to describe discrimination at the hands of white people: white supremacy, microaggressions, the bamboo ceiling, Orientalism. What doesn’t exist now, or for that matter, didn’t exist in 1992, is a language to discuss what happens when the attackers caught on video happen to be Black.

And so, we are left with the videos, which transcend language and cultural barriers and exist in a space outside mediation and intervention. They have been viewed thousands, or even millions, of times by a people who are not really a people at all. There is no shared history between, say, Thai immigrants who saw images of one of their own attacked in San Francisco, and the Chinese-American population of Oakland alarmed by the assault in Chinatown.

Asian-American identity is fractured and often incoherent because it assumes kinship between people who do not speak the same language, and, in many cases, dislike one another. Solidarity between these groups is rare — the burning of Korean businesses during the 1992 Los Angeles riots, for example, did not produce a mass response from Chinese- or Japanese-Americans. But because the recent attacks seem aimed at anyone who looks Asian, they have translated across the language, country-of-origin, and perhaps most important, class lines that usually separate one group of Asians from another.

For better or worse, a collective identity can emerge from these moments. Amid the outcry, a new form of Asian-Americanness has begun to stand up, unsteadily, on its legs, still uncertain of where it will go. In private conversations, the foreign language press, and messaging apps like WeChat and KakaoTalk catering to the Asian diaspora, a central question is being asked: Why does nobody care when our people get attacked and killed in the streets? Where is the outcry for us? Do our lives not matter?

This is not to say that all Asian-Americans believe that these attacks are racially motivated, nor does it mean that some silent majority now believes that Black people are waging a race war against them. But the answers to the question “Why does nobody care?” has unearthed a series of contradictions that always lurked right beneath the surface, unmentioned in polite company: We are not white, but do we count as “people of color”? (Not according to the newer literature around school equity, which increasingly doesn’t include Asians when discussing diversity.) When people say “Black and brown folk” do they also mean yellow? (Probably not.)

These questions are not new, but the attacks have placed them in a discomforting, sometimes maddening, context and heightened their urgency. The videos of the two assaults in the Bay Area, for example, coincided with national scrutiny over the place of high-achieving Asian students in public schools.

The San Francisco Board of Education recently voted to end merit-based admissions to Lowell, the city’s premier public high school. The ostensible reason for the change is to address equity concerns within the school system and to make Lowell more representative of the city at large. Like most of the public schools with merit-based admissions that [*have come under fire*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058) over the past few years, Lowell is predominantly Asian, with many students coming from Chinese ***working-class*** families.

For some Asian-American families in San Francisco, the change amounted to discrimination, not from right-wing politicians or white supremacists, but from the liberals who were supposed to be on their side. This change, juxtaposed with the recent attacks, expose, in microcosm, the deep, discomforting tension that sits at the heart of progressive politics around race: Why would we give up our spots at selective schools to benefit the same people who attack us in the streets? And more broadly: If we are the natural enemy of equity and racial progress, then why should we support it? Is the pursuit of a more equitable America a zero-sum game?

The relative truth of this tension can be excavated, debated and examined. The usual explanations, invoking the history of this country, the model minority myth, and the need for solidarity against white supremacy, can be forcefully stated. All these are true and necessary, but they do not tell us why nobody seems to care when Asian people get attacked.

In the fall of 2018, I spent a few days with Yukong Zhao, a Chinese immigrant businessman who had worked on several Asian-American activist campaigns, whether protesting Jimmy Kimmel’s show or supporting Asian anti-discrimination initiatives against prestigious universities.

At the time, it seemed that Mr. Zhao was part of an ascendant Asian-American conservative movement whose main appeal came from upending the carefully constructed, nuanced narrative about the place of Asians in the American racial hierarchy. Mr. Zhao, who voted for Donald Trump and made a losing congressional bid as a Republican in 2020, has fashioned himself into an evangelist of pure meritocracy and self-reliance. He believes that Asian-Americans should be politically active like right-wing Cuban-Americans in Florida.

Instead of the capitulations and endless contextualizing offered up by progressive, second-generation Asian-Americans, he and his fellow activists simply asked: What about us? Why does it not count when we’re discriminated against? Toward the end of our time together in his home in Orlando, Fla., Mr. Zhao told me he wished Asian-Americans could unite to fight for their own and persuade Americans to protect them in the same way the Black community does.

I disagree with Mr. Zhao on almost every possible substantive point. I do not think America protects Black lives, I support affirmative action, I reject all forms of self-interested, racial chauvinism. But I recognize that in this time of crisis for Asian-Americans, this message of nationalism and self-protection, with all its implied calls for law and order and incarceration, will be heard by millions who are still trying to figure out what “Asian-American” even means. Who will sound like the truth-teller, and who will sound like the out-of-touch liberal who talks vaguely about the need for unity?

Last year, a few weeks before the pandemic shut down San Francisco, a video made the rounds on social media. It captured a 68-year-old Chinese man in the Bayview neighborhood in a confrontation with a handful of Black people. The man, who made his living collecting cans, was being harassed and humiliated. The cart he used to carry the day’s haul had been taken away from him. His grabber had also been snatched and a Black man was swinging at him with it.

In the video, you can hear a woman off-camera ask the person filming the encounter to help the old man. He responds: “Hell, no, I’m not helping this [expletive]. I hate Asians.” As the Chinese man begins to despair and cry, the man filming shoves the camera in his face and mocks him.

Asian-Americans in the area demanded justice from San Francisco’s progressive district attorney, Chesa Boudin. Mr. Boudin, who is among a new breed of prosecutors who favor restorative justice over jail whenever possible, dropped charges against the 20-year-old man who filmed the attack, citing the wishes of the victim. The decision prompted people to raise the well-worn questions asked by Asian-Americans conservatives like Mr. Zhao: What would have happened if the attackers were Asian and the victim was Black? Do hate crimes count only when they run one way?

These are not sophisticated questions, but they are being asked over and over again. My fear is that these attacks will also accelerate a trend already underway. Roughly one-third of Asian-American voters supported Donald Trump in 2020, a figure that represented a [*seven point*](https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674077058)increase from 2016. As Asian-Americans once again ask themselves where they fit in the country, champions of law and order like Mr. Zhao will provide simple, compelling answers.

They will not care about the decades of efforts by courageous Asian, Black and Latino organizers to build solidarity between ***working-class*** people in the Bay Area and nationwide, nor will they care that the people who have been attacked appear largely to be from the working poor and will certainly bear the brunt of an escalation in racial conflict.

Electoral politics are not everything, nor should they be the basis for how we think about ourselves and how we relate to others. But these past months have also shown the limits of the rote progressive language about race and its assumption, in practice, of a binary between Black and white Americans.

There is an opportunity to reshape that language to address the contradictions inherent in the lives of millions of immigrants and to create a reality that acknowledges the size of the rift between Asian and Black Americans, but does not fall into a zero-sum game in which everyone loses.

These questions and contradictions must be taken up before the narrative around these attacks calcifies into something more sinister. Foot patrols have already formed in Asian neighborhoods around the country. Those of us who, like Mr. Boudin, believe in non-jail solutions to crime, must not bury these concerns about the simplistic way in which race is discussed and then acted upon with a fog of platitudes about white supremacy and Donald Trump.

It has become increasingly clear that in the coming months, the climate of fear and the unsaid conversations could lead to vigilantism or a false accusation against a Black defendant. A militant response, which takes, at least in part, its inspiration from the images of Korean shopkeepers patrolling their rooftops with guns during the 1992 Los Angeles riots, seems possible and should not be dismissed. If left to fester, this reactionary anger will only harden into a reactionary nationalism that will threaten vital community and organizing work and turn one race against another.

Jay Caspian Kang is a writer at large for The New York Times Magazine.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Na Kim FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** July 29, 2021

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[***The 'Wild Field' Where Putin Sowed the Seeds of War***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66DC-78W1-DXY4-X0VJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 17, 2022 Saturday

The New York Times on the Web

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**Section:** Section ; Column 0; Foreign Desk

**Length:** 2521 words

**Byline:** By Jeffrey Gettleman

**Body**

CHASIV YAR, Ukraine -- On a clear spring morning eight years ago, Oleksandr Khainus stepped outside his house to go to work at the town factory when he spotted new graffiti scrawled across his fence. ''Glory to Russia,'' vandals had written in angry black spray paint. ''Putin,'' another message said.

Mr. Khainus was perplexed. It was true that Chasiv Yar, the Rust Belt-like town where he has spent his entire life in a region called the Donbas, had long contained many conflicting opinions on its identity. Geographically, the Donbas was part of Ukraine, no question, but it was so close to Russia and so tied to it historically that many maintained that their true home really lay eastward.

''It was the type of stuff you'd argue about over the dinner table,'' he said. ''But nothing that anyone would get violent over.''

Mr. Khainus's optimism now seems almost quaint.

In the next few months in 2014, pro-Russia protests exploded. Armed separatists seized some parts of the Donbas, including Chasiv Yar right under the authorities' noses. Two so-called People's Republics were declared. Russian troops stormed in.

Vladimir V. Putin, Russia's leader, turned this patch of Eastern Europe into a personal project, sowing the seeds for an explosion of bloodshed that would spawn the most far-reaching war in generations. It was the Donbas that became Mr. Putin's pretext for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. And now it is heating up again.

The Ukrainians have just pulled off a masterful offensive in the Kharkiv region, in Ukraine's northeast, where town after town fell without a shot. Now they are heading south. Columns of dark green military trucks and American-made rocket launchers are thundering down the long, straight highways into the Donbas. But they will have a much harder fight on their hands.

The Russians have been dug into the Donbas for nearly a decade. They have countless fallback positions, fortified trenches, tens of thousands of soldiers, mercenaries from the notorious Wagner Group and close air cover because of the proximity to the Russian border. They also have a well-financed network of citizen-spies who relay secret information to the invaders, often with devastating consequences.

''Our walls now shake every day from shelling,'' said one Ukrainian soldier on the front lines who could not be identified because of the sensitivity of his position. He said that the Ukrainian military was taking heavy casualties in the Donbas and that ''the Russians storm us every day and seize our territory by a couple of meters a day.''

In Soledar, an old salt mining town, earsplitting explosions crack in every direction. Black smoke thickens the air. Civilians are refusing to evacuate, disobeying a direct order from the Ukrainian government to get out of the way of the incoming troops. Places like this have become a snake pit. The troops do not trust the people. The people do not trust the troops. Nobody trusts anybody.

''I'm not going,'' declared one woman on a recent afternoon as she clutched the side of her shrapnel-pocked house. Her voice shook at the edge of control. She had a wild look in her eyes. ''I've been here 40 years,'' she yelled over the sounds of the explosions. ''My ancestors are buried here. Where are our boys to defend us? Why aren't they here?''

To understand the Donbas, and how it became the benighted chunk of territory that Mr. Putin wants so badly, is to see it as an integral piece of a grand strategy to resurrect elements of the Soviet world. Some people living here welcome that; others cannot imagine anything worse.

The region is full of contradictions like these, both rustic and industrial, beautiful and blood-soaked, enormously important to the national economy but in terminal decline. For the past eight years, Mr. Putin has thoroughly destabilized this complicated corner of Ukraine.

Then, on Feb. 24, 2022, he turned its problems into a global crisis.

The Wild Field

The Donbas region used to be part of what the Russians called ''Dikoye Polye,'' or the Wild Field. Even today, driving in past millions of sunflowers tracking the sun across huge blue skies, the Donbas still exudes an epic sense of space.

For centuries, the Wild Field was loosely controlled by Asiatic tribes and Cossack groups. But in the late 1700s, Catherine the Great, the Russian empress, colonized it with hearty souls from across the empire. In the 1800s, the Russians built a steel industry here, remaking the landscape. They left enormous mountains of slag on the horizon and dug pits for clay so yawning that they eventually filled with rain and became lakes.

Chasiv Yar became home to a large ceramics plant. It grew into a typical Donbas industrial town -- one that would encapsulate all of this region's warring feelings. Mr. Khainus, who has deep green eyes and permanently tousled hair, took his first job here 23 years ago, sorting bricks. ''It was exhausting,'' he said. ''But my hands got really strong.''

Mr. Khainus is not what I had expected to find in the Donbas. Many people had told me, before I arrived in July, that the only people still living here were those who sympathized with Russia, derisively referred to as ''the Waiters'' because they were believed to be waiting eagerly for the Russians to come.

But Mr. Khainus, who grew up speaking Russian (like many here) and has deep family roots in this part of Ukraine, said, when asked if the Donbas should be part of Russia: ''Are you kidding? That would be a complete disaster. There would be no development, no normal life, no law.''

Instead, he serves as a local representative for Power of the People, a liberal political party trying to pull Ukraine away from Moscow's clutches. He has moved on from the ceramics plant, which shut down a few years ago. Now he farms sunflowers.

Across the street from him stands a yellow brick house where, some other townspeople had complained, a rabidly pro-Russia separatist lived. I knocked on the gate.

An older man hobbled out. When my translator, Oleksandra, told him I was an American journalist, his whole face lit up. ''Amerikanski!'' he blurted and gave me a bear hug. He was shirtless, it was warm, and his skin was damp with sweat.

He introduced himself as Volodymyr Tsyhankov. He talked fast, a huge smile on his face, and said that he used to be a champion sprinter and Chasiv Yar's top arm wrestler. He had a broad chest and thick biceps. At age 70, he looked like he could still do some damage.

Mr. Tsyhankov, too, had worked at the ceramics plant, driving a dump truck, and clearly missed those days. ''We had good work, a decent salary,'' he said.

He and his wife, Lyudmila, said they had built a good life in Chasiv Yar. Fishing for pike, perch and catfish in the man-made lake behind their house; growing grapes, apples, beets and plums in their backyard plot; canning the fruit for the long winter; raising children and grandchildren.

''Life under the Soviet Union might not have been good,'' Ms. Tsyhankova said, looking into her husband's eyes for affirmation. ''But it was stable.''

I heard this a lot.

When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, Ukraine became an independent country. For younger people, this spelled new opportunity. But for Mr. Tsyhankov's generation, it was like a crash of their whole life project.

The Unraveling

In February 2014, protesters in Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, chased Viktor Yanukovych, Ukraine's pro-Russia president, out of office. Mr. Yanukovych came from a Donbas steel town. In one stroke, Russia lost its ally and the Donbas elite its godfather. That is when the trouble started.

People flooded into the Donbas streets waving Russian flags. At first, said Alisa Sopova, a journalist for a Donbas newspaper at the time, ''We were sure they were fake people brought in from Russia to pose for Russian TV.''

''But when we went out and talked to them,'' she said, ''we learned they were locals, ***working-class*** people, mostly. And it was frustrating. They were just falling for manipulation, and we knew they'd suffer for it.''

Ms. Sopova, who is now studying anthropology at Princeton, tried to reason with some of them, including her grandmother. ''I told her: 'You're using banks. You're getting your pension. Do you realize what you're supporting will destroy it all?'''

But they did not listen.

''They didn't know it would turn out this way,'' she said. ''And now it's too late.''

In Chasiv Yar, it was like a poison had been injected into the town's bloodstream. The issue of language suddenly became fractious. Ukrainians have argued forever about whether it is right to speak so much Russian. A critical aspect of Ukrainian independence was reviving the Ukrainian language, marginalized during Soviet times. But those arguments were typically confined to social media posts or intellectual debates, until this moment.

''I'd go into the supermarket to buy some meat, and the shopkeeper tells me, 'If you don't speak Ukrainian, I'm not going to sell you any meat,''' Mr. Tsyhankov said. ''I've been speaking Russian my whole life. How do you think that made me feel?''

He looked down at his hands, humiliated even by the memory.

What became clear only later was that all of this had been orchestrated. Mr. Putin had done something similar in South Ossetia, in Georgia, in 2008, and before that the Russians had meddled in Moldova, backing the breakaway Transnistria region. The tools were generally the same: bankrolling pro-Russia political parties; deploying intelligence agents to foment protests; sowing disinformation through Russian TV.

Mr. Putin's strategy was to turn strategic slices of the former Soviet Union into separatist hotbeds to hobble young nations like Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, all struggling to break free from Moscow and move closer to Europe.

Under the Kremlin's wing, Donbas's separatists killed Ukrainian officials, took territory and declared the breakaway Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic. When Ukrainian forces rolled in to quell the rebellion, some residents saw them as occupiers. They spoke a different language, hailed from a different region, embraced a different culture -- or so went the pro-Russia narrative. In some villages, babushkas lay down in the roads blocking Ukrainian tanks, officers said, and in one, an especially cunning babushka kept stealing the soldiers' helmets.

''It was frustrating,'' said Anatolii Mohyla, a Ukrainian military commander. ''We'd come to liberate them and they'd give us the finger.''

Mr. Putin dispatched thousands of Russian troops to support the separatists, later saying he had been ''forced to protect'' the Russian-speaking population. In 2021, he upped the ante, saying, ''Kyiv simply does not need the Donbas.'' On Feb. 21 of this year, three days before he invaded Ukraine, Mr. Putin accused the Ukrainian government of perpetrating a ''genocide.'' He justified the most cataclysmic war in decades by citing the very tensions he himself stoked.

The 'Correctors'

In early April, the agricultural land around Chasiv Yar began to thaw. Mr. Khainus, the pro-Ukraine farmer, drove out to check a sunflower field. A Ukrainian military vehicle raced up. A soldier leaned out the window and fired an assault rifle, the bullets skipping up in the dirt. Mr. Khainus slammed on the brakes.

A Ukrainian commander he recognized, a man whom Mr. Khainus said he had complained about before, jumped out. The commander greeted him with a punch to the head, Mr. Khainus said, and then smashed him in the face with a rifle butt.

He does not remember much after that. He shared photographs of himself lying in a hospital bed with two black eyes. Military and law enforcement officials declined to comment.

Mr. Khainus remains a supporter of the military, saying, ''One stupid person doesn't represent the army.''

But, he added wryly: ''It's one thing to be a patriot in Kyiv. It's another to be a patriot in the Donbas.''

At 9 p.m. on July 9, four cruise missiles slammed into a dormitory at the old ceramic plant. The buildings crumbled as if they were made out of sand. Viacheslav Boitsov, an emergency services official, said there were ''no military facilities nearby.''

But according to Mr. Mohyla and Oleksandr Nevydomskyi, another Ukrainian military officer, Ukrainian soldiers were staying in that building. The night before, they said, a mysterious man was seen standing outside flashing light signals, most likely pinpointing the position.

The military calls such spies ''correctors,'' and they relay navigational information to the Russians to make missile and artillery strikes more precise. Ukrainian officials have arrested more than 20 and say correctors are often paid several hundred dollars after a target is hit. The strike in Chasiv Yar was one of the deadliest: 48 killed, including 18 soldiers, the officers said.

''For sure there are Russian agents in this town,'' Mr. Mohyla said. ''There might even be spies in our unit.''

The Days Ahead

Few in Chasiv Yar are confident that the town will stay in government hands.

Mr. Khainus said the Russians were steadily moving closer to his sunflower fields. About a week ago, a friend's house was shelled. A day later, in an online messaging channel, separatist supporters said Mr. Khainus should be next, calling him a ''hero'' -- adding an epithet.

Is he scared?

''Why should I be?'' he said. ''They're nobodies.''

Mr. Tsyhankov, the retired dump truck driver nostalgic for the Soviet times, seemed pained by all of the bloodshed but did not blame the Russians or the separatists. ''They're doing the right thing,'' he said. ''They're fighting for the Russian language and their territory.''

As he said goodbye, insisting that his guests take with them a jug of his homemade apple juice and some fresh green grapes, he shook his head at the enormity of it. ''Why can't we be friends with you guys, the Americans?'' he asked. ''Politics are keeping all of us hostage.''

Every night, the horizon in Chasiv Yar lights up with explosions. Ukrainian soldiers operate here almost as if they are on enemy territory, hiving themselves off from the public, watching their backs, traveling by night in long convoys of cars with the lights blacked out, the drivers wearing night vision goggles. According to separatist messaging channels, the Wagner mercenaries have reached the outskirts of Bakhmut, a major Donbas town. As for Soledar, it is now off limits to journalists, but volunteers there trying to rescue civilians say it is as deadly as ever.

People here used to describe the Donbas in simple terms like ''beautiful,'' ''honest,'' ''unbreakable'' and ''free.''

Now it is destroyed, depopulated, sad and empty.

''It's like the Rust Belt,'' Ms. Sopova said. ''It's not needed anymore. We should let it go.''

Countless communities have risen in the Donbas. Many are now falling. Ms. Sopova glimpses a perhaps not so faraway future where the Donbas goes back to what it once was: a wild field.

Oleksandra Mykolyshyn contributed reporting.

Oleksandra Mykolyshyn contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/17/world/europe/ukraine-war-donbas-putin.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/17/world/europe/ukraine-war-donbas-putin.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A road outside Chasiv Yar with mountains of slag visible on the horizon. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jim Huylebroek for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 17, 2022

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[***The Long Roots Of a People's Revolt Against Wall Street***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654T-3W01-JBG3-64Y5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 3, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BU; Column 0; Money and Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1627 words

**Byline:** By Emily Flitter

**Body**

In 1861, Jay Cooke, a minor money man hoping to help the Union army, lobbied Abraham Lincoln's government to make investing accessible to more Americans. In 1972, Bill Gross, destined to earn the nickname ''the Bond King,'' realized that more value could be squeezed out of the products that Cooke wanted to sell -- government bonds -- if they were traded by experts. And in 2021, a Reddit user named Roaring Kitty led a band of regular Joes on a crusade against financial engineers of Mr. Gross's ilk.

And that arc of U.S. economic history helps explain why people were calling me a puppet on the internet.

At least that is how I came to understand it. At first, all I knew is that I was facing intense backlash from Roaring Kitty and company after I wrote about the evolution of what they, and other smaller retail investors, believed -- a baseless theory that various powerful entities were out to get them and tank their stocks.

While I was awash in all their bad vibes, I was also reading two new books: ''The Bond King,'' by the NPR host Mary Childs and the forthcoming ''Bonds of War'' by the historian David K. Thomson.

I realized that there is a strong link between the Civil War-era campaign to sell bonds to ***working class*** people and a stock-hoarding movement among financially inexperienced masses connecting on the internet.

It's called financial populism.

Over the past century and a half, finance in the United States has been characterized by an ebb and flow of who feels Wall Street is for them, who feels (or is) excluded.

Understanding how we got where we are now is one way to demystify the Reddit-based investing revolution, which is powered by a conspiracy theory along with a deep resentment of the way real power and wealth seem so out of reach for most people these days.

About the conspiracy theory: A year into the pandemic, a group of doctors, factory workers, salesmen, dentists and other investing amateurs came to the defense of companies facing existential challenges: a chain of empty movie theaters and a secondhand video game retailer. Hedge funds, run by superrich and increasingly powerful people, were shorting shares of those companies. The smaller investors fought back.

They gathered on a Reddit forum called r/WallStreetBets, where group members goaded and cheered one another into buying more and more shares of these companies -- GameStop and AMC Entertainment -- vowing to hold on to them ''with diamond hands.'' Stocks became stonks, jokey things infused with the currency of internet memes. The buying only stopped when a handful of retail brokerage firms cut off access to the market like a bartender cutting off a sloppy drunk.

The stocks' prices crashed and the biggest zealots moved from r/WallStreetBets to a new subreddit, r/Superstonk, and began posting essays many thousands of words long that they called ''dds,'' short for ''due diligences,'' to explain what had happened.

These were ostensibly research reports, modeled, perhaps, after professional financial analysts' publications. They made the baseless claim that securities regulators, brokerage houses and the people in charge of the market's day-to-day functioning had gotten together and agreed to create fake shares of the stocks, which they were secretly passing on to hedge funds preparing to short them again.

To fight back against this supposed scheme, the Redditors pledged to buy as many more shares of GameStop and AMC as possible to bring about the ''mother of all short squeezes,'' or the MOASS for short, when short sellers would be forced to pay whatever price the Redditors asked -- maybe even $1 million a share -- to cover their bets.

Reality check: There is no giant conspiracy, there are no fake shares; there will be no MOASS. The January 2021 short squeeze did cause breakdowns in the stock market, the most dramatic of which occurred in the brokerage houses that eventually shut down trading in those stocks, not based on any moral authority, but because they were about to run out of money to cover failed trades.

But the Redditors accomplished something real. Like Jay Cooke, who pointed out how hard it was for most people to get access to investment products in 1861, the Reddit crowd highlighted structural problems in the stock market and prodded regulators to try to fix them. The Securities and Exchange Commission has since proposed several changes to stock market operations that would make them more visible and easily understood and faster.

The People's War Effort

Wall Street has long boasted that its great-great grandfather firms saved the Union during the darkest period of the Civil War by generously lending Lincoln's administration money. This claim, which financial titans repeat to imply that their work is morally good and descended from opponents of slavery, is now getting a fresh look.

In ''Bonds of War,'' Mr. Thomson describes how, after arranging an initial $50 million loan in early 1861, elite financiers in New York, Boston and Philadelphia basically told Lincoln's Treasury secretary, an Ohioan named Salmon P. Chase, that they wished him the best of luck. They felt it was too risky to keep buying U.S. debt, especially since individual states had regularly defaulted on their debt during the antebellum period.

Jay Cooke, a financier from Philly who wanted to make the big leagues, persuaded Chase to make it easier for Treasury notes and bonds to be sold in small denominations, then started going door-to-door signing people up to buy them. He specifically targeted ''small subscribers,'' as he put it, who came away from agreeing to make their investments ''almost with tears in their eyes, so overjoyed at the patriotic scene.''

Mr. Thomson, an assistant professor of history at Sacred Heart University, chronicles how Cooke assembled an army of salesmen and sent them all over the country looking for people who had saved a little money and wanted to make a statement while spending it. Buying Treasuries let Union sympathizers -- including formerly enslaved people, Native Americans and residents of Southern cities -- express their support for the cause no matter who or where they happened to be. It made buyers feel powerful.

For the first time, wage-earners played a crucial role in the U.S. financial system -- and they knew it. A new class of financial participants was born.

On and off, well into the second half of the 20th century, the image of the investor that Jay Cooke helped create prevailed, especially during the periods in which the United States was deeply involved in world wars and appealed yet again to patriotism in search of financial support.

If Jay Cooke made Americans feel like they mattered, Mr. Gross -- unintentionally, you could say -- instilled in them the opposite belief.

Ms. Childs's book is about the expansion of finance as a whole, told through the history of Bill Gross's life's work as the founder of what would eventually become the biggest bond fund in the world, PIMCO.

Mr. Gross, whom Ms. Childs portrays as a single-minded whiz-kid seeking to prove his worth to his parents and former classmates, chipped away at the notion that anyone could be an investor by criticizing the buy-and-hold strategy for bonds. He began studying tables of bond issues and ''making money buying the better bonds and selling the worse ones.'' This made big money for big organizations, but it also made everything more complicated, bringing about a rule of experts.

Mr. Gross got the bond market going just as the dollar was disconnected from a fixed price for gold, ending the last vestige of the gold standard. The financial system grew much more subjective and more hospitable to operations conducted on the largest scale possible.

Buying bonds was increasingly viewed as something that ordinary people just didn't do. The technology to buy and sell them didn't keep up with the technological innovations that brought stocks to life in the imaginations of retail investors. While no one was cut off from buying bonds, they weren't regarded as fruitful investments for just anyone.

Eventually, Ms. Childs writes, Mr. Gross and his allies and competitors grew not just powerful, but arrogant. They seemed to feel that any means they could think of to serve their clients, regardless of their wider consequences for society, were justified. This was contemporary Wall Street culture taking shape. More and more, in every asset class, including stocks, the biggest gains were going to the biggest investors.

I was in the middle of Ms. Childs's book when I began exploring posts on r/Superstonk. I soon noticed a paragraph of text that seemed to be repeated over and over again by a slew of different posters on the forum. It expressed joy at the defeat of ''smug fine art collecting 'high class' billionaires'' at the hands of Redditors who were ''completely immune to all the psychological warfare'' perpetrated against retail investors ''for decades.''

The difference between the medium the Redditors chose for their rebellion and Mr. Gross's area of expertise is important: Throughout his career, Mr. Gross generally viewed the stock market as a place where dumb money gathered. He never quite saw the point in participating in it. The Redditors would probably label this as snobbery, but the truth is the stock market is more susceptible to populist activity than the bond market.

Although the oft-repeated post was not referring to Mr. Gross specifically -- he played no part in the Reddit rebellion -- it was clearly a rallying cry for people like Jay Cooke's ''small subscribers'' against the big financiers who took so much power away from the American public. Those ordinary people are now using the internet to try to get it back.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/02/business/civil-war-bonds-stocks.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/02/business/civil-war-bonds-stocks.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Matt Chinworth FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 3, 2022

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[***The ‘Wild Field’ Where Putin Sowed the Seeds of War***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66DB-WY31-JBG3-604Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 17, 2022 Saturday 15:56 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 2625 words

**Byline:** Jeffrey Gettleman

**Highlight:** In one small town in the Donbas region, everything suddenly fell apart. It was part of Vladimir Putin’s grand plan, and it helped lay the groundwork for the invasion of Ukraine. Now things are heating up again.

**Body**

CHASIV YAR, Ukraine — On a clear spring morning eight years ago, Oleksandr Khainus stepped outside his house to go to work at the town factory when he spotted new graffiti scrawled across his fence. “Glory to Russia,” vandals had written in angry black spray paint. “Putin,” another message said.

Mr. Khainus was perplexed. It was true that Chasiv Yar, the Rust Belt-like town where he has spent his entire life in a region called the Donbas, had long contained many conflicting opinions on its identity. Geographically, the Donbas was part of Ukraine, no question, but it was so close to Russia and so tied to it historically that many maintained that their true home really lay eastward.

“It was the type of stuff you’d argue about over the dinner table,” he said. “But nothing that anyone would get violent over.”

Mr. Khainus’s optimism now seems almost quaint.

In the next few months in 2014, pro-Russia [*protests exploded*](https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/04/world/europe/russias-hand-can-be-seen-in-the-protests.html). Armed separatists seized chunks of the Donbas right under the authorities’ noses. Two so-called People’s Republics were declared. Russian troops stormed in.

Vladimir V. Putin, Russia’s leader, turned this patch of Eastern Europe into a personal project, sowing the seeds for an explosion of bloodshed that would spawn [*the most far-reaching war*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/world/europe/why-russia-attacked-ukraine.html) in generations. It was the Donbas that became Mr. Putin’s pretext for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. And now it is heating up again.

The Ukrainians have just pulled off a [*masterful offensive*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/11/world/europe/ukraine-kharkiv-russian-retreat.html) in the Kharkiv region, in Ukraine’s northeast, where town after town fell without a shot. Now they are heading south. Columns of dark green military trucks and American-made rocket launchers are thundering down the long, straight highways into the Donbas. But they will have a much harder fight on their hands.

The Russians have been dug into the Donbas for nearly a decade. They have countless fallback positions, fortified trenches, tens of thousands of soldiers, mercenaries from the notorious [*Wagner Group*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/31/world/europe/wagner-group-russia-ukraine.html) and close air cover because of the proximity to the Russian border. They can also rely on separatist fighters and a well-financed network of citizen-spies who relay secret information to the invaders, often with devastating consequences.

“Our walls now shake every day from shelling,” said one Ukrainian soldier on the front lines who could not be identified because of the sensitivity of his position. He said that the Ukrainian military was taking heavy casualties in the Donbas and that “the Russians storm us every day and seize our territory by a couple of meters a day.”

In Soledar, an old salt mining town, earsplitting explosions crack in every direction. Black smoke thickens the air. Civilians are refusing to evacuate, disobeying a direct order from the Ukrainian government to get out of the way of the incoming troops. Places like this have become a snake pit. The troops do not trust the people. The people do not trust the troops. Nobody trusts anybody.

“I’m not going,” declared one woman on a recent afternoon as she clutched the side of her shrapnel-pocked house. Her voice shook at the edge of control. She had a wild look in her eyes. “I’ve been here 40 years,” she yelled over the sounds of the explosions. “My ancestors are buried here. Where are our boys to defend us? Why aren’t they here?”

To understand the Donbas, and how it became the benighted chunk of territory that Mr. Putin wants so badly, is to see it as an integral piece of a grand strategy to resurrect elements of the Soviet world. Some people living here welcome that; others cannot imagine anything worse.

The region is full of contradictions like these, both rustic and industrial, beautiful and blood-soaked, enormously important to the national economy but in terminal decline. For the past eight years, Mr. Putin has poured in money, spies, propaganda and weapons, thoroughly destabilizing this complicated corner of Ukraine.

Then, on Feb. 24, 2022, he turned its problems into a global crisis.

The Wild Field

The Donbas region used to be part of what the Russians called “Dikoye Polye,” or the Wild Field. Even today, driving in past millions of sunflowers tracking the sun across huge blue skies, the Donbas still exudes an epic sense of space.

For centuries, the Wild Field was loosely controlled by Asiatic tribes and Cossack groups. But in the late 1700s, Catherine the Great, the Russian empress, colonized it with hearty souls from across the empire. In the 1800s, the Russians built a steel industry here, remaking the landscape. They left enormous mountains of slag on the horizon and dug pits for clay so yawning that they eventually filled with rain and became lakes.

Chasiv Yar became home to a large ceramics plant. It grew into a typical Donbas industrial town — one that would encapsulate all of this region’s warring feelings. Mr. Khainus, who has deep green eyes and permanently tousled hair, took his first job here 23 years ago, sorting bricks. “It was exhausting,” he said. “But my hands got really strong.”

Mr. Khainus is not what I had expected to find in the Donbas. Many people had told me, before I arrived in July, that the only people still living here were those who sympathized with Russia, derisively referred to as “the Waiters” because they were believed to be waiting eagerly for the Russians to come.

But Mr. Khainus, who grew up speaking Russian (like many here) and has deep family roots in this part of Ukraine, said, when asked if the Donbas should be part of Russia: “Are you kidding? That would be a complete disaster. There would be no development, no normal life, no law.”

Instead, he serves as a local representative for Power of the People, a liberal political party trying to pull Ukraine away from Moscow’s clutches. He has moved on from the ceramics plant, which shut down a few years ago. Now he farms sunflowers.

Across the street from him stands a yellow brick house where, some other townspeople had complained, a rabidly pro-Russia separatist lived. I knocked on the gate.

An older man hobbled out. When my translator, Oleksandra, told him I was an American journalist, his whole face lit up. “Amerikanski!” he blurted and gave me a bear hug. He was shirtless, it was warm, and his skin was damp with sweat.

He introduced himself as Volodymyr Tsyhankov. He talked fast, a huge smile on his face, and said that he used to be a champion sprinter and Chasiv Yar’s top arm wrestler. He had a broad chest and thick biceps. At age 70, he looked like he could still do some damage.

Mr. Tsyhankov, too, had worked at the ceramics plant, driving a dump truck, and clearly missed those days. “We had good work, a decent salary,” he said.

He and his wife, Liudmyla, said they had built a good life in Chasiv Yar. Fishing for pike, perch and catfish in the man-made lake behind their house; growing grapes, apples, beets and plums in their backyard plot; canning the fruit for the long winter; raising children and grandchildren.

“Life under the Soviet Union might not have been good,” Ms. Tsyhankova said, looking into her husband’s eyes for affirmation. “But it was stable.”

I heard this a lot.

When the Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991, Ukraine became an independent country. For younger people, this spelled new opportunity. But for Mr. Tsyhankov’s generation, it was like a crash of their whole life project.

The Unraveling

In February 2014, protesters in Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, chased [*Viktor Yanukovych*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/04/world/europe/ukraine-leader-was-defeated-even-before-he-was-ousted.html), Ukraine’s pro-Russia president, out of office. Mr. Yanukovych came from a Donbas steel town. In one stroke, Russia lost its ally and the Donbas elite its godfather. That is when the trouble started.

People flooded into the Donbas streets waving Russian flags. At first, said [*Alisa Sopova*](https://anthropology.princeton.edu/people/graduate-students/alisa-sopova), a journalist for a Donbas newspaper at the time, “We were sure they were fake people brought in from Russia to pose for Russian TV.”

“But when we went out and talked to them,” she said, “we learned they were locals, ***working-class*** people, mostly. And it was frustrating. They were just falling for manipulation, and we knew they’d suffer for it.”

Ms. Sopova, who is now studying anthropology at Princeton, tried to reason with some of them, including her grandmother. “I told her: ‘You’re using banks. You’re getting your pension. Do you realize what you’re supporting will destroy it all?’”

But they did not listen.

“They didn’t know it would turn out this way,” she said. “And now it’s too late.”

In Chasiv Yar, it was like a poison had been injected into the town’s bloodstream. The issue of language suddenly became fractious. Ukrainians have argued forever about whether it is right [*to speak so much Russian*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/29/world/europe/ukraine-russia-language.html). A critical aspect of Ukrainian independence was reviving the Ukrainian language, marginalized during Soviet times. But those arguments were typically confined to social media posts or intellectual debates, until this moment.

“I’d go into the supermarket to buy some meat, and the shopkeeper tells me, ‘If you don’t speak Ukrainian, I’m not going to sell you any meat,’” Mr. Tsyhankov said. “I’ve been speaking Russian my whole life. How do you think that made me feel?”

He looked down at his hands, humiliated even by the memory.

What became clear only later was that all of this had been orchestrated. Mr. Putin had [*done something similar in 2008 in South Ossetia and Abkhazia,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/19/world/europe/ukraine-georgia-war.html) two regions of Georgia, and before that the Russians had [*meddled in Moldova*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/23/world/europe/moldova-ukraine-russia.html), backing the breakaway Transnistria region. The tools were generally the same: bankrolling pro-Russia political parties; deploying intelligence agents to foment protests; sowing disinformation through Russian TV.

Mr. Putin’s strategy was to turn strategic slices of the former Soviet Union into separatist hotbeds to hobble young nations like Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, all struggling to break free from Moscow and move closer to Europe.

Under the Kremlin’s wing, Donbas’s separatists killed Ukrainian officials, took territory and declared the breakaway Donetsk People’s Republic and Luhansk People’s Republic. When Ukrainian forces rolled in to quell the rebellion, some residents saw them as occupiers. They spoke a different language, hailed from a different region, embraced a different culture — or so went the pro-Russia narrative. In some villages, babushkas lay down in the roads blocking Ukrainian tanks, officers said, and in one, an especially cunning babushka kept stealing the soldiers’ helmets.

“It was frustrating,” said Anatolii Mohyla, a Ukrainian military commander. “We’d come to liberate them and they’d give us the finger.”

Mr. Putin dispatched thousands of Russian troops to support the separatists, later saying he had been “forced to protect” the Russian-speaking population. Towns like Chasiv Yar were occupied by separatist fighters, then liberated by Ukrainian troops a few months later. By 2015, the heavy fighting had died down. But it was not like Mr. Putin forgot about the Donbas.

He upped the ante in 2021, saying, “Kyiv simply does not need the Donbas.” And on Feb. 21 of this year, three days before he invaded Ukraine, Mr. Putin accused the Ukrainian government of perpetrating a “genocide.” He justified the most cataclysmic war in decades by citing the very tensions he himself stoked.

The ‘Correctors’

In early April, the agricultural land around Chasiv Yar began to thaw. Mr. Khainus, the pro-Ukraine farmer, drove out to check a sunflower field. A Ukrainian military vehicle raced up. A soldier leaned out the window and fired an assault rifle, the bullets skipping up in the dirt. Mr. Khainus slammed on the brakes.

A Ukrainian commander he recognized, a man whom Mr. Khainus said he had complained about before, jumped out. The commander greeted him with a punch to the head, Mr. Khainus said, and then smashed him in the face with a rifle butt.

He does not remember much after that. He shared photographs of himself lying in a hospital bed with two black eyes. Military and law enforcement officials declined to comment.

Mr. Khainus remains a supporter of the military, saying, “One stupid person doesn’t represent the army.”

But, he added wryly: “It’s one thing to be a patriot in Kyiv. It’s another to be a patriot in the Donbas.”

At 9 p.m. on July 9, four cruise missiles slammed into a dormitory at the old ceramic plant. The buildings crumbled as if they were made out of sand. Viacheslav Boitsov, an emergency services official, said there were “no military facilities nearby.”

But according to Mr. Mohyla and Oleksandr Nevydomskyi, another Ukrainian military officer, Ukrainian soldiers were staying in that building. The night before, they said, a mysterious man was seen standing outside flashing light signals, most likely pinpointing the position.

The military calls such spies “correctors,” and they relay navigational information to the Russians to make missile and artillery strikes more precise. Ukrainian officials have arrested more than 20 and say correctors are often paid several hundred dollars after a target is hit. The strike in Chasiv Yar was one of the deadliest: 48 killed, including 18 soldiers, the officers said.

“For sure there are Russian agents in this town,” Mr. Mohyla said. “There might even be spies in our unit.”

The Days Ahead

Few in Chasiv Yar are confident that the town will stay in government hands.

Mr. Khainus said the Russians were steadily moving closer to his sunflower fields. About a week ago, a friend’s house was shelled. A day later, in an online messaging channel, separatist supporters said Mr. Khainus should be next, calling him a “hero” — adding an epithet.

Is he scared?

“Why should I be?” he said. “They’re nobodies.”

Mr. Tsyhankov, the retired dump truck driver nostalgic for the Soviet times, seemed pained by all of the bloodshed but did not blame the Russians or the separatists. “They’re doing the right thing,” he said. “They’re fighting for the Russian language and their territory.”

As he said goodbye, insisting that his guests take with them a jug of his homemade apple juice and some fresh green grapes, he shook his head at the enormity of it. “Why can’t we be friends with you guys, the Americans?” he asked. “Politics are keeping all of us hostage.”

Every night, the horizon in Chasiv Yar lights up with explosions. Ukrainian soldiers operate here almost as if they are on enemy territory, hiving themselves off from the public, watching their backs, traveling by night in long convoys of cars with the lights blacked out, the drivers wearing night vision goggles. According to separatist messaging channels, the Wagner mercenaries have reached the outskirts of Bakhmut, a major Donbas town. As for Soledar, it is now off limits to journalists, but volunteers there trying to rescue civilians say it is as deadly as ever.

People here used to describe the Donbas in simple terms like “beautiful,” “honest,” “unbreakable” and “free.”

Now it is destroyed, depopulated, sad and empty.

“It’s like the Rust Belt,” Ms. Sopova said. “It’s not needed anymore. All that industry is obsolete.”

Countless communities have risen in the Donbas. Many are now falling. Ms. Sopova glimpses a perhaps not so faraway future where the Donbas goes back to what it once was: a wild field.

Oleksandra Mykolyshyn contributed reporting.

Oleksandra Mykolyshyn contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Outside Chasiv Yar, a town in the Donbas, in eastern Ukraine. The war is heating up again in the region, where the Russians have been dug in for nearly a decade.; A family that had refused to leave Soledar, an old mining town in the Donbas, despite heavy shelling recently. “I’m not going,” one resident said outside her shrapnel-scarred house. “I’ve been here 40 years.”; Oleksandr Khainus at his sunflower farm near Chasiv Yar. In recent days, Russian troops have drawn ever closer. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM HUYLEBROEK FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A13)

**Load-Date:** September 18, 2022

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[***Tightening the Squeeze on Russia; DealBook Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65K5-FYS1-JBG3-63MH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 31, 2022 Tuesday 09:05 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS; dealbook

**Length:** 1754 words

**Byline:** Andrew Ross Sorkin, Vivian Giang, Stephen Gandel, Lauren Hirsch, Ephrat Livni and Jenny Gross

**Highlight:** What an embargo means for oil prices, plus a one-issue candidate whose issue is Elon Musk.

**Body**

What an embargo means for oil prices, plus a one-issue candidate whose issue is Elon Musk.

An oil embargo on Russia will take time to bite

Late last night, the European Union [*agreed to ban Russian oil imports*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/31/world/russia-ukraine-war#eu-reaches-agreement-on-a-russian-oil-import-ban) arriving by sea by the end of the year. The agreement, which was reached after weeks of wrangling among E.U. member states, could cut into Moscow’s ability to finance its invasion of Ukraine. The embargo applies to most oil imports from Russia.

The key word in the sanctions package is “most,” Geordie Wilkes, the head of research at Sucden Financial, told DealBook. “There’s no doubt that the whole sanctions package and this latest move from the E.U. will hurt Russia,” he said. How much it hurts will depend on Russia’s ability to find other buyers — and how much “most” turns out to be, Wilkes said. The deal includes a temporary exemption for oil via pipelines.

The embargo could drive already high oil prices even higher. That’s because it will put a further strain on inventories, which are already low and are likely to stay that way, given China’s expected easing of coronavirus lockdown measures and summertime demand for more power for air-conditioners, Wilkes said. The push for cleaner energy has meant that companies have not been investing in new equipment to bolster production, and this could further hurt supplies in the longer term, he said. Futures for Brent crude, the global benchmark, rose to a two-month high of around $120 a barrel today.

In the short term, Russia will most likely have no problem continuing to find buyers for its oil. Buyers in [*India*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/04/world/asia/india-russia-oil.html) and [*China*](https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/exclusive-china-quietly-increases-purchases-low-priced-russian-oil-2022-05-20/), the world’s biggest oil importer, are already snapping up Russian crude at bargain prices, and flows to these countries are likely to increase, analysts said. The damage of sanctions to Russia’s bottom line has been cushioned by persistently high oil prices.

Kpler, a firm that tracks petroleum shipping, estimates that Russian oil production actually edged up by about 200,000 barrels a day in May to 10.2 million barrels compared with April. Still, that was about 800,000 barrels below February’s daily levels.

Over time, the embargo will cost Russia billions of dollars a year. Russia’s energy industry is poised for a broad downturn once the restrictions kick in, and as major oil companies quit the country and sanctions curb imports of Western technology, [*The Times’s Stanley Reed writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/30/business/oil-embargo-russia.html).

Caroline Bain, the chief commodities economist at Capital Economics, told DealBook that while Russia would find other customers, “it’s going to be a disorderly process, and that will keep prices high in the near term.” She added: “We’re losing the most efficient supplier of oil to Europe at the moment.”

HERE’S WHAT’S HAPPENING

Shanghai is expected to ease Covid restrictions. Two months after China’s biggest city fell under a lockdown that [*rippled across the national economy*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/05/31/world/covid-19-mandates-vaccine-cases#shanghai-is-poised-to-ease-restrictions-as-infections-fall), Shanghai is poised to return to something closer to normal starting tomorrow. The city released plans to reopen shops and malls and revive buses and ferries.

Unilever gives the ​activist investor Nelson Peltz a seat on its board. Peltz said today that Unilever had significant potential and that he was looking forward to working with its management. Peltz’s [*Trian Fund Management holds a 1.5 percent stake in the consumer goods group*](https://www.ft.com/content/f7e72c63-9531-4d2b-9206-6e723dd1b3f0).

Senator Chuck Schumer tries to negotiate a compromise on new gun laws. President Biden on Sunday promised the families of the victims in the Texas shooting government action on gun violence, increasing pressure on the Senate. [*Schumer has raised expectations that a bipartisan deal on gun safety*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/30/us/politics/senate-guns-democracy.html), mental health and school security is possible.

Danone will send the equivalent of about five million bottles of nondairy infant formula to the U.S. The shipment is part of a push to ensure that babies with allergies to cow’s milk and other proteins [*have enough to eat*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/danone-to-fly-formula-to-the-u-s-for-babies-with-allergies-11653907727?mod=hp_lead_pos7) amid a nationwide shortage of formula. Nestlé’s C.E.O. said yesterday that [*no big shortages were expected outside the U.S.*](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/nestle-ceo-does-not-see-significant-baby-formula-shortages-outside-us-2022-05-30/)

New York City companies are opening offices where their workers live. To make the return to work more appealing, some companies have [*moved their offices out of Manhattan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/30/nyregion/nyc-manhattan-brooklyn-commute-offices.html?smid=url-share), easing employees’ commutes.

The candidate running against Elon Musk

Dan O’Dowd, a reclusive software billionaire, is running for Senate in California as a Democrat and will be on the ballot in next week’s primaries. But the person O’Dowd is really running against is not a candidate, or even a politician, Blake Hounshell writes in The Times’s [*On Politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/27/us/politics/california-senate-candidate-odowd-musk.html) newsletter.

All of O’Dowd’s campaign ads are focused on Elon Musk and his electric car company, Tesla, and most of them claim that the self-driving software that Tesla uses is unsafe. O’Dowd, who made his fortune building software for airplanes, says he has spent the past seven years trying to get regulators to take action against Tesla.

O’Dowd’s campaign is the latest instance of politics being used as a tool to influence business. Last year, [*the gun industry lobbied*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/28/business/dealbook/texas-banks-gun-law.html) the Texas Legislature to pass a law that punishes banks for, as the law puts it, “discriminating” against firearm companies. Lawmakers have also used their power to punish companies, particularly financial ones, that are trying [*to divest from fossil fuels*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/27/climate/republicans-blackrock-climate.html?campaign_id=0&amp;emc=edit_dk_20220527&amp;instance_id=0&amp;nl=dealbook&amp;regi_id=0&amp;segment_id=0&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=a315ecfde821c9f7faa61718b82ca92c).

What’s different about O’Dowd’s campaign is that it doesn’t focus on a hot-button political issue. O’Dowd doesn’t even appear to want to win. Instead, one of the main reasons he appears to be in the race is to get a better rate on advertising. [*Federal regulations*](https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/47/315) require broadcasters to provide steep discounts to qualified candidates for public office. But what O’Dowd is doing, experts say, appears to be allowed under election laws.

Musk is likely to be the focus of other politicians in the next election year. For Democrats, Musk may make for political pay dirt. Musk’s plan to buy Twitter, and potentially reinstate Donald Trump’s account, has raised Musk’s value as a political target. He has long been a talking point for progressives, like Senator Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, who say billionaires don’t pay their fair share in taxes. In turn, Musk has bashed Democrats and recently said that he would now [*“vote Republican.”*](https://twitter.com/elonmusk/status/1526997132858822658)

“I was out to dinner and the person said to me, ‘What do you think of Buffett’s investment?’ And I was like, ‘What?’”

— Shari Redstone, the chairwoman of Paramount, on how she learned this month that Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway had [*amassed a $2.6 billion stake in her company*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/29/business/media/paramount-streaming.html?searchResultPosition=1).

Rethinking Jack Welch

In his new book, David Gelles, a New York Times correspondent, examines corporate America through the evolution of General Electric and its leader, the business executive Jack Welch, from 1981 to 2001. The book, “[*The Man Who Broke Capitalism*](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/The-Man-Who-Broke-Capitalism/David-Gelles/9781982176440): How Jack Welch Gutted the Heartland and Crushed the Soul of Corporate America — and How to Undo His Legacy,” is out today. This interview with David has been edited and condensed.

Do you think Welch got a pass during his lifetime?

Initially, he didn’t. Just a couple years after taking over G.E., he earned the nickname “Neutron Jack” after unleashing a series of mass layoffs that destabilized the American ***working class***. What’s so remarkable is that he recovered from that — thanks largely to his ability to drive G.E.’s share price ever higher — and ended his career with Fortune magazine crowning him “manager of the century.”

In the [*excerpt from your book*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/21/business/jack-welch-ge-ceo-behavior.html) in The Times, you suggested that Welch’s leadership style led to the rise of Elon Musk. Why? Who is better?

I see Musk as the inheritor of Welch’s legacy as a brash, impulsive C.E.O. operating with a sense of impunity. But when it comes to their actual track records as businessmen, there’s a world of difference between the two men. Perhaps most importantly, Welch was a manager, and made his name and fortune by acquiring companies, shuffling assets and doubling down on finance. Musk, for all his complexity, is ultimately a builder, having created two thriving companies in Tesla and SpaceX.

What do you think about Jack Welch’s legacy with female executives? He was criticized for not promoting them.

Our former colleague Mary Williams Walsh wrote what I think is [*the authoritative piece*](https://www.nytimes.com/2000/09/03/business/where-ge-falls-short-diversity-at-the-top.html) on this topic in 2000, just before Welch retired. The answer is: It wasn’t great. While the ’80s and ’90s were, of course, a different era, there is no doubt that as many more women assumed senior roles at big companies around the country, there were conspicuously few women in senior roles at G.E.

Do you think Welch’s influence on the business world will be reversed?

We can’t change history, and we can’t change the last 40 years of capitalism in America. What we can do is chart a new path forward. It’s important to remember the rise of [*Friedmanism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/13/business/dealbook/milton-friedman-essay-anniversary.html), the rise of shareholder primacy, the rise of Welch and everything he stood for was a multigenerational project.

I believe we can have a more just economy. But it’s going to be a generational project, one that takes decades and decades. Company by company, executive by executive, union drive by union drive, at the warehouses of Amazon and the coffee shops of Starbucks, we can, piece by piece, create an economy that’s better for workers, better for communities and is better for the environment.

THE SPEED READ

Deals

* GSK will buy the [*U.S. biotech company Affinivax*](https://www.reuters.com/markets/deals/britains-gsk-buy-affinivax-33-bln-deal-2022-05-31/) for up to $3.3 billion. (Reuters)

1. Richard Li’s insurance company FWD has reportedly [*delayed its Hong Kong I.P.O.*](https://www.ft.com/content/a24778d2-70ee-4fa9-8db1-d63c41725f50) (FT)
2. [*Ripple and FTX*](https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/31/ripple-ftx-on-the-hunt-for-acquisition-targets-as-market-crashes.html), two top crypto companies, are on the lookout for acquisitions. (CNBC)

Policy

* In an opinion piece, President Biden writes about [*his plan for fighting inflation*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/my-plan-for-fighting-inflation-joe-biden-gas-prices-economy-unemployment-jobs-covid-11653940654?mod=article_inline). (WSJ)

1. Several states are putting more money and effort into [*combating false and misleading information*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/technology/misinformation-sheriff-election-midterms.html) about elections. (NYT)
2. “How a Florida Power Project Flew Under [*the Regulatory Radar*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/business/energy-environment/florida-power-light-electric-line.html)” (NYT)
3. Deutsche Bank’s offices in Frankfurt were [*raided by the police*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-05-31/deutsche-bank-s-dws-unit-raided-amid-allegations-of-greenwashing), who are investigating accusations of “greenwashing.” (Bloomberg)

Best of the rest

* [*Wall Street’s losing streak ends*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/business/stocks-bear-market.html), but the concerns that drove the panic remain unresolved. (NYT)

1. The profits engine that drove stocks to their highs [*may be working in reverse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/31/business/stock-market-company-profits.html). (NYT)
2. Ted Sarandos of Netflix talks about [*the company’s stock plunge*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/28/style/ted-sarandos-netflix.html) and backing Dave Chappelle. (NYT)
3. Goldman’s new unlimited vacation policy is [*less generous than it sounds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/27/business/goldman-sachs-unlimited-vacation.html). (NYT)

[*David F. Gallagher*](http://dfg.im/) contributed to today’s DealBook.

We’d like your feedback. Please email thoughts and suggestions to [*dealbook@nytimes.com*](mailto:dealbook@nytimes.com).

PHOTO: Protesters in Belgium. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Ksenia Kuleshova for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 31, 2022

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[***A Reckoning by Ross Douthat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:616B-MFB1-JBG3-64RT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 1, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 12

**Length:** 1442 words

**Byline:** By Ross Douthat

**Body**

The 2016 election should have forced change on all our factions. With Trump's help, they've all reverted back to type.

In the original Greek the term ''apocalypse'' refers to an unveiling, the gray rain clouds of the everyday world torn away and something long hidden finally revealed. The political apocalypse of 2016, when Donald Trump improbably vanquished the establishment of both parties, fits this ancient definition perfectly: It was a moment when all kinds of uncomfortable truths about American life were suddenly exposed, when the hidden realities of our country and our coalitions were suddenly dragged up into the light, when the failures in both parties and every faction were laid bare.

So when we talk about what's been lost in the four years of Trump's administration, we should start with the lost opportunities to address what was revealed in 2016. These failures aren't universal; there has been some reckoning with what the last presidential election meant, some attempts at treatment in response to a ''that's why you got Trump'' diagnosis.

But there has also been a widespread retreat from revelation, let alone from any subsequent conversion, and a rush back to the comforts of one's preconceptions and one's tribe.

For the right, the major revelations of 2016 were threefold. The celebrity bombast of Trump's campaign revealed how much the right's media-entertainment complex, envisioned as an adjunct to conservatism's political program, had instead swallowed up the movement. His birtherism and race-baiting revealed that white-identity politics had more potency, more support within the larger right, than many conservative intellectuals had ever wanted to admit. And the success of his America First arguments on economics and foreign policy exposed the gulf between the actual sentiments of Republican voters and the hawkish, limited-government orthodoxies of Reaganite conservatism in its decadent phase.

For the center, the revelations of 2016 were about policy failures that had been mostly invisible until Trump came along -- above all, the way that center-left and center-right visions of post-Cold War ''openness,'' to free trade or low-skilled immigration or ever-greater-integration with the People's Republic of China, simultaneously failed to achieve their geopolitical goals and hollowed out communities across the American heartland, creating a deadly, demagogy-ready vacuum where work and church and family used to be.

For the left, the revelations were about how its own victories within the Democratic coalition, the triumph of social liberalism over cultural conservatism, had forged a party that no longer connected with a lot of white, ***working-class*** voters (and more than a few Hispanics) no matter how much new federal spending it promised. Like Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party and Social Democratic parties across Europe, the Democrats' shift leftward in the 2010s accelerated their transformation into a party of the professional classes, culturally separated from many of the struggling blue-collar voters they claimed to represent.

So how did right, left and center respond to these revelations? Sometimes with recognition and adaptation, but more often with denial.

On the right, this denial took the form of a concerted attempt to just ignore Trump's Twitter feed, to play ''hear no evil'' with his toxic rhetoric while steering his administration back toward precisely the stale orthodoxies that his campaign had rejected. For every figure who tried to make something substantive out of Trumpism (Josh Hawley) or repudiate its moral turpitude (Mitt Romney), there were many more Republicans who behaved as though Mike Pence had been elected president, answering Trump's excesses with a public shrug and an off-the-record lament, and governing as though they had been given a mandate to do just the Republican usual -- cut taxes on high earners while pretending to cut spending, with Trumpian populism reduced from its initial economic ambitions to a constant owning of the libs.

In the center, any sustained reckoning with the failings of the neoliberal era was eclipsed by a self-flattering narrative of liberalism desperately imperiled, authoritarianism on the march, that allowed pundits and ex-officials to posture as Resistance leaders and pretend to be pontificating in the shadow of a 1930s-style putsch. The major centrist project of the Trump era wasn't a sustained reassessment of where its leaders had gone wrong; it was the hysterical overhyping of the Russia investigation, in a paranoid style that made seedy Trumpian malfeasance out to be a vast Kremlin conspiracy, the casus belli of a new Cold War.

Finally, on the left there were some attempts, via the Bernie Sanders movement, to build a left-wing politics responsive to the appeals of right-wing populism. But the gravitational pull of the cultural left was the stronger force, dragging Sanders away from his economics-first message, his skepticism of identity politics, toward a woke socialism that appealed to neither the white ***working class*** nor the African-American voters who ultimately made Joe Biden the Democratic nominee. And with Sanders's defeat, the left turned decisively toward the easier opportunities afforded by its power in elite institutions and bureaucracies, in which class politics took second place to the promise of corporate H.R. departments assigning intersectional reading lists, forever.

Of course, all the lost opportunities I'm describing owe a great deal to Trump's own presidential conduct. Had he governed as he campaigned, had he dropped into Washington trying to cut infrastructure deals with purple-state senators instead of letting Paul Ryan run domestic policy for the first two years, it might have forced real policy adaptation on both parties. Had he been less Mafioso-like in his rhetoric, less brazen in his financial self-dealing, it would have forced centrists away from their Resistance poses and into a more constructive stance.

Likewise, when the pandemic and the economic crisis and the George Floyd protests came along, he had an opportunity to make use of the two big ideas that emerged on the right in response to his initial victory -- so-called state capacity libertarianism and common-good conservatism, overlapping perspectives that stressed the importance of effective institutions and socioeconomic solidarity, against the tendency of limited-government conservatism to decay into anti-government individualism.

Instead -- unsurprisingly -- Trump embraced precisely that decay. His management of the pandemic has been a case study in what you might call state-incapacity libertarianism, his handling of racial protest was deliberately polarizing rather than unifying (and not even successfully polarizing, since it left the majority on the other side), and his early push for sweeping Covid relief spending gave way to indifference and distraction as the autumn phase of legislation stalled.

Overall we can say that Trump enacted the fantasy (or nightmare, from a liberal perspective) of a populist government but never figured out how to translate that image into political or policy reality, which enabled other factions to persist in their ideological bubbles and self-flattering fantasies as well. And now that reality has taken its revenge of Trump's incompetence, the whole exhausting experience has made the idea of a simple reset, a return to the before-times of 2014 or so -- a ''kill switch'' on the virtual adventure of the Trump era, as the Portuguese writer-diplomat Bruno Maçães put it recently -- much more politically potent than it might otherwise have been.

Which is one reason that Biden is likely to be his successor in the White House, as the aging avatar of the pre-Trump establishment, even as Trump's own party girds itself for a return to its circa-2014 positions.

After so much failure and derangement, there are worse things than a reset. But it's still the case that too many of the figures, Republican and Democrat, who are poised to be restored to their prior positions on the chessboard resemble the restored Bourbons after Napoleon, having ''learned nothing and forgotten nothing'' across the last four years. Which suggests that what we've lost above all in the Trump years is the chance not to repeat the experience soon enough.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/30/opinion/trump-republican-democratic-party.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/30/opinion/trump-republican-democratic-party.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2020

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[***Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction: Sunday, March 01st 2020***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YB8-KK41-JBG3-6050-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 1, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 481 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the March 01, 2020 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending February 15, 2020. An asterisk (\*) indicates that a book's sales are barely distinguishable from those of the book above it. A dagger (?) indicates that some retailers report receiving bulk orders. For an explanation of our methodology, visit [*http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers*](http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers).

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|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Weeks | Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | OPEN BOOK, by Jessica Simpson with Kevin Carr O?Leary. (Dey St.) The singer, actress and fashion designer discloses times of success, trauma and addiction. |
| 2 | 2 | 4 | A VERY STABLE GENIUS, by Philip Rucker and Carol Leonnig. (Penguin Press) The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists use firsthand accounts to chart patterns of behavior within the Trump administration. |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | PROFILES IN CORRUPTION, by Peter Schweizer. (Harper) The author of ?Clinton Cash? gives his evaluations of members of the Democratic Party. |
| 4 | 4 | 104 | EDUCATED, by Tara Westover. (Random House) The daughter of survivalists, who is kept out of school, educates herself enough to leave home for university. |
| 5 | 7 | 62 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Crown) The former first lady describes how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. |
| 6 | 8 | 23 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Little, Brown) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts and misunderstandings. |
| 7 | 6 | 9 | THE MAMBA MENTALITY, by Kobe Bryant. (Melcher/MCD/Farrar, Straus & Giroux) Various skills and techniques used on the court by the Los Angeles Lakers player. |
| 8 | 5 | 3 | WHY WE'RE POLARIZED, by Ezra Klein. (Avid Reader) The editor at large and co-founder of Vox offers his take on what causes divisions in America. |
| 9 | 10 | 23 | MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE, by Lori Gottlieb. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) A psychotherapist gains unexpected insights when she becomes another therapist?s patient. |
| 10 | 13 | 11 | HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST, by Ibram X. Kendi. (One World) A primer for creating a more just and equitable society through identifying and opposing racism. |
| 11 | 15 | 18 | THE BODY, by Bill Bryson. (Doubleday) An owner?s manual of the human body covering various parts, functions and what happens when things go wrong. |
| 12 | 12 | 2 | THE BIG GOODBYE, by Sam Wasson. (Flatiron) The making of the film "Chinatown" and shifts in Hollywood during the 1970s. |
| 13 |  | 3 | WHY WE CAN'T SLEEP, by Ada Calhoun. (Grove) The cultural and political contexts of the crises that Generation X women face. |
| 14 |  | 1 | NATURE'S BEST HOPE, by Douglas W. Tallamy. (Timber) Potential grass-roots solutions citizens might take to help reverse declining wildlife populations. |
| 15 |  | 4 | TIGHTROPE, by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. (Knopf) The Pulitzer Prize-winning authors examine issues affecting ***working-class*** Americans. |

**Load-Date:** March 2, 2020

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[***The Opportunities We Lost Under Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:615W-PJR1-JBG3-618V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 30, 2020 Friday 18:03 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1446 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** The 2016 election should have forced change on all our factions. With Trump’s help, they’ve all reverted back to type.

**Body**

The 2016 election should have forced change on all our factions. With Trump’s help, they’ve all reverted back to type.

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The Times is committed to publishing [*a diversity of letters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/02/us/coronavirus-apocalypse-religion.html) to the editor. We’d like to hear what you think about this or any of our articles. Here are some [*tips*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/02/us/coronavirus-apocalypse-religion.html). And here’s our email: [*letters@nytimes.com*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/02/us/coronavirus-apocalypse-religion.html).

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 1, 2020

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[***'We Want Change': Young People Aim to Upend Philippine Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BY-C351-DXY4-X0N9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 2, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1508 words

**Byline:** By Sui-Lee Wee

**Body**

As the election in the Philippines nears, tens of thousands of young people who fear another Marcos presidency are rallying around Leni Robredo, the country's vice president.

VALENZUELA CITY, Philippines -- John Benvir Serag knocked on doors in the ***working-class*** neighborhood, wearing his pink ''Youth Vote for Leni'' T-shirt and holding a stack of fliers. He has spent nearly every day in the past month trying to explain to strangers why Leni Robredo is the best person to lead the Philippines.

''What are you looking for in a president?'' Mr. Serag asked an older woman, ahead of the country's presidential election in May.

''Of course, someone who does not steal,'' she responded.

''Right! Leni has no trace of corruption,'' Mr. Serag said. ''Also, she is not a thief.''

Anyone who made eye contact with the 26-year-old Mr. Serag in this neighborhood was an opening. Questions about her proposal for clean government? Needed more information about her plans for farmers and businesses?

In the past six years, many young people in the Philippines have grown increasingly disenchanted with President Rodrigo Duterte's leadership: both his brutal war on drugs and his approach to the pandemic. They have watched men and boys being gunned down in the streets and experienced the mental toll from a prolonged shutdown of schools, two years and running.

In this election, many have come out in full force for Ms. Robredo, the country's vice president, who is an outspoken critic of Mr. Duterte and a frequent target of his insults. They are facing long odds, with Ms. Robredo polling a far second behind the front-runner, Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the only son and namesake of the late dictator.

They are also fighting a wave of disinformation that has recast the Marcos dictatorship as what supporters of the younger Marcos call a ''golden age.'' Some of their peers are swayed by YouTube videos that portray Mr. Marcos as a cool parent, while some among an older generation are nostalgic for strongman rule.

Presidential elections in the Philippines have long been a contest for the hearts of young Filipinos. This time, at least half of the record 65 million registered voters are between the ages of 18 and 30.

But they have rarely been marked by this level of passion and intensity. As of Feb. 25, two million volunteers had signed up for Ms. Robredo's campaign, according to Barry Gutierrez, her spokesman. Many of them are first-time voters or too young to vote. Her rallies have drawn tens of thousands of people.

''It's like my mom's a rock star every time she goes around, and this is something very surprising to us,'' said Tricia Robredo, one of Ms. Robredo's daughters. ''Especially because we've been going off our experience the past six years where my mom has been very vilified online.''

Dozens of groups have sprouted up, combining their shared interests in K-pop and Taylor Swift with getting the vote out for Ms. Robredo. The ''Swifties4Leni'' wear T-shirts with the hashtag #OnlyTheYoung, referencing Ms. Swift's track about youth empowerment against the ''big bad man and his big bad clan.''

Many of Ms. Robredo's young supporters are united in their desire to prevent another Marcos from becoming president. Aside from the human rights abuses committed during his father's 20-year rule, Mr. Marcos -- who is known by his nickname, Bongbong -- has been convicted of tax fraud, refused to pay his family's estate taxes, and misrepresented his education at Oxford University.

Ms. Robredo, a lawyer and an economist, beat Mr. Marcos narrowly in 2016 to win the vice presidency, which is separately elected from the presidency. She has vowed to stop the extrajudicial killings in the drug war. During the pandemic, she sent medical equipment to patients and dispatched supplies to frontliners. She has helped marginalized communities and is usually one of the first top officials to visit disaster-stricken sites.

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing Ms. Robredo's young volunteers has been the wave of disinformation that has lionized the Marcos era and vilified Ms. Robredo as a communist. Spliced videos have also portrayed her as stuttering and unintelligent.

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The youth vote remains divided between Ms. Robredo and Mr. Marcos. Many young people remain big fans of Mr. Marcos -- a survey has shown that seven out of 10 Filipinos aged 18 to 24 want him to be president. The country's textbooks dwell little on the atrocities of the Marcos era. Mr. Marcos's young supporters say they enjoy watching his YouTube videos, which often feature his family in game-show segments.

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In past elections, the youths in the Philippines were mostly concerned about bread-and-butter issues such as jobs. They were often frustrated by the political dynasties that dominated the establishment, but felt there was little they could do to change it. Youth turnout in the 2016 election was about 30 percent, compared with 82 percent for the general population.

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But she remained curious about the appeal of Ms. Robredo. In March, she decided to attend a rally for the candidate. She saw the young volunteers distribute free food and water. Her daughter was in front of the stage.

That night, the elder Ms. Tinao, who lives in a neighborhood of Marcos supporters, found her daughter's banner promoting Ms. Robredo and strung it up on her front gate.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/01/world/asia/philippines-election-marcos-robredo.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/01/world/asia/philippines-election-marcos-robredo.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: A rally for Leni Robredo in early April in Pampanga, the Philippines. Ms. Robredo, the country's vice president, is polling a distant second in the presidential race.

John Benvir Serag in the Youth Vote for Leni headquarters. He and his army of volunteers have been fighting a wave of disinformation about Ms. Robredo.

K-Pop Stans for Leni at a rally. Dozens of groups have sprouted up, combining shared interests in K-pop, Taylor Swift and getting out votes for Ms. Robredo.

A Youth Vote for Leni worker canvassing in Manila. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., son of the former dictator, leads in the polls. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH REYES MORALES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***‘We Want a Change’: In the Philippines, Young People Aim to Upend an Election***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BS-FWS1-DXY4-X2DW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 1, 2022 Sunday 03:59 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 1597 words

**Byline:** Sui-Lee Wee

**Highlight:** As the election in the Philippines nears, tens of thousands of young people who fear another Marcos presidency are rallying around Leni Robredo, the country’s vice president.

**Body**

As the election in the Philippines nears, tens of thousands of young people who fear another Marcos presidency are rallying around Leni Robredo, the country’s vice president.

VALENZUELA CITY, Philippines — John Benvir Serag knocked on doors in the ***working-class*** neighborhood, wearing his pink “Youth Vote for Leni” T-shirt and holding a stack of fliers. He has spent nearly every day in the past month trying to explain to strangers why [*Leni Robredo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/19/world/asia/duterte-philippines-leni-robredo.html) is the best person to lead the Philippines.

“What are you looking for in a president?” Mr. Serag asked an older woman, ahead of the country’s presidential election in May.

“Of course, someone who does not steal,” she responded.

“Right! Leni has no trace of corruption,” Mr. Serag said. “Also, she is not a thief.”

Anyone who made eye contact with the 26-year-old Mr. Serag in this neighborhood was an opening. Questions about her proposal for clean government? Needed more information about her plans for farmers and businesses?

In the past six years, many young people in the Philippines [*have grown increasingly disenchanted*](https://www.publicusasia.com/ncr-covid-19-survey-3-68-approve-of-duterte-admin-response-to-covid-19/) with [*President Rodrigo Duterte*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/03/21/world/asia/rodrigo-duterte-philippines-president-strongman.html)’s leadership: both his [*brutal war on drugs*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/12/07/world/asia/rodrigo-duterte-philippines-drugs-killings.html) and his [*approach to the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/15/world/asia/manila-coronavirus-lockdown-slum.html). They have watched [*men and boys being gunned down in the streets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/15/world/asia/philippines-duterte-drugs-icc.html) and experienced the mental toll from a [*prolonged shutdown of schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/13/world/asia/philippines-students-remote-covid.html), two years and running.

In this election, many have come out in full force for Ms. Robredo, the country’s vice president, who is an outspoken critic of Mr. Duterte and a frequent target of his insults. They are facing long odds, with Ms. Robredo polling a far second behind the front-runner, [*Ferdinand Marcos Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/world/asia/philippines-marcos-president-election.html), the only son and namesake of the late dictator.

They are also fighting a wave of disinformation that has recast the Marcos dictatorship as what supporters of the younger Marcos call a “golden age.” Some of their peers are swayed by YouTube videos that portray Mr. Marcos as a cool parent, while some among an older generation are nostalgic for strongman rule.

Presidential elections in the Philippines have long been a contest for the hearts of young Filipinos. This time, at least half of the record 65 million registered voters[*are between the ages of 18 and 30*](https://opinion.inquirer.net/149856/understanding-the-youth-vote).

But they have rarely been marked by this level of passion and intensity. As of Feb. 25, two million volunteers had signed up for Ms. Robredo’s campaign, according to Barry Gutierrez, her spokesman. Many of them are first-time voters or too young to vote. Her rallies have drawn tens of thousands of people.

“It’s like my mom’s a rock star every time she goes around, and this is something very surprising to us,” said Tricia Robredo, one of Ms. Robredo’s daughters. “Especially because we’ve been going off our experience the past six years where my mom has been very vilified online.”

Dozens of groups have sprouted up, combining their shared interests in K-pop and Taylor Swift with getting the vote out for Ms. Robredo. The “Swifties4Leni” wear T-shirts with the hashtag #OnlyTheYoung, referencing Ms. Swift’s track about youth empowerment against the “big bad man and his big bad clan.”

Many of Ms. Robredo’s young supporters are united in their desire to prevent another Marcos from becoming president. Aside from the human rights abuses committed during his father’s 20-year rule, Mr. Marcos — who is known by his nickname, Bongbong — has been [*convicted of tax fraud*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/17/world/asia/marcos-jr-philippines-presidential-election.html), refused to pay his family’s estate taxes, and misrepresented his education at Oxford University.

Ms. Robredo, a lawyer and an economist, beat Mr. Marcos narrowly in 2016 to win the vice presidency, which is separately elected from the presidency. She has vowed to stop the extrajudicial killings in the drug war. During the pandemic, she sent medical equipment to patients and dispatched supplies to frontliners. She has helped marginalized communities and is usually one of the first top officials to visit disaster-stricken sites.

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The youth vote remains divided between Ms. Robredo and Mr. Marcos. Many young people remain big fans of Mr. Marcos — a survey has shown that [*seven out of 10 Filipinos aged 18 to 24 want him to be president*](https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/marcos-jr-top-pick-generation-z-pulse-asia-survey-february-2022/). The country’s textbooks dwell little on the atrocities of the Marcos era. Mr. Marcos’s young supporters say they enjoy watching his YouTube videos, which often feature his family in game-show segments.

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PHOTOS: A rally for Leni Robredo in early April in Pampanga, the Philippines. Ms. Robredo, the country’s vice president, is polling a distant second in the presidential race.; John Benvir Serag in the Youth Vote for Leni headquarters. He and his army of volunteers have been fighting a wave of disinformation about Ms. Robredo.; K-Pop Stans for Leni at a rally. Dozens of groups have sprouted up, combining shared interests in K-pop, Taylor Swift and getting out votes for Ms. Robredo.; A Youth Vote for Leni worker canvassing in Manila. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., son of the former dictator, leads in the polls. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANNAH REYES MORALES FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Democrats Go Hunting For Missing Voters; The On Politics Newsletter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64H7-FNY1-JBG3-6314-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 10, 2022 Monday 19:16 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1323 words

**Byline:** Blake Hounshell and Leah Askarinam

**Highlight:** Some strategists say the party needs a “radical departure” from its longstanding reliance on demographic changes to give Democrats a stable hold on political power.

**Body**

Some strategists say the party needs a “radical departure” from its longstanding reliance on demographic changes to give Democrats a stable hold on political power.

When Donald J. Trump won the presidency in 2016, he ignited a debate within the Democratic Party over what sort of coalition it needed to assemble to win power. As Trump flirts with another run in 2024, the party’s strategy is very much a live discussion today.

There are those who say Democrats need to do more to appeal to white suburbanites, and those who think it’s more important to focus on growing core constituencies, like African Americans, Hispanics, and younger voters. And there are those, [*notably the influential data analyst David Shor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/08/opinion/democrats-david-shor-education-polarization.html), who say the party has drifted too far away from the interests of ***working-class*** voters of all backgrounds.

It’s a discussion that touches on everything from the policies that Democrats develop — Green New Deal or middle-class tax cuts? — to the messages they deliver to voters: Abolish ICE or secure the border first?

But where the debate gets especially concrete is over voter registration, a subject with a rich tradition closely identified with the civil rights movement of the 1960s.

The latest entry into the debate comes from Forward Majority, a Democratic-aligned super PAC focused on winning the sorts of state legislative races that are [*increasingly central*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/24/us/elections/democrats-state-elections.html) in American politics.

In a provocative new [*“Blueprint for Power,”*](https://www.forwardmajority.org/news/blueprint-for-power) the group calls for a “radical departure” from the Democratic Party’s existing strategy, which has left Republicans in command of key state legislatures across the country.

“We need to claw our way back to power to prevent election subversion,” Vicky Hausman, founder and co-chief executive of Forward Majority, said in an interview, expressing a common fear on the left that in 2024 Republicans will use those statehouse majorities to steal the next presidential election. Forward Majority [*has identified*](https://www.forwardmajority.org/news/blueprint-for-power) nearly 2 million unregistered voters it sees as likely Democratic, largely in suburban areas that the group says are critical to winning those legislatures back.

The new data comes as [*Republicans have begun to outpace Democrats*](https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/575275-democrats-voter-registration-edge-shrinks-in-key-states?rl=1) in voter registration in major swing states, including Florida, Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Worse for Democrats, the coronavirus pandemic disrupted the usual pathways that the party had used to bring in new voters: sign-ups at the Department of Motor Vehicles and face-to-face field work. And it comes as President Biden faces growing skepticism among African Americans over whether he has a formula to overcome voting restrictions pushed by G.O.P.-led state legislatures — the topic of a high-profile address that he plans to give on Tuesday in Atlanta.

An analysis by Catalist, a Democratic data firm, shows that in 2020, the Democrats’ traditional edge in voter registration shrank to nine percentage points in key states, down from a 19-percentage-point advantage over Republicans in 2009.

The overall picture might not be so grim for Democrats, because newer registrants are still leaning Democratic at typical rates, even if they register as independents. The trend has nonetheless alarmed some party insiders.

“There’s a big deficit building up on the Democratic side, which could start becoming consequential,” said Michael Podhorzer, a strategist and former co-chair of Catalist.

Demographics as destiny

For more than a decade, the Democratic Party has assured itself that “[*demographics is destiny*](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0036QVPEU/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&amp;btkr=1)” — that a younger, more diverse electorate will inevitably propel Democrats to stable national majorities.

But as much as that approach has worked in presidential elections — Joe Biden beat Donald Trump by [*more than 7 million votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/03/us/elections/results-president.html) in 2020 — it has been less sound at the local level.

Most voter registration programs on the left aren’t focused on the closely fought suburban and exurban areas that are crucial to winning state legislative majorities, Forward Majority argues.

Democrats made a strategic error, the group says, by leaving too much of the difficult and expensive task of voter registration to nonprofit advocacy organizations. Because those allied groups are also officially nonpartisan, they focus on signing up carefully chosen demographic groups, such as young voters or people of color in cities and on college campuses. Their voter registration drives tend to look a lot like [*When We All Vote*](https://whenweallvote.org/about-us/), Michelle Obama’s celebrity-packed nonprofit, which describes its mission as “helping to close the race and age gap.”

Nobody in the Democratic Party is arguing that such efforts are unwelcome; the [*New Georgia Project*](https://newgeorgiaproject.org/about/), which has registered several hundred thousand voters since 2014, helped Democrats take two Senate seats in Georgia last year. In September, the Democratic National Committee [*announced a $5 million investment in voter registration*](https://democrats.org/news/dnc-announces-nearly-5-million-voter-registration-campaign/), modeled on that success in Georgia. And it’s worth noting that [*American suburbs are increasingly diverse*](https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2015/05/26/the-rise-of-melting-pot-suburbs/), so it’s not necessarily the case that more targeted, party-driven efforts would focus on white voters at the expense of voters of color.

Still, it’s harder, not to mention more expensive, for nonprofit groups to identify far-flung potential voters in suburban areas that are less dense than urban cores. Not to mention, setting up a booth outside the wrong Walmart might inadvertently yield more Republicans than Democrats.

But Forward Majority says that if Democrats want to win back power in state capitols, they’re going to need to get comfortable targeting new voters at strip malls and big-box retail stores, and to stop thinking that a blunt-instrument approach on college campuses and in downtowns will save them.

“We need a scalpel instead of a hammer,” said Hausman.

What to read

* Senator Joe Manchin III of West Virginia finds himself torn between the interests of coal miners and mine owners, [*Jonathan Weisman writes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/10/us/politics/manchin-coal-miners.html): “With the miners now officially on the opposite side of the mine owners, it signaled the escalation of a behind-the-scenes struggle centered in Mr. Manchin’s home state to sway the balking senator, whose skepticism about his party’s marquee domestic policy measure has emerged as a potentially fatal impediment to its enactment.”

1. At first, Representative Jim Jordan said he planned to engage with the congressional panel investigating the Jan. 6 riot. Now, [*Luke Broadwater reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/09/us/politics/jim-jordan-jan-6-panel.html), the Ohio Republican is refusing to cooperate. But there’s one person whose testimony could be especially critical to the probe: [*the former vice president, Mike Pence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/10/us/politics/pence-jan-6-testimony.html).
2. Symone D. Sanders, the former spokeswoman for Vice President Kamala Harris, [*spoke with Michael M. Grynbaum*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/10/business/media/symone-sanders-msnbc.html) about landing a new show on MSNBC, fulfilling a childhood dream. “I picked up a spoon, a fork, a remote or whatever was there, and I would report on the kitchen,” she told Grynbaum. “I think I watched too much evening news as a child.”

One more thing…

Jill Abramson, a former New York Times executive editor, [*reviews “Chasing History,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/07/books/review/carl-bernstein-chasing-history.html) by Carl Bernstein, a new book she describes as “a rollicking memoir about the golden age of newspapers.”

But how much nostalgia is too much? “If you count the books Bernstein co-authored with Bob Woodward about their legendary coverage of Watergate for The Washington Post (‘All the President’s Men’ and ‘The Final Days’) and ‘[*Loyalties,’*](https://www.nytimes.com/1989/03/05/books/the-left-side-of-childhood.html)the book he published in 1989 about his parents’ struggles during McCarthyism, this is Bernstein’s fourth time writing about his life and work,” Abramson writes. “Even for one of the country’s most famous reporters, that’s a lot of Bernstein.”

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: The coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the usual pathways that Democrats have used to bring in new voters: sign-ups at the Department of Motor Vehicles and face-to-face field work. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Sarah Blesener for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Is American Democracy Built to Last?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65BD-3651-DXY4-X0SC-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 29, 2022 Friday 19:35 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1728 words

**Byline:** Blake Hounshell

**Highlight:** Yascha Mounk’s new book questions deeply held beliefs about the stability of Western societies.

**Body**

Yascha Mounk’s new book questions deeply held beliefs about the stability of Western societies.

When Yascha Mounk went on a German television program to talk about the rise of authoritarianism in Western democracies, he never expected a seemingly innocuous remark to cause such a stir.

“We are embarking on a historically unique experiment — that of turning a monoethnic and monocultural democracy into a multiethnic one,” Mounk said.

“I think it will work,” he continued, betraying some doubt in his mind. “But of course it also causes all kinds of disruptions.”

The observation made Mounk an instant target of extremists on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. “Who agreed to this experiment?” one far-right German website raged. The Daily Stormer, an American neo-Nazi website, attacked Mounk’s Jewish heritage with an allusion to Auschwitz.

That experience inspired Mounk’s new book, “[*The Great Experiment: Why Diverse Democracies Fall Apart and How They Can Endure*](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B099VYZXPQ/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&amp;btkr=1),” which warns that countries like the United States are not as stable or immune to violent conflict as they appear.

“The history of diverse societies is grim,” Mounk writes. Surveying the turbulent history of the world’s democracies, he frets that they have “worryingly little experience” with being truly inclusive. Politicians like Donald Trump, Marine Le Pen and Viktor Orban, he says, might be only the vanguard of a backlash against ethnic and religious diversity that could end democracy as we know it.

This is a book that Mounk, a public intellectual and political scientist at the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies, is uniquely suited to write. Born in Munich to the descendants of Polish Holocaust survivors, educated at the University of Cambridge and Harvard, naturalized as an American citizen, he describes himself as a “Jew with an unplaceable accent” — a self-deprecating nod to his lifelong experience of feeling like a cultural outsider wherever he goes.

Our conversation, edited for length and clarity, is below.

It’s in the title of your book. So tell us, why do diverse democracies fall apart?

It’s tempting to think that it shouldn’t be hard to build a diverse democracy. You know, how hard is it to be tolerant? How hard is it not to hate your neighbor for irrational reasons? But the more I thought about and researched the topic, the more I realized that this is really something very difficult.

Part of the reason for that is human psychology. We have a deeply ingrained instinct to form groups and then discriminate against anybody who does not belong.

We know from history that many of the most brutal crimes and conflicts that humanity has endured were motivated in good part by ethnic, religious, racial and sometimes national distinctions. From the Holocaust to Rwanda, you can find examples from virtually any century of recorded history.

As a small-D democrat, I would love to think that democratic institutions can help to resolve those conflicts, and in certain ways, they can. But in one important respect, democracy actually makes managing diversity harder.

Democracy is always a search for majorities. And so, if I am used to being in the majority, but now you have more kids than I do, or if there are more immigrants coming in that look like you rather than me, there’s this natural fear that I might suddenly lose some of my power. And we can see this in the form of the demographic panic that is motivating so many on the far right in the United States and many other democracies today.

And why do you call it a “great experiment”?

Because there is no precedent for highly ethnically and religiously diverse democracies that actually treat all of their members as equals.

There are many examples of stable, relatively homogeneous democracies, like West Germany after World War II. There are many examples of democracies that have been diverse from their founding, like the United States, which used to give special status to one group and oppress the other — at times horrifically.

As a student of the rise of populism and the crisis of democracy, I’ve been struck over the last couple of decades by the way in which people from Donald Trump to Viktor Orban to Narendra Modi to Marine Le Pen exploit the fears that the great experiment has inspired.

One reason for their success is not only that they have a powerful narrative, but also that the mainstream and the left have failed to counter that pessimism and have instead responded with pessimism of their own, which I think is deeply counterproductive.

Can you expand on that a little?

Let’s take the condition of immigrants in Western Europe and North America.

The majority still come from countries that are much poorer and have much lower educational opportunities. This allows the far right to spin a narrative that immigrants don’t learn the language, aren’t interested in integrating into the host society and won’t ever be economically productive.

The left usually rejects that attribution of blame. But it then goes on to echo many of its main findings, saying that immigrants are excluded from the mainstream of society, that they really are much poorer, that they don’t experience socioeconomic mobility. The only difference is that the left blames those troubles on discrimination or racism and other forms of structural injustice.

Undoubtedly, immigrants — and especially nonwhite immigrants — experience serious forms of discrimination and racism. But when I started writing the book, I looked at the best empirical evidence we have on how immigrants are faring. It turns out that the first generation often does struggle to some extent, but their children and grandchildren rise in the socioeconomic ranks very quickly.

You’re worried about American democracy falling apart. Tell us why.

I sometimes joke that I’m a democracy hipster: I started arguing that democracy was in danger in 2014 and 2015, before it was cool. I was seeing the rise of authoritarian populist candidates and parties in many countries around the world. If they were not in power yet, they were within arm’s reach of it.

The most dangerous thing about them is the anti-pluralism, the claim that they alone represent the people. That drives them to concentrate power in their own hands and refuse to accept electoral defeats.

So in that sense, there’s nothing especially surprising about the way that Trump conducted himself in office, or for that matter, how he has refused to accept his defeat as legitimate. For him, it’s a conceptual impossibility that the majority of his compatriots might actually have chosen President Biden.

When Trump first won election in 2016, I don’t think he recognized the extent to which various institutions reined in his power. If he’s re-elected in 2024, he would be much more determined to concentrate power in his own hands from Day 1. A second Trump presidency would be much more dangerous than the first one was.

What about the second part of the book title, which is how democracies endure? How does the United States transcend the historical pattern that you worry about?

That is a very difficult task. Our country today remains deeply shaped by the extreme forms of injustice that have warped it for centuries. It would be naïve to think we can fully overcome that legacy in a matter of years.

But people sometimes forget that, as recently as 1980, a clear majority of Americans thought that interracial marriage of any kind was immoral. Today, that number is down to the single digits.

More broadly, one of the most dangerous ideas in American politics is the idea that demography is destiny. It’s deeply pernicious. It fuels right-wing extremism and left-wing identity politics, despite the fact that simple demographic categories — white people versus people of color — no longer represent the complex reality of the country.

So, one of the most important tasks of both political parties is to advance the racial depolarization of the American electorate. The country would be much better off if Republicans truly tried to build a multiracial, ***working-class*** coalition and if the Democrats didn’t give up on many of the predominantly white states.

I don’t want to live in a country in which I can walk down the street, look at the color of somebody’s skin and know with a high degree of certainty whom they’re voting for.

What to read tonight

* My colleague Maya King reports from Georgia on two predominantly Black cities that embody the state’s increasing diversity and leftward shift — and that [*may soon be represented in Congress by Marjorie Taylor Greene*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/29/us/politics/georgia-redistricting-greene.html).

1. Republican candidates in several states are trying to oust conservative governors by harnessing the anti-establishment energy of the Trump base. But in races for governor, [*Reid Epstein reports*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/29/us/politics/republican-governor-election-trump.html), it’s hard to beat the establishment.
2. Anxious about American politics? [*You can blame Tiktaalik*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/29/science/tiktaalik-fish-fossil-meme.html), a 375-million-year-old fish that has become the subject of memes asking why — just why — it had to flop its four whispery limbs onto land and send humanity down its current path.

A farewell to a secretary of state

On Politics regularly features work by Times photographers. Here’s what Kenny Holston told us about capturing the image above:

Since December, I’ve covered three funeral services for The Times: for former Senator [*Bob Dole*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/05/us/politics/bob-dole-dead.html), former Senator [*Harry Reid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/28/us/politics/harry-reid-dead.html) and, this week, former Secretary of State [*Madeleine Albright*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/23/us/madeleine-albright-dead.html).

Covering a funeral service can often be challenging. My goal during Albright’s service was to capture scenes that would depict the depth of what those in attendance might be feeling while providing clear news coverage for Times readers.

Among the family, friends and former colleagues at Albright’s service were three presidents — Joe Biden, Barack Obama and Bill Clinton — as well as Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton. It’s rare to have the opportunity to capture images like this. I did my best to compose an image that I felt spoke to the importance of the life Albright lived.

Thanks for reading. We’ll see you on Monday.

— Blake

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: Yascha Mounk, a political scientist, warns in a new book that countries like the United States are not as stable or immune to violent conflict as they appear. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Michal Fludra/NurPhoto via Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 29, 2022

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[***Poetry***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63N0-TYK1-JBG3-6313-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 19, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 26; SHORTLIST

**Length:** 1102 words

**Byline:** By Stephanie Burt

**Body**

CATCALLINGBy Lee SohoTranslated by Soje 103 pp. Open Letter. Paper, $14.95.

Painful and charming, raw and sometimes purposefully childish, Soho's poems track the Korean poet's alter ego, Kyungjin, and her sometimes affectionate, sometimes bloody relations with her birth family. ''I wore baby clothes and a bridal veil,'' she imagines: ''Little sister and I were stuck on top of the same wedding cake''; ''I slit little sister's wrist for her. Mom says you slept inside her like it was your grave.'' Sexuality, free-flowing angst and ''Teen......Spleen,'' as the poet puts it, animate a compelling volume of free verse, prose poems and monostichs, turning from tender intimacy to visceral confusion in the space of a few syllables. On good days, the poet inhabits disturbing dream-visions: ''We combed each other's pubic hair with mascara,'' ''Sharing bites of each other.'' On bad days, Kyungjin (who is also a gallery artist) faces down the predictable, virulent sexism of men in the art world: ''I like you, Soho, because you're chill. Lady artists are different from other girls.'' ''Playing with scars,'' asking, ''Tie me tighter,'' Soho draws both on Korea-specific contexts and on the shock and feminist awe of an international avant-garde, citing Niki de Saint Phalle and Tracey Emin.

The single-named Soje's spare and clear translations serve the poet well. Writing about the difficulty of ''drawing a single boundary,'' Soho also mixes verse with visual art, using typography, layout and line drawings to augment her forceful words.

THE COLLECTION PLATEPoemsBy Kendra Allen78 pp. Ecco. $26.99.

Gospel traditions, erotic need, African American vernacular English and plenty of blank space on well-organized pages come together in ''The Collection Plate,'' Allen's debut. Echoes of recent giants from Lucille Clifton to C. D. Wright, musical quotations from Earl Sweatshirt to Ace Hood, support a collection distinguished by winningly colloquial titles: ''The invention of the Super Sadness! was an accident.'' ''The many times I failed to defend my mother to Our Father.'' ''I ain't never baked a thing from scratch a day in my life.'' Water and swimming and baptism, worship and blasphemy, describe an America in which Black lives ought to matter, but -- as in the Flint, Mich., water crisis -- they may not: ''This American way / results in bodies of children, / a news story, and in extreme / cases, residents plead for / showmanship then evaporate.'' Allen excels -- like Clifton, like Robert Burns -- as she shifts into and out of standard English: ''this is either finna make sense / or we gone break.'' Amid all the fragments, complete single poems pop out. One comprises a mini-crown of semi-sonnets; another compares, jocularly and then with righteous anger, persecuted Black Americans to ''chihuahuas,'' who ''bark cause that's what they supposed to do.'' Also an essayist (''When You Learn the Alphabet''), Allen writes to honor her elders, among them a centenarian great-grandmother who made a triumph of simple survival: ''ain't no need to sorrow the sticky / stuff / when kids gotta learn to grieve too.''

MAROON CHOREOGRAPHYBy Fahima Ife125 pp. Duke University. Cloth, $84.95; paper, $21.95.

Ife's poems approach African American, West Indian and global Black experiences through the perspective of demanding theoretical frameworks. ''Sinuous / and sensuous / as night is / singular,'' engaged like Allen with ''the sound of my grandmother's lost voice,'' Ife invokes recent thinkers for whom the inherited rules and categories of what we have learned to call civilization look like acts of Western oppression. Against those categories, with sublimity and verve, Ife's verse raises up a defiant ''queeribbeanness,'' celebrating ''unruly contemporary dancers'' and other ''black bodies'' that ''struggle to name our lives as sovereign, on our own terms.'' Spectacularly allusive in its canny, concise segments, sometimes programmatic but more often simply learned, Ife's ''tremulous / antegrammatical'' work invokes ''the black morning of baldwin / across the river in another country.'' James Baldwin sits beside Fred Moten, Saidiya Hartman and the mushroom expert and anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing in the 20-page visual poem that doubles as Ife's bibliography: the X's and parallels in its lists of titles complement the slim, asymmetrical stanzas in the body of Ife's book. The cruelties of the middle passages, of lynching, of white supremacy recede in the Louisiana-based Ife's utopian imagination, where divisions among human, animal and plant life also fade away: All its central figures, no longer in danger, become ''not runaway slave not fugitive,'' ''not seven fugitives / only trees.''

THE SURVIVAL EXPOPoemsBy Caki Wilkinson78 pp. Persea. Paper, $15.95.

''Our trick plays worked. We wore each other's sweat. / Our pregnant captain didn't know it yet.'' Wilkinson's third collection opens where her second left off: with stars of girls' sports wondering how to grow up. Southern exurbs and small towns, the people who live there and the people who flee, and two such people in particular -- one the poet, the other her ***working-class*** cousin -- animate her delightful, clever, sometimes wrenching, sometimes rhyming and always clear verse and prose. Wilkinson's women fear they peaked in their teens. ''Juvenilia'' recalls exciting days and headstrong choices ''in a borrowed car / with a guy called Nuh-Uh at the wheel.'' The poet's cousin, Hope, ''runs out and won't say where she's headed,'' her heady rebellion turned to frustration. The poet, grown, conducts a ''Rite Performed With the Aid of High School Exes.'' In ''I Think About My Neighbors,'' the Memphis resident lets herself ''wonder how they voted, or will vote,'' and to what effect. She may want to flee from them, or from herself: ''I'd take a post hole digger / to the extra acreage where my worst thoughts graze / and build a high fence I could shoo them through.'' Poems organized around famous quotations, poems using only one vowel (''we helter-skeltered. / We deleted scenes''), poems made from lists of towns' names entertain in their own right, reminiscent of recent volumes by Sandra Beasley or Denise Duhamel. And yet the collection's emotional depth comes from work with more conventional, even narrative, structure, fitting the impulsive teenager Wilkinson was inside the careful adult she has become.Stephanie Burt's most recent books are ''Don't Read Poetry: A Book About How to Read Poems'' and a collection of modern translations, ''After Callimachus.'' She teaches English at Harvard.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/books/review/four-new-poetry-books-mine-their-authors-pasts-for-music-and-meaning.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/books/review/four-new-poetry-books-mine-their-authors-pasts-for-music-and-meaning.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS

**Load-Date:** September 19, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Carl Bernstein’s Eulogy for the Newspaper Business; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64GD-D111-JBG3-625H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 7, 2022 Friday 06:50 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1257 words

**Byline:** Jill Abramson

**Highlight:** Bernstein’s memoir “Chasing History” is a personal and affectionate look at the past, when journalism was thriving.

**Body**

CHASING HISTORY

A Kid in the Newsroom

By Carl Bernstein

Nearly 25 percent of [*the 9,000 U.S. newspapers*](https://www.poynter.org/locally/2020/unc-news-deserts-report-2020) that were published 15 years ago are gone, leaving behind a vast news desert and signs of a weakened democracy. So it’s bittersweet to read Carl Bernstein’s “Chasing History,” a rollicking memoir about the golden age of newspapers. Bernstein ignores the bad karma engulfing the newspaper industry to recreate his rookie days at [*The Washington Evening Star*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/remembering-washingtons-shining-star-a-great-newspaper-that-died-in-1981/2019/10/16/32094c36-f02a-11e9-8693-f487e46784aa_story.html), a robust afternoon paper that ceased publication in 1981. Bernstein’s nostalgia for those times is so deep that after the first 30 pages I could hear ghostly voices shouting, “Honey, get me rewrite.”

If you count the books Bernstein co-authored with Bob Woodward about their legendary coverage of Watergate for The Washington Post (“All the President’s Men” and “The Final Days”) and [*“Loyalties,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/1989/03/05/books/the-left-side-of-childhood.html)the book he published in 1989 about his parents’ struggles during McCarthyism, this is Bernstein’s fourth time writing about his life and work. Even for one of the country’s most famous reporters, that’s a lot of Bernstein.

But he’s as well placed as anyone to tell the story of what gets lost when the presses stop. Counting his current work as a CNN political analyst, Bernstein, 77, has been a journalist for more than half a century. His career spans the profession’s best of times and the worst, though the story he tells in “Chasing History” evokes only the happy days.

The Carl Bernstein who stars here isn’t the trench-coated investigative reporter from “All the President’s Men.” He’s a teenage version of Hildy Johnson, the wisecracking ace reporter in the 1928 stage classic [*“The Front Page.”*](https://www.encyclopedia.com/arts/educational-magazines/front-page) After buying a cheap, cream-colored suit from the cousin of a street vendor, young Carl managed to fast-talk his way into getting hired as a copyboy at The Evening Star, then the chief rival of The Washington Post. He was only 16 and still in high school.

Unsurprisingly, it was love at first sight once he entered the newsroom. “People were shouting. Typewriters clattered and chinged. Beneath my feet I could feel the rumble of the presses,” he recalls. “In my whole life I had never heard such glorious chaos or seen such purposeful commotion as I now beheld in that newsroom. By the time I had walked from one end to the other, I knew that I wanted to be a newspaperman.” Bernstein quickly graduated from copyboy to the dictation desk, the now-extinct place where reporters once phoned in their stories and where Bernstein’s typing skills won accolades from top editors. It didn’t take long for the talented kid to find himself at a local hangout, swilling after-deadline martinis with The Star’s stars.

All of this is good fun, though the book is clotted with a dizzying number of names, people, streets and stores. And there’s an ever-present cloud called school. Bernstein almost flunked out of high school and then got kicked out of the University of Maryland. School assignments were no competition for the bylines he coveted and proudly pasted into his Washington Star scrapbook.

Although his nose for news was unquestioned, Bernstein could not be promoted to full reporter without a college diploma. His early career coincided with journalism’s transition away from a trade for poker-playing, ***working-class*** tough guys to a more genteel profession recruiting from the Ivy League. A few women have cameos in “Chasing History,” including frustrated reporters confined to the women’s department. Bernstein almost married one of them when he was 19.

“Chasing History” vividly captures the bonds between a local newspaper and the community it covers. Reporters truly knew the people and territory they wrote about. Bernstein, for example, grew up in suburban Washington, where one of his neighbors was a United States senator. A great-aunt from Silver Spring, Md., who spoke Yiddish with a twang, offered him an education about the area’s grandees. She called them “the Wesorts,” as in “We sorts of people are different than you sorts of people.” Papers like The Evening Star were trusted because they published accurately reported stories that actually impacted the lives of their readers.

The Star was known as a writer’s paper, often more creative and entertaining than the stodgier Post. It was the early proving ground for some of the best journalists of our time, including the national political reporter David Broder, who eventually migrated to The Post, the investigative star Jane Mayer of The New Yorker and The New York Times’s columnist Maureen Dowd. It was where Mary McGrory, another must-read political columnist for The Post, sharpened her pen.

Having made a living chronicling the lives of others, many journalists understandably feel compelled to write memoirs, even though these books often wind up on the $2 shelves at used-book sales. (I have a small library of them, including the memoir of a Los Angeles Examiner reporter, Will Fowler, who in 1947 found the severed body of a woman who became known as [*the Black Dahlia*](https://www.fbi.gov/history/famous-cases/the-black-dahlia). The most grandiose title in my collection is “From Kristallnacht to Watergate: Memoirs of a Newspaperman,” by the former Post editor Harry Rosenfeld.) McGrory, whom Bernstein absolutely worshiped, resisted memoir-mania and snapped at me when I once asked her if she intended to write one, saying, “I’m much too busy writing my column,” which she produced three times a week.

McGrory always said she would have happily worked forever at The Star. For his part, Bernstein wanted nothing more than to become its city editor. The well-tailored man who actually held the job, [*Sidney Epstein*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2002/09/18/washington-star-editor-sidney-epstein-dies/6f06a76f-c654-4d31-97a3-c3aef657360b/), was his role model and is, besides the author, the most intriguing character in the book. Epstein mentored his young cub during the hours they spent making up the weekly schedule for all the employees in the city room. Bernstein’s excitement is palpable when, early on, he watched the city editor marshal his troops to cover the tragedy of two boys electrocuted at a local pool. He also vividly recaptures the paper’s herculean efforts to cover the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

Sadly, Epstein could not save his protégé from the Star’s rule requiring a college diploma, so at age 21 Bernstein quit and, after an interim job at a paper in New Jersey, was snapped up by The Post. As we know, there was plenty of history left for Carl Bernstein to chase. But that’s a story he has already told.

In 2008, as the digital revolution was destroying newspaper advertising and circulation, Clay Shirky, an influential media analyst at New York University, warned in a widely read article called [*“Newspapers and Thinking the Unthinkable”*](https://www.edge.org/conversation/clay_shirky-newspapers-and-thinking-the-unthinkable) against spilling tears for the past. He argued that the survival of journalism was crucial, but that print newspapers could — and would — fade away. “They’ll miss us when we’re gone” was not, he chided, a sustainable business model.

Maybe not. But people still do value the connection between a newspaper and its readers and want journalists to be knowledgeable about the communities they cover. Carl Bernstein’s book, which is ultimately a eulogy for print newspapers, is a passionate reminder of exactly what is being lost.

Jill Abramson is a former executive editor of The Times. CHASING HISTORY A Kid in the Newsroom By Carl Bernstein 384 pp. Henry Holt & Company. $29.99.

PHOTO: Carl Bernstein, 1973. (PHOTOGRAPH FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Related Articles**

* [*When All the Zingers Were Fit to Print*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/01/reader-center/times-satire-history.html)

1. [*The Future of Print Journalism in the Age of Digital Media*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/13/us/the-future-of-print-journalism-in-the-age-of-digital-media.html)
2. [*A Paradox at the Heart of the Newspaper Crisis*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/01/business/media/news-deserts-media-newspapers.html)
3. [*A Partisan Future for Local News?*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/28/podcasts/the-daily/local-news-partisanship-brian-timpone.html)

**Load-Date:** January 10, 2022

**End of Document**



[***What Does the Right Do When Big Business Turns Against Republicans?; Ross Douthat***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659W-VG81-JBG3-623W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 27, 2022 Wednesday 20:05 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1738 words

**Byline:** Ross Douthat

**Highlight:** How conservatives put their hope in Elon Musk and Ron DeSantis.

**Body**

Back in 2011, when Elizabeth Warren was preparing to run for the U.S. Senate, she had a long riff making the case against a certain kind of idealized Ayn Rand-ian vision of the lonely heroic capitalist.

In a video that went viral, she told an audience: “There is nobody in this country who got rich on his own — nobody. You built a factory out there? Good for you. But I want to be clear. You moved your goods to market on the roads the rest of us paid for. You hired workers the rest of us paid to educate. You were safe in your factory because of police forces and fire forces that the rest of us paid for.” She praised her hypothetical wealthy business owners: “Now look, you built a factory and it turned into something terrific, or a great idea. God bless.” But she argued that they owed the system something in return — which in her vision meant a higher tax rate.

This riff was echoed by Barack Obama in his fateful phrase “You didn’t build that” — which, note well, Warren did not originally say — which in turn gave birth to “You built that!” as an important theme of Mitt Romney’s ill-fated pro-entrepreneurship presidential candidacy. In that Romney-Obama argument, the divide between the parties seemed consistent, familiar: You turned to the Democrats for versions of Warren’s case that no successful business was built without some kind of state support and to the Republicans for a more heroic, rugged-individualist view of corporate America’s success.

Nothing has been quite so consistent since. The Republican Party in the Trump era remained a mostly pro-business party in its policies, but its constituencies and rhetoric have tilted more ***working class*** and populist, with many Romney Republicans drifting into the Democratic coalition. Meanwhile, the Democratic Party remains generally the party of regulation and higher taxation, but much of corporate America has [*swung*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/opinion/bernie-sanders-protesters-democrats.html) culturally into liberalism’s camp. That process was well underway a decade ago, but it’s been accelerated by anti-Trump backlash, the more left-leaning commitments of big business’s younger customers and (especially) younger employees, and the relative ease with which the radical-sounding language of identity politics can be assimilated to corporate management techniques.

As a consequence, today’s G.O.P. is most clearly now the party of local capitalism — the small-business gentry, the family firms, what leftists like to call [*patrimonial capitalism*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/family-capitalism-and-the-small-business-insurrection) — while its relationship with corporate America is increasingly complex.

Much of the party elite wishes to continue doing business with big business as before. But the party’s base regards corporate institutions — especially in Silicon Valley but extending to more traditional capitalist powers — as cultural enemies, with too much consolidated power and too much interest in pressuring, censoring and propagandizing against socially conservative views and policy.

This tension on the right has produced a little policy innovation — a sudden right-wing interest in trustbusting, some vaguely union-friendly forays — and a lot of incoherence. But in the past week we’ve seen two sharper conservative answers to the question: What does the right do when big business turns against conservatism?

One answer is the Elon Musk solution: You wait for a libertarian billionaire (or maybe really a billionaire with the politics of a liberal from 10 years ago — but look, conservatives have to take what they can get) to buy one of the companies whose mix of influence and censorship you fear. You hope that he will overrule its largely progressive staff and make its moderation rules more favorable to right-wing content, or at least less likely to censor uncomfortable stories about, say, the son of a Democratic presidential candidate. And you take the arguments liberals were making about social media moderation policies just yesterday — if you don’t like it, go build your own social network, losers — and hurl them back in their smug faces.

What Musk might really want to do with Twitter is a subject for another time. But suffice it to say that he would have to do a lot to make his kind of billionaire-savior model a real answer to conservatism’s general alienation from big business.

Which brings us to the second answer, the Ron DeSantis solution, manifest in the Florida governor’s recent war with Disney. You tell corporations that if they decide (or find themselves internally pressured) to become active on the liberal side of the culture wars, they may find their special deals and corporate carve-outs suddenly threatened or revoked.

From one perspective, this is no more scalable than the Musk solution, because a move as direct as DeSantis’s is quite possibly unconstitutional, an assault on corporate free-speech rights. And the Florida governor himself may expect to have his move swatted down in the courts, to reap political benefits without having to actually deal with the fallout of what, frankly, seems like a pretty poorly thought-out policy shift.

But there is a conservative case for the principle of what he’s doing — a case that while the government can’t single you out for special disfavor for your political speech, what is being withdrawn in Disney’s case is special favor, linked to the bipartisan and indeed above-partisanship position that the House of Mouse has long enjoyed in Florida.

Interestingly, this argument feels like a reworking, from the cultural right, of Warren’s argument from a decade back. Not with the same policy conclusion, obviously, but with a similar premise. She argued that nobody builds a business alone, and now conservatives are embracing a variation of that case — not to justify progressive taxation but to suggest that if your business or institution accepts special government favors, then the public becomes a stakeholder in your success, and it has the right to withdraw that special treatment if you then become a partisan or ideological actor.

“Almost every institution the left controls and has weaponized in the culture wars,” the conservative writer and editor Ben Domenech [*argued*](https://thetransom.substack.com/p/how-should-republicans-fight-the?s=r) this week, “was created by and depends upon special, favorable treatment — even funding — from all Americans.”

This is true of public entities, public schools and universities, the locus of so much controversy right now, but it’s also true of the internet behemoths, beneficiaries of a regulatory system that largely immunized them from content responsibility (via the famous Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act). Or the Wall Street firms bailed out in 2008. Or the sports leagues that rely on antitrust exemptions and stadium subsidies. Or Disney — because, as Domenech writes, “it’s only by the generosity of the American people” that Disney has been successful in its decades of lobbying to extend copyright protections.

All of these institutions enjoy First Amendment protections from being discriminated against, this line of argument suggests. But forms of discrimination that work in their favor — meaning all their privileges, immunities and tax breaks — are political fair game if they enter the culture-war arena.

“U.S. economic policy is not neutral toward business in any kind of pure, Adam Smithian sense,” Domenech writes, “but a gigantic, convoluted network of special treatment for special interests. So, when elites who run such special interests launch a smug, moral crusade against the same American people who have showered them with special treatment … that abused, insulted public is well within its rights to withdraw some of its munificence.”

I don’t know if this argument is constitutionally convincing when applied to something as crudely retaliatory-seeming as the DeSantis move. But it’s convincing at some level of distance.

For instance, when the Trump administration pushed through a [*tax on endowment income*](https://www.taxpolicycenter.org/briefing-book/what-tax-treatment-college-and-university-endowments) for wealthy colleges and universities, that was clearly not just disinterested policy; the goal was to reduce the special treatment offered to these institutions precisely because they have grown increasingly radicalized against conservatism in recent years. It was a political act, a punitive one, a version of what Domenech is describing: You take tax dollars from conservatives as well as liberals, so you can’t complain when the right notices you don’t seem to hire any conservative faculty members and decides to take some of those tax dollars back. And while there were [*claims*](https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2018/01/16/tax-college-endowment-unconstitutionally-targets-institutions-opinion) that this intention made the measure unconstitutional, few legal figures seemed to take them particularly seriously.

Likewise, if the inchoate right-left alliance against Big Tech ever brought trustbusting legislation to fruition, that legislation would be clearly motivated, in some sense, by a conservative desire to punish the big tech companies for certain high-profile transgressions. But it seems pretty unlikely that these motives — mixed with others, of course — would be grounds for the courts to block, say, a Facebook breakup or a Section 230 repeal.

So while the specific details of the Disney gambit may not be upheld or replicated, the idea behind it is likely to live on, shaping conservative ambitions at the state and federal level alike. (Especially since, as we saw with the Chick-fil-A wars, liberals are ready to engage in the same tactics when the opportunity presents itself — though the cultural weakness of the right means there are fewer high-profile opportunities.)

Most likely, given the chaotic nature of conservatism at the moment, these anti-corporate gambits will be tactical more often than strategic, symbolic more often than transformative and quite often just showy gestures to the party’s business-skeptical base that leave cozy relationships intact behind the scenes.

But it’s still a striking evolution — that the right that once disdained an “Actually, we all built that” account of business success is now inclined to adopt its own version of that case. And while I don’t expect Warren to claim any kind of vindication, it’s proof that ideas can circulate and reappear sometimes in the last place that you’d expect.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Damon Winter/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2022

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[***Hochul, Democrats' Sudden Star, Gains Party's Blessing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64TC-N5X1-DXY4-X1TG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 18, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1427 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck

**Body**

Gov. Kathy Hochul received the Democratic nomination for governor on Thursday, as she seeks her first full term after succeeding Andrew Cuomo.

Six months after Kathy Hochul suddenly became New York's first female governor, the Democratic State Convention on Thursday showcased just how much the political dynamics of the state had changed since Andrew M. Cuomo's stunning resignation, as Ms. Hochul easily secured her party's endorsement in her race for a full term.

Ms. Hochul has quickly cemented institutional Democratic Party support, reflecting both the advantages of incumbency and a relentless personal political effort. Those dynamics were on display as lawmakers praised her, party chairs suggested others drop out of the race and ''Labor for Kathy'' signs dotted the convention hall at a Sheraton hotel in Midtown Manhattan.

She was introduced by Hillary Clinton, the first female presidential nominee of a major political party and a former New York senator, marking the most high-profile day of campaigning yet for the governor.

Mrs. Clinton used the appearance to both glowingly endorse Ms. Hochul -- and to describe the stakes of the upcoming midterm elections in stark terms following the Jan. 6 attacks on the U.S. Capitol and Republican efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

''New York must be not just the home of the Statue of Liberty, we must be the defenders of liberty,'' said Mrs. Clinton, who also spoke warmly of Lt. Gov. Brian Benjamin.

Then it was Ms. Hochul's turn. She used her speech to embrace her status as the state's leader of the Democratic Party and to turn attendees' attention to defeating Republicans, though she must first navigate the Democratic primary in June.

''What is the greatest threat to the Republican Party? What is their biggest nightmare? A united Democratic Party!'' Ms. Hochul declared -- though protesters who interrupted her speech with concerns around evictions illustrated clear tensions at play.

Ms. Hochul, a relative moderate from Western New York, suggested that whatever tactical differences there may be, members of the party should ''never lose sight of the fact that as New York Democrats, we know where we need to go.''

The convention capped an extraordinary year in New York politics, defined in New York City by the election of the city's second Black mayor, Eric Adams, and in Albany by the ouster of Mr. Cuomo amid allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct.

Attorney General Letitia James, who briefly challenged Ms. Hochul but is now seeking re-election, released an investigation into Mr. Cuomo's conduct that led to his resignation. He has denied touching anyone inappropriately and, emboldened by decisions from top prosecutors to rebuke but not to prosecute him, he has signaled to associates that he hopes to regain relevance in public life.

In an enthusiastically received appearance before the convention, Ms. James defended the report and lashed Mr. Cuomo.

''It has become clear that the former governor will never accept any version of these events other than his own,'' she said. ''To achieve that, he is now claiming the mantle of victim and disgracefully attacking anyone in his path. Pushing others down in order to prop himself up. But I will not bow. I will not break.''

The crowd began to applaud, a stark reminder of how far Mr. Cuomo has fallen. Four years ago, the Democratic convention was a coronation for him, after a spirited primary challenge from the actress Cynthia Nixon.

Now he is a pariah among the party officials over whom he once wielded enormous influence.

''I will not be bullied by him,'' said Ms. James, whose office is also conducting a civil inquiry into former President Donald J. Trump and his family business. ''Or Donald Trump,'' she added.

But much of the day was focused on the current governor.

''The party should be unified,'' said Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn, the chairwoman of the Brooklyn Democratic Party, who said she believed Ms. Hochul's Democratic opponents -- the New York City public advocate, Jumaane D. Williams, and Representative Tom Suozzi of Long Island -- should drop out of the race.

''The vast majority of the people are behind Kathy Hochul,'' she said. ''So why create fights?''

Mr. Williams is running to Ms. Hochul's left, while Mr. Suozzi is waging a centrist campaign focused heavily on combating crime. Both lag her significantly in fund-raising and in the sparse public polling that is available, and Mr. Suozzi's name was not even voted on at the convention. (Kim Devlin, a spokeswoman for the congressman, said he did not put his name in contention.)

But Mr. Williams and Mr. Suozzi both argued on Thursday that they saw pathways that were not reliant on state party support.

''We all know that it's kind of pageantry in here,'' Mr. Williams said.

Still, Ms. Hochul is unquestionably the clear front-runner. Other races appeared even less competitive: After years of speculation concerning whether the Senate majority leader, Chuck Schumer, would face a credible left-wing challenge, he was renominated for his seat by acclamation on Thursday. A significant opponent could still emerge, though the window is narrowing ahead of the June primary.

Attention on a potential primary challenge had long focused on Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democratic congresswoman from New York, but she confirmed in an interview recently that she was running for re-election.

''I love New York,'' Mr. Schumer declared. ''I love representing New York as Senate majority leader. I'll love it even more when we pick up two more seats.''

But the convention arrived toward the beginning of a midterm campaign season that appears brutally difficult for the Democratic Party nationally, and potentially challenging even in liberal New York. The party sustained major losses on Long Island and even in a few New York City races in November.

Mrs. Clinton warned against getting distracted by ''the latest culture war nonsense, or some new right-wing lie on Fox or Facebook.'' And she implicitly cautioned her party against being overly responsive to online arguments that appear removed from the daily concerns of many Americans.

''Don't let the extremes of any or either side throw us off course,'' she said. ''Focus on the solutions that matter to voters, not the slogans that only matter on Twitter.''

Mr. Suozzi alluded to some of the party's challenges during a Thursday breakfast.

''We are not speaking to the issues that the people are concerned about,'' he said, laying out a centrist vision that includes fighting crime and grappling with high property taxes. ''We're not resonating.''

He also acknowledged the institutional resistance he faces, noting the prominent Democrats who have questioned why he would give up his seat in Congress to run.

''I spoke with our keynote speaker today, Hillary Clinton, a few months ago, she tried to persuade me not to run,'' he volunteered. A spokesman for Mrs. Clinton declined to comment.

But in his speech and in additional interviews, he expressed confidence in a path forward. He has also named Diana Reyna, a former city councilwoman from Brooklyn, as his running mate.

Mr. Williams, for his part, said he had doubled his showing from 2018: He received 12.46 percent of the vote on Thursday, to Ms. Hochul's 85.5 percent; a contender named Paul Nichols received around 2 percent. Mr. Williams suggested that the makeup of the convention did not match that of the electorate.

''If we can do that here, in the belly of the establishment, we know that our vision works for ***working-class*** people,'' he said.

Another point of tension evident at the convention was concern around Latino representation; a preliminary schedule listed no Latino speakers, though some were added later.

''It's critical that the Democratic Party be sensitive of Latino voters,'' said Representative Adriano Espaillat, a New York City Democrat. ''I think that's a great challenge for the party.''

Jay Jacobs, the chairman of the New York State Democratic Committee, argued that some of the outcry was around a preliminary list that didn't represent the full speaker slate.

Ms. Hochul ended her remarks with a celebration of the state's diversity.

''I see Democrats of every race, creed, ethnicity, gender, who are with me in that arena,'' she said, ''ready to fight for the very soul of our party and our state.''

Grace Ashford and Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.Grace Ashford and Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/17/nyregion/kathy-hochul-democratic-nomination.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/17/nyregion/kathy-hochul-democratic-nomination.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Hillary Clinton introduced Gov. Kathy Hochul at the Democratic State Convention in a sign of Ms. Hochul's new stature in the party.

Governor Hochul's support includes union endorsements. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 18, 2022

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[***How to Survive a Royal Weekend on ‘The Crown’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:619H-SSY1-DXY4-X0VG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 16, 2020 Monday 07:27 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1766 words

**Byline:** Anna Leszkiewicz

**Highlight:** In the new season, Diana Spencer’s aristocratic breeding triumphs and Margaret Thatcher’s middle-class tendencies horrify the royals. Here’s a guide to the rigid world of the British class system.

**Body**

In the new season, Diana Spencer’s aristocratic breeding triumphs and Margaret Thatcher’s middle-class tendencies horrify the royals. Here’s a guide to the rigid world of the British class system.

This article contains spoilers for Season 4 of “[*The Crown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html).”

LONDON — Imagine you are invited to a black-tie dinner with the queen of England and the extended royal family at Balmoral Castle in Scotland, and it’s extremely important that you make a good impression. You’re asked to meet for drinks at 6 p.m. Do you arrive as the clock strikes in elegant evening wear, or do you wander in whenever, in an unbuttoned shirt, woolly sweater and muddy shoes?

If you answered with the former, then you have already failed the test, and the royal family are aghast. The queen might be smiling graciously, and brightly insisting that dinner (always at 8:15 p.m.) can be moved forward by over an hour, but the damage is done. At least you won’t be alone: this is [*Margaret Thatcher*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html)’s experience in an excruciating scene in the new season of “The Crown.”

In the fourth season of Netflix’s lavish show about the royal family, two significant new characters — Thatcher ([*Gillian Anderson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html)) and [*Diana Spencer*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html) (Emma Corrin) — form very different relationships with Queen Elizabeth II (Olivia Colman) as a result of the extent to which they understand the bizarre, contrived intricacies of British upper-class etiquette and royal protocol.

Thatcher is first introduced to “The Crown” through the lens of the British class system. As the queen watches the news of her election, [*Prince Philip*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html) (Tobias Menzies) describes Thatcher in a sneering tone as “the shopkeeper’s daughter,” to which Elizabeth replies, “an alderman’s shopkeeper’s daughter, who worked hard and gained a scholarship to Oxford.” The distinction — in Britain — is an important one.

Thatcher’s father, Alfred Roberts, was a self-made and prosperous owner of two shops. He was alderman (an extinct local government position reserved for men of a certain self-importance, who also enjoy dressing up in robes) and mayor of the town of Grantham in the north of England, where the Thatcher family lived in an apartment above his shop.

Though Thatcher would later emphasize how much she lacked as a child — including hot running water and an inside toilet — her deprived home life was a result of her father’s financial meanness, not poverty. As Hugo Young puts it in his book “One of Us,” the young Thatcher “belonged to the rising petty bourgeoisie, not the beleaguered ***working class***.” The mid-1930s was a time when 75 percent of British families were officially defined as ***working class***, but Thatcher’s family belonged to the 20 percent that could be considered middle class.

All of this is complicated by the fact that Thatcher had elocution lessons to eliminate her regional accent, studied at Oxford University alongside Britain’s privileged elite and climbed the social ranks when she married the affluent, upper-middle class Denis Thatcher. In November 1970, when Thatcher was the education secretary, The Sun newspaper asked resentfully, “How did the grocer’s daughter from Grantham become a Tory lady with a taste for large hats, a posh home, a wealthy husband and children at public school?”

“I think the queen was very puzzled by Margaret Thatcher, because she jumped class,” Dean Palmer, the author of “The Queen and Mrs. Thatcher: An Inconvenient Relationship,” said in a telephone interview. Jumping into the upper class bracket is notoriously difficult in Britain, since, generally, the main way to get titles, land and “good breeding” — the traditional cornerstones of the aristocracy — is to inherit them. Mere money rarely cuts it. (Before Prince William married Kate Middleton, sources close to the royal family were [*quoted in newspapers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html) bemoaning her wealthy — but not aristocratic — mother, whose faux pas included social climbing, chewing gum in public and an earlier career as a flight attendant.)

By the time she became prime minister in 1979, Thatcher looked and sounded posh, but she had very little in common with royalty. Still, a stickler for the rules and an ardent monarchist, Thatcher famously arrived early to her meetings with the queen and gave incredibly low, reverential curtsies. She admitted in her autobiography, “The Downing Street Years,” published in 1993, “I was anxious about getting the details of procedure and protocol right.”

But biographers have observed that Thatcher’s anxious disposition, pretentious accent and grandiose manner simply irritated the queen. Before Thatcher became prime minister, she was invited to Buckingham Palace as leader of the Conservative Party. “On at least two occasions,” Palmer said, “she got dizzy and fainted, and the queen had to say ‘Someone catch that woman — again!’”

In the second episode, “The Balmoral Test,” the relationship between the queen and Thatcher sours during trips to the queen’s private residence in Scotland. Once called “the sweetheart of suburbia” by The Newcastle Evening Chronicle, Thatcher had no interest in the country pursuits of shooting and fishing and did not bring the correct attire of tweeds, sweaters and wellington boots. A workaholic with little time for leisure, she shocks the royal family by working instead.

“If you’re not interested in shooting or horses or dogs, what do you do?” Palmer said. “That Balmoral world is a very strange, backward world that doesn’t exist outside of ‘Downton Abbey’ these days.” In the show, Thatcher leaves the visit early, infuriated by the lifestyle of a family she increasingly saw as the idle rich.

If Thatcher failed “the Balmoral test,” “The Crown” shows Diana passing with flying colors. We first hear about the Spencer family when the queen is told that Charles is dating Sarah Spencer, Diana’s older sister. “Johnnie’s girl?” she responds. “Oh, I rather like that idea!”

“Johnnie” is John Spencer, the eighth Earl Spencer: an Eton-educated nobleman and member of the House of Lords who had served as an equerry (a kind of attendant) to both King George VI and Queen Elizabeth II. The connection to royalty is an old one: Diana’s maternal grandmother was a friend of Elizabeth’s mother, and Diana was named after an ancestor intended to be another Princess of Wales. The two families quite literally could not have been closer: Diana was raised on the estate of one of the queen’s private residences: Sandringham, in Norfolk. Essentially, the queen was the family’s landlord, until they inherited their own palatial estate when Diana was 14.

As the author bell hooks has noted, that Diana “was from an upper-class background was obscured, and hers became a rags-to-riches story.” The writer Hilary Mantel observed in a recent essay collection, “Mantel Pieces,” that, in some ways, the Spencers were more embedded in the British aristocracy than the royals: “Though she was not born royal, her ancestors were ancient power-brokers, dug more deeply into these islands than the Windsors,” she wrote.

By the time Charles had begun dating Diana, both the royals and the press were delighted by the suitability of the match. “Her pedigree is perfect,” one news reporter cooed. “At that time it seemed imperative that the Prince of Wales should marry an aristocrat,” Penny Junor, who has written biographies of both Elizabeth and Diana, said in an email. “Diana seemed perfect in every way.”

Having experienced an aristocratic rural upbringing similar to [*Prince Charles’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html), Diana understood life at Balmoral. “Diana had no difficulty fitting in with the royals,” Junor said. “She knew how to hold her knife and fork, and was used to servants. She seemed to fit in perfectly, and appeared to enjoy all the outdoor activities.” A private secretary to the Queen praised Diana’s “wonderful instincts.”

But this was, to an extent, a performance. “In reality she didn’t enjoy yomping across the heather in the pouring rain,” Junor said. Diana made this abundantly clear when, after their wedding, Charles took her back to “Bloody Balmoral” (as she would later call it) for the last leg of their honeymoon. Tina Brown, in her biography of the princess, called this the moment when the “happy, gosh-I’m-all-muddy” Diana disappeared.

Diana was so bored and overwhelmed by the numerous formal dinners with strange guests that the family, Brown observed, “began to get the alarming realization that for a girl of her pedigree she was somehow a social novice.” Though her childhood was aristocratic, it was solitary, and Diana found the constant social pressures of royal life exhausting.

Later episodes of “The Crown” also show Diana struggling with the intricacies of royal life, like whom she had to curtsy to first, even at the family’s own private gatherings. In his biography, Andrew Morton wrote that Diana was “deeply disenchanted with the protocol, the flummery and the artifice” of the family, and “the brittle formality” of royal life. As she persisted with a more casual, less stuffy approach to her own relationships and duties, she was celebrated by the public but resented by the royals, becoming increasingly alienated from them.

Of course, the most important story of class in 1980s Britain is not one of upper-class etiquette. Thatcher’s 11 years in power was a period of dramatic economic and racial inequality, and a worsening quality of life for the average Briton. As her policies shrunk the welfare state, opposed labor unions and sold off social housing, [*unemployment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html) and [*child poverty*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html) rates doubled.

“The Crown” only nods to this wider context in the story of Michael Fagan, the man who the show depicts breaking into the queen’s bedroom in 1982 as an act of class protest. Colman’s queen lets him voice his troubles, saying unemployment “bothers” her “greatly” and seems to have real sympathy for the plight of the working classes under Thatcher. In reality, the queen “ran out of the room” upon discovering him, [*Fagan told The Independent in 2012*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/27/arts/television/the-crown-royal-family-queen-elizabeth.html).

“A lot of people want to present the queen as a lefty at heart,” Palmer said. “I don’t buy that at all.”

PHOTOS: Margaret Thatcher (Gillian Anderson, foreground) arrives in inappropriate dress for a day of outdoor pursuits at the Balmoral estate in Scotland in a scene from “The Crown." (PHOTOGRAPH BY NETFLIX) (C1); Above, the real royals Diana and Charles spent part of their honeymoon at the Balmoral estate in Scotland in 1981. Right, on “The Crown,” Gillian Anderson and Stephen Boxer play Margaret and Denis Thatcher, dressed to impress for dinner with the royal family but missing the mark. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB THOMAS/POPPERFOTO, VIA GETTY IMAGES; NETFLIX) (C5)

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2021

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[***To Understand Inequality, Look to the 9.9 Percent; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:643S-NR21-DXY4-X18Y-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 18, 2021 Thursday 23:39 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1258 words

**Byline:** Eyal Press

**Highlight:** In his new book, Matthew Stewart explores what he calls a “new aristocracy,” the one-tenth of Americans who are reaping the benefits of an unfair economy.

**Body**

THE 9.9 PERCENT

The New Aristocracy That Is Entrenching Inequality and Warping Our Culture

By Matthew Stewart

A decade ago, protesters enraged by corporate greed and the bailouts that followed the 2008 financial crisis coined a phrase — “We Are the 99 Percent!” — that quickly went viral. It was a captivating slogan that spoke to the anger many felt about rising inequality and an economic system that seemed blatantly unfair. It was also misleading, not because the slogan exaggerated the economic disparities in America but because it understated them.

As various studies have shown, much of the wealth in recent decades has flowed into the pockets not of the richest 1 percent of Americans but of the 0.1 percent, including a band of billionaires whose net worth has grown by a staggering $1.8 trillion since the start of the pandemic. In our new Gilded Age, wealth is even more concentrated at the top than the participants in the Occupy Wall Street protests imagined.

At the same time, the idea that the interests of all but the very rich — that 99 percent — are harmoniously aligned is a fantasy, glossing over the economic and racial divisions that cleave the rest of society. This was starkly apparent during the pandemic, when families in some neighborhoods gathered in bread lines while others fled to second homes and ordered gourmet meals online — food delivered to their doors by “essential workers” paid a fraction of what the typical lawyer or software engineer earns.

In books like Matthew Desmond’s “Evicted” and Sarah Smarsh’s “Heartland,” the stories of poor people at the bottom of America’s hourglass economy have been vividly documented. The literature on affluent citizens who, though not superrich, have nevertheless benefited from inequality is comparatively sparse. What kinds of stories do the better-off tell themselves about the advantages they possess? How do they justify their good fortune to themselves?

In his new book, “The 9.9 Percent,” Matthew Stewart focuses on the wealthiest one-tenth of Americans, a “new aristocracy” whose aggregate wealth is four times greater than that of everyone else. A minimum of $1.2 million in assets is required to enter this exclusive club and Stewart writes that the threshold will almost certainly rise by the time his book is published. It’s a club to which white people are eight times more likely to belong than people of color.

But what ultimately unites its members is less the size of their bank accounts than a mind-set, Stewart contends. At its core lies “the merit myth,” a shared belief that the affluent owe their success not to the color of their skin or the advantages they’ve inherited but to their talent and intelligence. Under the spell of this conviction, Stewart argues, the privileged engage in practices — segregating themselves in upscale neighborhoods, using their money and influence to get their children into elite colleges — that entrench inequality even as they remain blithely unaware of their role in perpetuating it.

A former partner at a management consulting firm, Stewart is interested in tracing how the “thoughts and desires” of his own professional class exacerbate inequality, a welcome if not entirely original idea (in his 2017 book “Dream Hoarders,” the economist Richard Reeves made a similar argument about the upper middle class). Unfortunately, Stewart’s portrait of the 9.9 percent draws on few firsthand interviews with members of this class. He relies instead on examples culled from sources like Slate and on made-up characters such as “Ultramom,” a cartoonish figure who deploys her knowledge of branding to promote the virtues of her “Ultrachildren” in the race for coveted spots at a hyper-selective preschool.

Such caricaturing may resonate with the popular anger at elites. But it fails to lend much insight into what Stewart calls “the mind of the 9.9 percent,” or for that matter, to demonstrate that such a uniform thing exists. Is it fair to place salaried professionals in fields like medicine and law in the same category as hedge-fund managers who pocket seven-figure bonuses? How might the aspirations and beliefs of the 9.9 percent vary by occupation, or by region and political affiliation? And how has the growing rage at financial elites — nowadays, one is as likely to hear billionaires denounced by Fox News’s Tucker Carlson as by Senator Bernie Sanders — altered how affluent Americans see themselves?

The latter question was examined by the sociologist Rachel Sherman in another recent study of those reaping the benefits of our economic system, “Uneasy Street,” which drew on interviews with 50 well-to-do New Yorkers. Far from unaware of inequality, many of Sherman’s subjects were acutely conscious of it, to the point that they refrained not only from showing off their wealth but from talking about it (money is “more private than sex,” one subject told her). Sherman interpreted the silence as a form of status anxiety, reflecting uncertainty about how to feel morally entitled to one’s privilege.

“The fortunate man is seldom satisfied with the fact of being fortunate,” observed the sociologist Max Weber. “Beyond this, he needs to know that he has a right to his good fortune. He wants to be convinced that he ‘deserves’ it, and above all, that he deserves it in comparison with others.” The comparison that wealthy people have often drawn to affirm their moral worth is with the lazy, undeserving poor. Some of the people Sherman interviewed compared themselves favorably to another class — the undeserving rich, dilettantes who inherited their money rather than earning it and who ostentatiously displayed their wealth. Distinguishing themselves from these “bad” rich people did not mean Sherman’s subjects were ready to give up their own material advantages. To the contrary, drawing such distinctions affirmed their self-image as “good people” who, by dint of certain character traits (self-sufficiency, restraint), could feel entitled to what they had. In an age of rising inequality, believing they possessed such traits could help assuage “the anxieties of affluence,” Sherman concluded.

These are, to be sure, anxieties that millions of adults who fear going broke because of a medical emergency or getting evicted from their homes would be happy to have. In “The 9.9 Percent,” Stewart notes that in 1963, the median household would have needed 10 times as much wealth to reach the middle of the 9.9 percent. Today, it would need 24 times as much wealth. In contemporary America, the lives of the wealthy bear increasingly little resemblance to those of ***working-class*** people, much less to those who are poor. Stewart is surely right to view this as a problem and to question why it has generated so much less outrage and concern than the obscene fortunes of the superrich. But the growing chasm between the 9.9 percent and the rest of society only underscores why pushing beyond reductive stereotypes to explain how affluent professionals think about, and justify, their wealth and privilege is important. Doing so can help illuminate both how deep the economic disparities in America have become and how inequality is validated and sustained.

Eyal Press is the author of “Dirty Work: Essential Jobs and the Hidden Toll of Inequality in America.” THE 9.9 PERCENT The New Aristocracy That Is Entrenching Inequality and Warping Our Culture By Matthew Stewart 352 pp. Simon & Schuster. $28.

PHOTO: Families enjoying the grassy expanses of Central Park. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 14, 2021

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[***Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction: Sunday, February 16th 2020***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y78-W8P1-DXY4-X1BJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 16, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 493 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the February 16, 2020 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending February 1, 2020. An asterisk (\*) indicates that a book's sales are barely distinguishable from those of the book above it. A dagger (?) indicates that some retailers report receiving bulk orders. For an explanation of our methodology, visit [*http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers*](http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers).

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|  |  | Weeks | Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 | 2 | 2 | PROFILES IN CORRUPTION, by Peter Schweizer. (Harper) The author of ?Clinton Cash? gives his evaluations of members of the Democratic Party. |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | A VERY STABLE GENIUS, by Philip Rucker and Carol Leonnig. (Penguin Press) The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists use firsthand accounts to chart patterns of behavior within the Trump administration. |
| 3 | 3 | 102 | EDUCATED, by Tara Westover. (Random House) The daughter of survivalists, who is kept out of school, educates herself enough to leave home for university. |
| 4 |  | 7 | THE MAMBA MENTALITY, by Kobe Bryant. (Melcher/MCD/Farrar, Straus & Giroux) Various skills and techniques used on the court by the Los Angeles Lakers player. |
| 5 |  | 1 | WHY WE'RE POLARIZED, by Ezra Klein. (Avid Reader) The editor at large and co-founder of Vox offers his take on what causes divisions in America. |
| 6 | 5 | 60 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Crown) The former first lady describes how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. |
| 7 | 4 | 21 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Little, Brown) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts and misunderstandings. |
| 8 |  | 1 | ME AND WHITE SUPREMACY, by Layla F. Saad. (Sourcebooks) Ways to understand and possibly counteract white privilege. |
| 9 | 6 | 21 | MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE, by Lori Gottlieb. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) A psychotherapist gains unexpected insights when she becomes another therapist?s patient. |
| 10 | 13 | 16 | THE BODY, by Bill Bryson. (Doubleday) An owner?s manual of the human body covering various parts, functions and what happens when things go wrong. |
| 11 | 7 | 3 | TIGHTROPE, by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. (Knopf) The Pulitzer Prize-winning authors examine issues affecting ***working-class*** Americans. |
| 12 | 14 | 9 | HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST, by Ibram X. Kendi. (One World) A primer for creating a more just and equitable society through identifying and opposing racism. |
| 13 |  | 1 | ARGUING WITH ZOMBIES, by Paul Krugman. (Norton) The Nobel-winning economist and New York Times columnist describes potential misunderstandings in discussing economics. |
| 14 | 11 | 11 | CATCH AND KILL, by Ronan Farrow. (Little, Brown) The Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter details some surveillance and intimidation tactics used to pressure journalists and elude consequences by certain wealthy and connected men. |
| 15 |  | 10 | SAY NOTHING, by Patrick Radden Keefe. (Doubleday) A look at the conflict in Northern Ireland known as the Troubles. |

**Load-Date:** February 17, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Hochul Is the Star as Democrats Gather for a Cuomo-Free Convention***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64T7-K2H1-DXY4-X1DV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 17, 2022 Thursday 23:21 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1446 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck

**Highlight:** Gov. Kathy Hochul received the Democratic nomination for governor on Thursday, as she seeks her first full term after succeeding Andrew Cuomo.

**Body**

Gov. Kathy Hochul received the Democratic nomination for governor on Thursday, as she seeks her first full term after succeeding Andrew Cuomo.

Six months after Kathy Hochul suddenly became New York’s [*first female governor*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/nyregion/kathy-hochul-interview.html), the Democratic State Convention on Thursday showcased just how much the political dynamics of the state had changed since Andrew M. Cuomo’s stunning resignation, as Ms. Hochul easily secured her party’s endorsement in her race for a full term.

Ms. Hochul has quickly cemented institutional Democratic Party support, reflecting both the advantages of incumbency and a relentless [*personal political effort*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/nyregion/kathy-hochul-governor.html). Those dynamics were on display as lawmakers praised her, party chairs suggested others drop out of the race and “Labor for Kathy” signs dotted the convention hall at a Sheraton hotel in Midtown Manhattan.

She was introduced by [*Hillary Clinton*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/27/us/politics/dnc-speakers-sanders-clinton.html), the first female presidential nominee of a major political party and a former New York senator, marking the most high-profile day of campaigning yet for the governor.

Mrs. Clinton used the appearance to both glowingly endorse Ms. Hochul — and to describe the stakes of the upcoming midterm elections in stark terms following the Jan. 6 attacks on the U.S. Capitol and Republican efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

“New York must be not just the home of the Statue of Liberty, we must be the defenders of liberty,” said Mrs. Clinton, who also spoke warmly of Lt. Gov. Brian Benjamin.

Then it was Ms. Hochul’s turn. She used her speech to embrace her status as the state’s leader of the Democratic Party and to turn attendees’ attention to defeating Republicans, though she must first navigate the Democratic primary in June.

“What is the greatest threat to the Republican Party? What is their biggest nightmare? A united Democratic Party!” Ms. Hochul declared — though protesters who interrupted her speech with concerns around evictions illustrated clear tensions at play.

Ms. Hochul, a relative moderate from Western New York, suggested that whatever tactical differences there may be, members of the party should “never lose sight of the fact that as New York Democrats, we know where we need to go.”

The convention capped an extraordinary year in New York politics, defined in New York City by the election of the city’s second Black mayor, Eric Adams, and in Albany by the ouster of Mr. Cuomo amid ​​allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct.

Attorney General Letitia James, who [*briefly challenged*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/09/nyregion/letitia-james-drops-out-governor.html) Ms. Hochul but is now seeking re-election, released an investigation into Mr. Cuomo’s conduct that led to his resignation. He has denied touching anyone inappropriately and, emboldened by decisions from top prosecutors to rebuke but not to prosecute him, he [*has signaled*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/18/nyregion/andrew-cuomo-money.html) to associates that he hopes to regain relevance in public life.

In an enthusiastically received appearance before the convention, [*Ms. James defended the report and lashed Mr. Cuomo*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/17/nyregion/letitia-james-ny-attorney-general.html).

“It has become clear that the former governor will never accept any version of these events other than his own,” she said. “To achieve that, he is now claiming the mantle of victim and disgracefully attacking anyone in his path. Pushing others down in order to prop himself up. But I will not bow. I will not break.”

The crowd began to applaud, a stark reminder of how far Mr. Cuomo has fallen. Four years ago, the Democratic convention [*was a coronation for him*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/23/nyregion/cuomo-democrats-hillary-clinton.html), after a spirited primary challenge from the actress Cynthia Nixon.

Now he is a pariah among the party officials over whom he once wielded enormous influence.

“I will not be bullied by him,” said Ms. James, whose office is also conducting a civil inquiry into former President Donald J. Trump and his family business. “Or Donald Trump,” she added.

But much of the day was focused on the current governor.

“The party should be unified,” said Assemblywoman Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn, the chairwoman of the Brooklyn Democratic Party, who said she believed Ms. Hochul’s Democratic opponents — the New York City public advocate, Jumaane D. Williams, and Representative Tom Suozzi of Long Island — should drop out of the race.

“The vast majority of the people are behind Kathy Hochul,” she said. “So why create fights?”

Mr. Williams is running to Ms. Hochul’s left, while Mr. Suozzi is waging a centrist campaign focused heavily on combating crime. Both [*lag her significantly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/18/nyregion/kathy-hochul-fundraising.html) in fund-raising and in the sparse public polling that is available, and Mr. Suozzi’s name was not even voted on at the convention. (Kim Devlin, a spokeswoman for the congressman, said he did not put his name in contention.)

But Mr. Williams and Mr. Suozzi both argued on Thursday that they saw pathways that were not reliant on state party support.

“We all know that it’s kind of pageantry in here,” Mr. Williams said.

Still, Ms. Hochul is unquestionably the clear front-runner. Other races appeared even less competitive: After years of speculation concerning whether the Senate majority leader, Chuck Schumer, would face a credible left-wing challenge, he was renominated for his seat by acclamation on Thursday. A significant opponent could still emerge, though the window is narrowing ahead of the June primary.

Attention on a potential primary challenge had long focused on Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democratic congresswoman from New York, but she confirmed in an interview recently that she was running for re-election.

“I love New York,” Mr. Schumer declared. “I love representing New York as Senate majority leader. I’ll love it even more when we pick up two more seats.”

But the convention arrived toward the beginning of a midterm campaign season that appears brutally difficult for the Democratic Party nationally, and potentially challenging even in liberal New York. The party sustained major losses on Long Island and even in a few New York City races in November.

Mrs. Clinton warned against getting distracted by “the latest culture war nonsense, or some new right-wing lie on Fox or Facebook.” And she implicitly cautioned her party against being overly responsive to online arguments that appear removed from the daily concerns of many Americans.

“Don’t let the extremes of any or either side throw us off course,” she said. “Focus on the solutions that matter to voters, not the slogans that only matter on Twitter.”

Mr. Suozzi alluded to some of the party’s challenges during a Thursday breakfast.

“We are not speaking to the issues that the people are concerned about,” he said, laying out a centrist vision that includes fighting crime and grappling with high property taxes. “We’re not resonating.”

He also acknowledged the institutional resistance he faces, noting the prominent Democrats who have questioned why he would give up his seat in Congress to run.

“I spoke with our keynote speaker today, Hillary Clinton, a few months ago, she tried to persuade me not to run,” he volunteered. A spokesman for Mrs. Clinton declined to comment.

But in his speech and in additional interviews, he expressed confidence in a path forward. He has also named Diana Reyna, a former city councilwoman from Brooklyn, as his running mate.

Mr. Williams, for his part, said he had doubled his showing from 2018: He received 12.46 percent of the vote on Thursday, to Ms. Hochul’s 85.5 percent; a contender named Paul Nichols received around 2 percent. Mr. Williams suggested that the makeup of the convention did not match that of the electorate.

“If we can do that here, in the belly of the establishment, we know that our vision works for ***working-class*** people,” he said.

Another point of tension evident at the convention was concern around Latino representation; a preliminary schedule listed no Latino speakers, though some were added later.

“It’s critical that the Democratic Party be sensitive of Latino voters,” said Representative Adriano Espaillat, a New York City Democrat. “I think that’s a great challenge for the party.”

Jay Jacobs, the chairman of the New York State Democratic Committee, argued that some of the outcry was around a preliminary list that didn’t represent the full speaker slate.

Ms. Hochul ended her remarks with a celebration of the state’s diversity.

“I see Democrats of every race, creed, ethnicity, gender, who are with me in that arena,” she said, “ready to fight for the very soul of our party and our state.”

Grace Ashford and Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.

Grace Ashford and Jeffery C. Mays contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Hillary Clinton introduced Gov. Kathy Hochul at the Democratic State Convention in a sign of Ms. Hochul’s new stature in the party.; Governor Hochul’s support includes union endorsements. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 17, 2022

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[***Trump's Influence Is Tested in Primary Elections in South Carolina and Nevada***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65PB-35D1-JBG3-64N9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 15, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1872 words

**Byline:** By Jonathan Weisman and Jazmine Ulloa

**Body**

Donald J. Trump, who turned 76 on Tuesday, had called on South Carolina primary voters to deliver him ''a beautiful, beautiful birthday present'' -- twin defeats of two Republican members of Congress.

Donald J. Trump scored a partial victory on Tuesday in South Carolina's Republican primary elections, as one Trump-backed Republican defeated a member of Congress who had voted to impeach him while another incumbent fended off the former president's endorsed opponent.

The split decision in two House primaries gave conflicting signals about the former president's hold on the Republican Party's core activist voters as he faces renewed scrutiny of his actions surrounding his 2020 defeat.

But in Texas, Republicans got a clear harbinger of potential victories in the fall when a G.O.P. candidate flipped the Rio Grande Valley seat of former Representative Filemon Vela, a Democrat who resigned in March. Mayra Flores became the first Republican to represent the majority-Hispanic district in the seat's 10-year history and the first Republican Latina ever sent to Congress in Texas.

In South Carolina, the two Republican incumbents -- Representatives Tom Rice and Nancy Mace -- had crossed the former president as he struggled to maintain power after the Jan. 6 attack, which is now under the spotlight of congressional hearings. Mr. Rice, a staunch conservative in a conservative coastal district, was one of 10 House Republicans who voted to impeach him for inciting the riot. Ms. Mace, in her first speech as a newly elected freshman, said Mr. Trump bore responsibility for the deadly mayhem, though she did not vote to impeach him.

In turn, Mr. Trump backed Katie Arrington to take on Ms. Mace and State Representative Russell Fry to challenge Mr. Rice, who said Mr. Trump has been on a ''traveling revenge tour.'' Mr. Trump, who turned 76 on Tuesday, had called on South Carolina voters to deliver him ''a beautiful, beautiful birthday present'' -- twin defeats of Ms. Mace and Mr. Rice. Ms. Mace's survival may have dampened that gift, but in the state's northeast, Republican primary voters roundly rejected Mr. Rice, giving the incumbent only a quarter of their votes.

Beyond South Carolina, Mr. Trump's sway was being tested on Tuesday in Nevada, where a series of Republican primaries were pitting candidates from Mr. Trump's wing of the party against more mainstream conservatives.

The South Carolina contests had their own dynamics -- Mr. Rice was defiant and contemptuous of Mr. Trump to the end, while Ms. Mace tried hard to regain the good graces of Trump administration officials if not Mr. Trump himself. The divergent outcomes could hold deep meaning to the party as it considers whether to renominate the former president for another White House run.

''This took a little bit of time but we are finally here,'' Ms. Mace told those gathered for a victory party in Charleston, as she thanked Ms. Arrington for ''stepping into the arena.'' She added, ''this is going to make our campaign even stronger in November.''

The elections on Tuesday represented something of a midpoint in a Republican primary season that has delivered decidedly mixed signals to party leadership. Mr. Trump has claimed some significant wins, propelling his chosen Senate candidates to victories, including J.D. Vance in Ohio and Mehmet Oz in Pennsylvania. However, his endorsed candidates have lost primary showdowns for governor in Georgia and Nebraska as well as a key secretary of state race in Georgia.

Still to come are contests that rank high on his vengeance list, such as Representative Liz Cheney's primary in Wyoming on Aug. 16. Ahead of Arizona's Aug. 2 primary, Mr. Trump has backed Kari Lake, a promoter of his false stolen-election claims, to be the state's next governor. To take on Senator Mark Kelly of Arizona, he picked Blake Masters, who was caught on tape promoting the conspiracy theory that one-third of the people outside the Capitol on Jan. 6 were F.B.I. agents. Republican leaders worry that Mr. Trump will soon back Missouri's disgraced former governor, Eric Greitens, for an open Senate seat.

In South Carolina, Mr. Rice was only the second of the 10 impeachment Republicans to take his case for re-election to the party's primary voters, and he was the first to lose. The other, Representative David Valadao of California, clings to a slim lead over a Trump-aligned challenger, as vote counting continues after the primary there last week. Mr. Rice's defeat means half of the 10 will not be returning to Congress next year, with other contests still to come, including Ms. Cheney's uphill climb.

Ms. Mace's run for re-election had split the Trump community. The Trump administration's most prominent South Carolinians -- former Representative Mick Mulvaney, his budget director and acting chief of staff, and former Gov. Nikki Haley, who served as United Nations ambassador -- both backed Ms. Mace against Ms. Arrington, who was a proven gamble for the party since she had lost the seat to a Democrat in 2018.

Ms. Haley, who is considering her own run for president in 2024, had scrambled to endorse Ms. Mace before Mr. Trump could endorse Ms. Arrington, a move that established some independence without openly crossing the former president.

In the Republican upset in South Texas, Ms. Flores won a special election to fill the remainder of Mr. Vela's term until the end of the year, becoming one of three Latinas to ever represent Texas in Congress. The seat will once again be up for grabs in the November general election. Yet even her temporary victory foreshadows broader Republican gains in the Democratic stronghold of South Texas. Ms. Flores -- who was born in Tamaulipas, Mexico, and is the wife of a Border Patrol agent -- raised 16 times the amount logged by her closest Democratic competitor, Dan Sanchez.

She has not received a formal endorsement from Mr. Trump, but she has campaigned as a Trump-inspired Republican focused on border security. Her campaign signs highlight three words: ''Dios, familia, patria.'' God, family, country.

In one of her earliest campaign ads, she makes her way through a thick field of flowering cotton in South Texas, as she blasts a Democratic Party that she says insists on selling Hispanics the idea that they should depend on big government.

''At 13 years old, I was working in this very cotton field every day, all day, in the hot Texas sun,'' she said, adding that immigrants like her came ''the legal way'' to pursue the American Dream. She has called for a militarization of the border, embraced Mr. Trump's false claims of election fraud and often echoes hard-right rhetoric against the ''radical socialist communist agenda.''

Her win sheds light on the splintering of the Latino vote in South Texas, where Hispanic residents have often been overlooked by national campaigns and disenfranchised from the state's electoral process.

The presumption had been that greater Latino turnout would benefit Democrats, but South Texas has emerged as a key battleground after Mr. Trump saw swings in his favor in 2020 in Latino and largely rural, ***working-class*** counties near the border. Analysts have found Democrats have lost ground with Latino voters on the economy and the coronavirus pandemic, issues that helped Mr. Trump win over new Hispanic voters, despite their dislike or outright disdain for his hard-line approach on immigration and his demeaning of Mexicans and immigrants.

The gains have left Republicans believing they have a chance to make those inroads permanent and have caused Democratic infighting over the best approach to counter the Republican enthusiasm.

In the sheer number of tossup contests, few states will rival Nevada this fall. Republicans see chances to unseat a host of top Democrats, including Gov. Steve Sisolak; Lt. Gov. Lisa Cano Burkhead; three Democratic members of the House; and Senator Catherine Cortez Masto, the first Latina elected to Congress's upper chamber.

Republican candidates have largely sought to align themselves with Mr. Trump, taking hard right stances on abortion, guns, immigration and the teaching of race and gender in schools.

In the Nevada governor's race, the Clark County sheriff, Joe Lombardo, was expected to win the Republican nomination on Tuesday and go head-to-head with Mr. Sisolak in November. He secured Mr. Trump's endorsement and had about $3 million cash on hand as of April. He had been criticizing the governor for his mask mandates and his handling of the pandemic.

Mr. Sisolak, who had more than $9 million in campaign cash, abandoned the state's mask mandate in February and has been heavily promoting Nevada's economic rebound and the billions of dollars pumped into the state from federal coronavirus relief packages.

Ms. Cortez Masto is likely to face Adam Laxalt, who led Mr. Trump's efforts to overturn the state's 2020 election results. Mr. Laxalt -- a former state attorney general and the grandson of a former Nevada governor and senator -- must hold off a late surge from Sam Brown, a veteran. Mr. Brown was gravely wounded fighting in Afghanistan and has been running as Mr. Trump's true acolyte.

Another backer of Mr. Trump's campaign to reject the 2020 election results, State Assemblyman Jim Marchant, was expected to win his party's nomination for secretary of state, a post that will allow him to oversee the 2024 election.

Some House contests in Nevada are showing even clearer lines between the Trump wing of the party and more traditional Republicans. The potential Republican challengers to Representative Steven Horsford, a Democrat, include Sam Peters, an insurance agent backed by the far-right Arizona congressmen Paul Gosar and Andy Biggs, as well as Annie Black, a more mainstream assemblywoman running in the primary against Mr. Peters.

Five Republicans hope to challenge Representative Susie Lee, a Democrat. Among them is April Becker, a real estate lawyer who has raised the most money by far and has the backing of the House Republican leader, Representative Kevin McCarthy.

Representative Dina Titus, a Democrat, has eight Republicans competing to challenge her, including a former House member, Cresent Hardy. But Carolina Serrano, a Colombian American immigrant, has the backing of both Republican leaders and Trump world. She won endorsements from Representative Elise Stefanik of New York, the party's No. 3 House leader, as well as Mr. Laxalt and Richard Grenell, a former national security official in the Trump administration.

At a field office tucked into a corner of an outdoor shopping plaza in northeastern Las Vegas, where a handful of Democratic volunteers were making a final phone-banking push, Ms. Titus said she was feeling optimistic and reminded people of the stakes if Republicans retake control of Congress.

''The right to vote, the right to choose, the right to unionize -- you name it,'' she said. ''They are going after it.''

She told reporters that her campaign had ''no clue'' who would emerge out of the crowded Republican primary to take her on, but she added, ''We'll be ready for them.''

Maya King and Jennifer Medina contributed reporting.Maya King and Jennifer Medina contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/14/us/politics/trump-candidates-south-carolina-nevada.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/14/us/politics/trump-candidates-south-carolina-nevada.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Diane Jackson, left, showing Anita Moores to her machine at Columbia Fire Station 9, in Columbia, S.C. Right, Sam Brown, a Republican, at his Las Vegas campaign office on Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LOGAN R. CYRUS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Anxiety and Anger Grows Among Children Affected by Shootings; New York Today***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:659G-0GB1-JBG3-60C4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 25, 2022 Monday 05:30 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1547 words

**Byline:** James Barron

**Highlight:** “I find it really hard to admit that I’m in pain,” said a 14-year-old whose school friend was fatally shot.

**Body**

“I find it really hard to admit that I’m in pain,” said a 14-year-old whose school friend was fatally shot.

Good morning. It’s Monday. We’ll look at how recent shootings of children or teenagers have affected young people. We’ll also look at Mayor Eric Adams’s plan to invest $171 million in homeless services.

It’s almost unimaginable, but at least 40 children and teenagers have been shot in New York City so far this year. Consider:

At least four of the people struck by bullets when a gunman opened fire in a Brooklyn subway car two weeks ago — or injured in the panic on the platform at the next stop — were children or teenagers. But they weren’t the only young people affected by the shooting. Classrooms went on lockdown, shutting doors to visitors as students posted on windows messages of hope — and anxiety.

On the same day, a community 16 miles away in the Bronx was facing a tragedy, a memorial for a 16-year-old who had dreamed of becoming a model. She was killed when she was hit by a stray bullet, and two other teenagers were injured. She was walking home from school.

The following afternoon, as the police arrested a 62-year-old man in the subway attack, dozens of East Flatbush teenagers stood outside their middle school and wept. They were mourning a 12-year-old who had recently been killed — shot in a case of mistaken identity.

“I find it really hard to admit that I’m in pain,” said Tatiana Barrett, 14, a student at the school, the Brooklyn Science and Engineering Academy, and a friend of the slain 12-year-old. “As the days go by, I get angrier and angrier.”

It is well known that the pandemic created new mental health problems for the young. Medical groups declared an [*emergency in child and adolescent mental health*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/10/20/world/covid-vaccine-boosters/covid-pandemic-children-mental-health?smid=url-copy) last fall, a crisis compounded by uncertainty and grief. More than [*one in every 200 children in New York lost a parent or caregiver*](https://www.thecity.nyc/2022/4/20/23033998/1-in-every-200-children-nyc-lost-parent-covid-twice-national-rate) to the virus, almost double the nationwide rate, a recent analysis found.

And when shootings rose during the pandemic, so did the number of young people caught in the violence. Children and teenagers already make up one in every 10 victims this year, and the overall toll is on track to match or exceed the number of youth victims last year, when 138 were struck by bullets.

That has made the [*grief only more acute*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/25/nyregion/nyc-gun-violence-children.html)for children and teenagers.

[*Experts have long warned of long-term setbacks*](https://siepr.stanford.edu/news/new-study-gun-violence-schools-identifies-long-term-harms) in schooling and health for students exposed to gun violence. Dr. Aditi Vasan, a pediatrician at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, [*where gun violence reached new highs last year*](https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia-murders-shootings-gun-violence-2021-20211231.html), said the ramifications could arrive much sooner.

Dr. Vasan and other researchers [*found that in the two weeks after a shooting*](https://t.co/4rdHlvz5CU), children living nearby were nearly twice as likely to visit emergency rooms for problems like anxiety, depression and self-harm. She said it was striking how rapidly symptoms could appear.

After the mistaken-identity shooting in East Flatbush, Tatiana Barrett said she has had trouble concentrating, describing herself as often “blurry-minded.” Her mother said that she has become withdrawn, asking to spend more time alone. She had known the shooting victim, Kade Lewin, 12, since she was 10. She mourned him at the funeral last week, but as for his burial the following day, she told her mother that “she couldn’t bear it.”

David Walcott Jr., a 12-year-old schoolmate, asked to stay home from memorials for Kade at school and the funeral, his father said. He has become anxious, worrying about who could be the next victim. David, watching television at 2 a.m. recently, was rattled when a car driving by outside backfired.

“Why do we live here?” his father, David Walcott, recalled his asking. “He said he’s starting to understand racism. He’s like, ‘It only happens in our neighborhoods that innocent people are dying.’”

The teenagers in East Flatbush released three turquoise balloons into the sky at the end of a memorial for Kade. The wind carried one into a tree where it lingered, a reminder of the persistent grief in the school nearby.

Enjoy a partly sunny day with a high in the low 60s. In the evening, expect temps in the low 50s with a slight chance of rain after midnight.

In effect until May 2 (Eid al-Fitr).

The latest New York news

* A firefighter was killed, five other firefighters were injured and another person in the home was also killed [*after a ceiling gave way in a fire at a two-story house in Brooklyn*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/24/nyregion/firefighter-dead-brooklyn.html).

1. Chinatown’s civic groups have held back gentrification in an area surrounded by development. [*Now the future of one of Manhattan’s few* ***working-class*** *neighborhoods is at stake.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/23/nyregion/chinatown-new-york-real-estate.html)
2. This year’s Tony Award nominations will be delayed by nearly a week. Nominations will [*now be announced on May 9, but the awards ceremony will still be held on June 12, as scheduled.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/theater/tony-awards-schedule-coronavirus.html)

Adams proposes more money for homeless services

Adding funding for his [*push to move homeless people off the streets*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/24/nyregion/eric-adams-homeless-services.html), Mayor Eric Adams is allocating $171 million for expanded services in his proposed budget. He said the money would pay for 1,400 temporary beds for people now living on the streets, as well as new drop-in centers and more outreach efforts.

Adams, who has focused on public safety and the city’s pandemic recovery since taking office in January, has been [*under pressure to do more to help homeless people*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/15/opinion/mayor-eric-adams-homelessness-nyc.html) as the city has moved to break up encampments on the streets and in the subway system.

Adams’s plan would expand a program that began under his predecessor, Bill de Blasio, which provides specialized shelter beds for New Yorkers coming off the streets — beds in facilities with more services to ease the transition for homeless people struggling with mental health problems and substance abuse issues. While the facilities vary in size, they tend to be smaller than traditional barracks-style shelters and have fewer rules: no curfews and fewer restrictions on drug and alcohol use.

Adams had already announced the addition of 500 beds. The plan he laid out on Sunday would bring the total to more than 4,000, city officials said.

“Too many of our fellow New Yorkers are experiencing unsheltered homelessness,” the mayor said in a statement, “but we cannot and will not abandon them.”

Adams said he was putting the money in the executive budget for the fiscal year 2023. As part of his $98.5 billion preliminary budget in February, he proposed spending $2.1 billion on the Department of Homeless Services.

City Council Speaker Adrienne Adams applauded allocating more services for the homeless. The speaker, who is not related to the mayor, called the plan “the right approach and a major step forward for our city.”

The mayor, a former police captain, has defended police sweeps of homeless encampments, several of which have been captured in videos circulating on social media and showing officers throwing homeless people’s belongings into the garbage.

Craig Hughes, a senior social worker with the Urban Justice Center, said that his clients needed the safety and privacy of single rooms, and permanent housing placements that did not require people to go through the shelter system. While he said the mayor’s proposal to add shelter beds was a good idea, he denounced the sweeps of homeless encampments.

“His entire homeless policy has been about getting homeless people out of sight,” Hughes said.

What we’re reading

* Shaved heads have people buzzing, and there is plenty of evidence to [*suggest that it is the first trendy cut of 2022.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/21/style/shaved-heads.html)

1. Martha Mitchell’s life was effectively ruined by Watergate. But for decades, her story was largely ignored. [*“Gaslit,” starring Julia Roberts, gives Mitchell her moment.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/arts/television/gaslit-julia-roberts-martha-mitchell.html)
2. With more than 50 vendors on hand for the opening, [*the Harlem Uptown Night Market launched its first full season in style.*](https://gothamist.com/food/good-times-great-food-uptown-night-market)

Odd-looking birds

Dear Diary:

I was at a thrift shop on the Upper West Side when I saw a set of two framed, unsigned drawings of birds.

The drawings were clearly the work of the same artist. They were of odd-looking birds with huge, wide eyes done in charcoal.

I liked one but not the other. The one I liked was of a single bird resembling an emu that was staring off to the side.

The other drawing was of two birds that looked like dodos. They had similar expressions and were facing forward, as if to stare at the viewer. I just couldn’t see hanging that drawing on my wall and looking at it every day.

Since they were obviously by the same artist, I felt funny about breaking up the set, so I didn’t.

Stopping at the shop again a few days later, I was surprised to see that the drawing I liked was still there but that the other one was gone. Someone else must have seen them, liked the drawing I did not and wasn’t worried about breaking up the set.

I immediately bought the drawing that remained.

— Michael Fishman

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).

Walker Clermont, Jeff Boda and Ed Shanahan contributed to New York Today. You can reach the team at [*nytoday@nytimes.com*](mailto:nytoday@nytimes.com).

[*Sign up here to get this newsletter in your inbox.*](https://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/newyorktoday)

PHOTO: Researchers say children exposed to gun violence, even at a remove, can suffer long-term repercussions. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Mostafa Bassim for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[***White Picket Fence***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61BT-S651-JBG3-61T4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 22, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 17; NONFICTION

**Length:** 705 words

**Byline:** By Liza Featherstone

**Body**

BRAVE NEW HOMEOur Future in Smarter, Simpler, Happier HousingBy Diana Lind

Diana Lind's ''Brave New Home'' is one of those invaluable books that offer a new, revelatory window on familiar problems. Faced with a host of societal challenges -- economic inequality, loneliness, housing precarity, environmental degradation -- Lind convincingly argues that the single-family home is at least partly to blame.

This cultural obsession, she shows, was manufactured by 20th-century policymakers and real estate developers wanting to populate the suburbs, as well as media-fueled -- often racist and elitist -- panics over the unwholesomeness of cities for families. Lind rightly contends that the single-family home is an impossible dream for many, fueling inequality.

Even for those who can afford it, she finds, the single-family home is at best a mixed blessing, depriving its occupants of community in an age of increasing social isolation. It also lures many Americans into an unhealthy and environmentally abhorrent car-dependent lifestyle. And that's only the beginning of her ecological indictment. The single-family home also gives its inhabitants far more space than they require, wastefully encouraging them to acquire unnecessary stuff and use far too much energy on heating, cooling and lighting.

Our dogged pursuit of this benchmark of middle-class adulthood can also create massive economic upheaval -- recall that the Great Recession was caused by extraordinary numbers of foreclosures, as Americans who could not afford to buy homes were lured by predatory lenders into trying to do so anyway. And as a policy prescription, all the government incentives to build and buy single-family homes do nothing to solve housing insecurity and homelessness for the many who will never be able to achieve this dubious idyll.

Lind's reporting leads her to tiny-home enthusiasts and co-living communities, as well as market-oriented policy tweaks. The media sometimes refers to co-living projects marketed to single people in cities as ''adult dorms,'' a phrase that rightly offends her -- why should seeking community be treated as a symptom of immaturity? She visits a tranquil intentional community in Georgia where homes are designed to encourage neighbors to hang out with one another, and a cultural event is on offer nearly every night.

Her book asks the right question: How can we move beyond the corrosive and exclusionary dream of the white picket fence, and instead, safely and happily house all Americans? Yet considering Lind's adventurous rejection of such a cornerstone of mainstream American thinking and life, her search for solutions is surprisingly provincial.

Even when her reporting demonstrates the limits of many market-driven solutions -- a program to offer incentives for Los Angeles homeowners to host low-income renters in small cottages in their yards, for example, has, several years in, resulted in almost no new housing -- this doesn't seem to inspire her to think any bigger. She doesn't explore how other countries house people on a large scale, perhaps because many successful strategies require investing heavily in public housing.

Lind exhibits only passing interest in social housing as a solution for this country, dismissing it as a ''one size must fit all'' strategy. But 80 percent of Singapore's residents live in public housing, which consists not only of apartments but also of self-sustaining small communities with their own schools, hospitals, supermarkets and many other amenities. With the vast majority of the city-state in public housing, there is no stigma to it, and the system is popular. She also overlooks the rich history of middle- and ***working-class*** cooperative housing in New York City. Lind works for the Chamber of Commerce in Philadelphia, heading its Arts + Business Council. She is an inquisitive reporter and writer, but perhaps her colleagues in Philadelphia's business community wouldn't welcome an investigation of such left-wing traditions.Liza Featherstone is the author, most recently, of ''Divining Desire: Focus Groups and the Culture of Consultation.''BRAVE NEW HOMEOur Future in Smarter, Simpler, Happier HousingBy Diana Lind257 pp. Bold Type Books. $28.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/13/books/review/brave-new-home-diana-lind.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/13/books/review/brave-new-home-diana-lind.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Diana Lind (PHOTOGRAPH BY COLIN LENTON)

**Load-Date:** November 22, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Saving the House That Built Golf***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65PB-35D1-JBG3-64NT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 15, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 11

**Length:** 1737 words

**Byline:** By Bill Pennington

**Body**

Francis Ouimet, an amateur who improbably won the 1913 U.S. Open at the Country Club, grew up across the street. Now his home will be given back to the game, and the course, that made him famous.

BROOKLINE, Mass. -- The small, 19th-century home with the golf course view is hardly noticeable to the hundreds of drivers whizzing by at 40 miles an hour on Clyde Street in the Boston suburb of Brookline. While the two-story house once stood like a sentry overlooking acres of cow pasture, the neighborhood is now replete with luxury housing, four-lane roads and a bustle worthy of a community just seven miles from downtown.

The location does not look like a landmark to the birthplace of American golf. But it is, in ways both tangible and symbolic. This week, the site will be newly in the spotlight as the U.S. Open returns for a fourth time to the Country Club in Brookline.

Neighbors of the Clyde Street property have recently noticed a flurry of activity at the residence as contractors' vans filled the driveway daily for what is clearly a moneyed restoration project. In late April, two workers peeled back attic ceiling panels of the 1893 dwelling and then had to duck as a pair of antique golf clubs tumbled to the floor.

''They're Francis's clubs!'' one of the workers, Aldeir Filho, yelped. His colleague Christian Herbet dashed down the stairs to alert the crew of tradesmen below.

From the second floor, Herbet shouted: ''We found Mr. Ouimet's clubs.''

In 1913, Francis Ouimet, then a 20-year-old self-taught amateur golfer, left the second-floor bedroom he shared with his brother at 246 Clyde Street and crossed the street to the Country Club, where he defeated the world's two most accomplished British professionals, Ted Ray and Harry Vardon, to win the U.S. Open.

The stunning upset by Ouimet, the son of immigrants and a caddie at the club, was front-page news across the nation and has been credited with spawning explosive nationwide growth in the game. While there were only 350,000 American golfers in 1913, that number had swelled to 2.1 million less than 10 years later. The fame of Ouimet's groundbreaking accomplishment -- no amateur had ever won the U.S. Open and few golfers from ***working-class*** roots had ever played in championships -- has endured for 109 years, no doubt helped by a popular 2005 movie, ''The Greatest Game Ever Played.''

The house that Ouimet's father, Arthur, just happened to purchase across from the Country Club has often played a prominent factor in Francis Ouimet's winsome story. The humble dwelling astride a tony country club came to represent the two worlds Ouimet daringly traversed when he walked down his unadorned wooden front steps and marched onto the club's gilded grounds for the last 18 holes of the 1913 U.S. Open. About four hours later, he was carried from the last green on the shoulders of cheering fans. The duality of Ouimet's life on either side of Clyde Street, including the cramped, meager confines of his upbringing, is a robust part of the narrative. There are, for example, 17 scenes depicting life in the Ouimet house in the 2005 movie.

And yet, until recently, preserving or formally recognizing the home's significance was never a priority. While the structure remained in the Ouimet family for 94 years, it changed ownership multiple times. The exterior and interior were altered and a tall white fence rose in the front yard to eclipse most of the ground floor from the road.

As housing prices in Brookline soared across the decades, some people at the nearby club, which is a founding member of the United States Golf Association, worried what might happen if the property was bought and redeveloped. Years ago, for instance, what had been the family barn next to the Ouimet house was sold, rebuilt and turned into condominiums.

''If you let that house be torn down,'' Fred Waterman, the club historian, said of the Ouimet house in an interview last month, ''you've allowed a very important part of American sports history to disappear.''

Tom Hynes, a member of the Country Club who has a Boston real estate background that stretches to the 1960s, casually befriended the owners of the house, Jerome and Dedie Wieler, not long after they moved to the neighborhood in 1989. Hynes lives nearby and would see the Wielers walking their dog almost daily.

''When you're ready to sell your house,'' Hynes told the couple, ''I'm your buyer.''

The Wielers answered that they were not selling and were curious why Hynes would want it. Hynes explained Ouimet's history to the Wielers, who knew nothing of golf. But the Wielers were intrigued by a heartwarming story.

''Someday, maybe 20 years from now, you might be selling and please let me know,'' said Hynes, who added that he would remind the Wielers about once a year. ''I just wanted the house returned to golf.''

Late in 2020, the Wielers contacted Hynes, who set foot in the house at 246 Clyde Street for the first time and 30 minutes later had a handshake agreement to buy the property for $875,000.

Hynes set about trying to defray the purchase cost by raising money with the intent of donating the house to the club, which could use it for myriad activities, including staff and guest housing on the second floor. The decision was also made to restore the house to make it appear as it did when the Ouimets lived there in 1913.

''When you walk into the house we want you to have the feeling of what it was like to have walked into the family's home 109 years ago,'' Waterman said.

But first, there was much work to do. While the house was in good shape, it needed innumerable improvements to meet modern building codes. The cost of the restoration swelled. As Hynes, the nephew of a three-term Boston mayor who has brokered some of the city's most sweeping real estate deals, said: ''I started going around town with my tin cup out.''

Hynes had a potent, almost divine ally in his fund-raising mission. It was as if Francis Ouimet was mystically assisting him. Ouimet, who died in 1967, remained a lifelong resident of the Boston area and continued to win golf championships as an amateur for many years after 1913. He also had a career in finance.

In 1949, a Ouimet college scholarship program for caddies was created. Since then, the Ouimet Fund has awarded nearly $44 million to more than 6,300 men and women. The need-based scholarships can be worth as much as $80,000 across four years of study.

As Hynes began to solicit help for his restoration, he occasionally was surprised to find donors who were unflinchingly generous with their money. They were Ouimet Scholars, now middle-aged, who believed they would have never attended college without the fund's assistance.

Additionally, more than 40 members of the Country Club have contributed, most donating $25,000 each. The first phase of the renovation was finished last week.

A tour of the 1,550-square-foot, six-room Ouimet house these days is like stepping back in time since its appearance has been curated to match an early-20th-century style. The wallpaper, lighting, drapes and shades are vintage. The furnishings are faithful to the period: chairs, sofas and tables from the early 1900s presented to the club by an architect who heard about the renovation. Common rooms were small then, but add to the cozy, familial feel.

Just inside the first-floor entry is an old, preserved wooden wall telephone, the kind with a crank on the side. It is rigged so visitors can lift the receiver and hear a recording of Ouimet describing his U.S. Open victory. He is joined on the audiotape by Eddie Lowery, who was Ouimet's 10-year-old caddie. The two remained lifelong friends.

Elsewhere on the first floor are mementos acknowledging what took place nearby in 1913, including newspaper clippings and photographs. The tall, imposing street-side fence has been removed to reveal newly planted sod with a border of perennials.

The second phase, which will renovate the building's exterior by adding new clapboard, windows and a cedar shingle roof, will not be complete until next year. After that, Hynes hopes to hand off the house to the club. Since the club, which has about 1,300 members, has yet to take possession of the Ouimet house, its president, Lyman Bullard, said there was no decision yet on access or its primary use.

Hynes, who mentioned being sensitive to neighbors of a property in a residential area, does not envision the house being open to the public, or offering tours like a museum. But Waterman felt there might be a sense of obligation to share the house, and its history, in some way.

In the movie ''The Greatest Game Ever Played,'' there is an early bit of foreshadowing: a scene of the young Francis Ouimet dutifully but surreptitiously practicing his putting at night after his parents had gone to bed. If that might be Hollywood mythmaking, there is no disputing the golf-centric, stirring view from Ouimet's second-floor bedroom window. Across Clyde Street, Francis could see the Country Club's pristine 17th hole. The vista now is altered by the decades-long growth of trees sprouting on the perimeter of the grounds. But standing at the bedroom window, with the house's revitalized original flooring creaking underfoot, the manicured 17th hole is still plainly visible.

Francis Ouimet's boyhood dreams seem present, not distant.

His impact on golf, even American sport, is alive in the spirit of his home.

In 1913, the golf icon Gene Sarazen, then known as Eugenio Saraceni, was an 11-year-old caddie in the New York suburbs. The son of Sicilian immigrants, he read about Ouimet's stunning victory over the renowned British professionals. As Waterman noted, Sarazen said to himself at the time: ''If he can do it, I can do it.''

When Sarazen was 20, like Ouimet, he won the U.S. Open, the first of the seven major golf championships he won from 1922 to 1935.

For Waterman and Hynes, one of their fondest hopes is that the Ouimet house, newly returned to golf, is not done influencing future U.S. Open champions. Hynes floated the possibility that one of the golfers in this year's field might wish to stay in the house during the competition.

Calling that ''the ultimate thing,'' Waterman added: ''It would be a player who says, 'I want to wake up in Francis Ouimet's bedroom because he walked down the stairs and won the U.S. Open. Maybe that's what will happen for me.' ''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/14/sports/golf/us-open-francis-ouimet-house.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/06/14/sports/golf/us-open-francis-ouimet-house.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Francis Ouimet, top, won the U.S. Open with help from his 10-year-old caddie, Eddie Lowery. The house Ouimet lived in, above, has now been restored, with vintage wallpaper and telephone. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX GAGNE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Ouimet lining up the putt that ended the match in which he defeated the British professionals Ted Ray and Harry Vardon to win the 1913 U.S. Open. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PUBLISHED BY RANDOM HOUSE 1962) (B11)

Francis Ouimet's victory as a 20-year-old amateur in the 1913 U.S. Open is credited with spawning golf's explosive growth in the U.S. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE GRANTHAM BAIN COLLECTION (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS))

The living room of the Ouimet house, above, with vintage furniture. Fred Waterman, far left, is the club historian at the Country Club. Tom Hynes, left, was instrumental in buying and preserving the house. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX GAGNE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B14)

**Load-Date:** June 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[***A Modern Mountain Perch Situated Above Lima***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6598-GSY1-JBG3-646C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 24, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 13; INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

**Length:** 1647 words

**Byline:** By Michael Kaminer

**Body**

Political upheaval has stunted the high-end market in Peru's capital, but domestic buyers are keeping demand high at the middle and lower end of the market.

An Airy Seven-Bedroom Villa in Lima, Peru

$2 MILLION (7.4 MILLION PERUVIAN NUEVO SOL)

A stone mountain rises behind this geometric 12,055-square-foot house in La Planicie, an affluent neighborhood in the eastern La Molina district of Lima, Peru. Designed by Peruvian firm Domenack Arquitectos and built in 2014, the seven-bedroom, eight-bath house incorporates natural elements like an indoor waterfall and volcanic stone around the pool deck.

''All of La Molina is surrounded by large rock formations, and this house has its own mountain,'' said Fernando Bertetti of Peru Sotheby's International Realty, the listing broker. ''But the home itself is modern and elegant, and the architects who designed it are very well-known.''

A 50-foot stone walkway leads from a gated street entrance to wooden front doors, which contrast with the concrete facade. The doors open to a foyer with black granite-slab floors. A square archway separates the foyer from a great room with 19.5-foot cathedral ceilings and cojoba wood floors. Full-length windows offer views of the backyard pool and hilly terrain beyond.

The kitchen, with glossy white cabinets and gray quartzite countertops offsetting a wooden breakfast bar, is concealed by a wall that houses a wide ethanol fireplace. The home's main level also includes a small office, a bar and a two-bedroom guest suite.

On the second floor are five en suite bedrooms including the primary suite, which has a terrace. Two more bedrooms share a bathroom.

An indoor/outdoor waterfall flows from the home's main level to the basement, which has a screening room, guest bathroom and kitchenette. The waterfall begins at the edge of the concrete pool deck, which is inlaid with Peruvian volcanic stone. A snaking steel sculpture forms a canopy over the rear terrace, and the 60-foot pool is surrounded by landscaping. ''Lima is a desert, so anything planted is done by a gardener,'' Mr. Bertetti said.

In the mountain behind the house, the owner carved niches called andenes, versions of farming ''terraces'' used by Inca people in pre-Colombian times. ''Each of those little cutouts has a garden or a staircase,'' Mr. Bertetti said.

Lima, Peru's capital and largest city, is home to nearly 9.8 million residents in 43 urban districts covering about 1,000 square miles. Quiet and leafy, La Molina is favored by ''wealthy families, expats and embassy workers,'' Mr. Bertetti said. ''There are only houses here, no tall buildings.'' Private schools including the exclusive Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt/The American School of Lima are a draw, as is the upscale Country Club La Planicie, a half-mile west of the house. San Isidro, Lima's central business district, is about 10 miles west, as is Jorge Chavez International Airport and Peru's Pacific coastline.

Market Overview

Many wealthy Peruvians have been nervous since last year's election of Marxist-Leninist president Pedro Castillo, who in February swore in his third cabinet in six months. As a result, Lima's luxury market has ''frozen,'' said Ivan Zalaquett, a partner at Keller Williams Peru in Lima. ''Clients with money think it's too risky to invest here, and they're looking in places like Miami.''

Prices at the high end have declined about 20 percent since last year, said Nella Pinto, the head of Peru Sotheby's International Realty in Lima.

''Unlike other countries, it's been a buyer's market,'' she said. But Peru's economy, driven by mining and commodities, ''has remained strong, and people are realizing Peru isn't changing. Prices will only go up.''

According to Ms. Pinto, prices in central Lima's upscale neighborhoods, including San Isidro and Miraflores, range from $3,000 to $6,000 a square meter. In La Molina, where this home is located, prices average $1,500 a square meter.

Because of inflated property prices abroad, the exodus of wealth is starting to boomerang, said Juan Carlos Tassara, CEO of property developers Edifica and president of the Asociacion de Empresas Inmobiliarias del Peru (AESI), a real estate industry group. ''Peruvians who left are realizing you can't really get a good return on your investment in the U.S.,'' he said.

The pandemic has also shifted Lima's market dynamic. ''There has been an increase in demand for properties outside the city'' in surrounding districts and coastal communities, said Alen Becerra, founder and owner of Becerra Group/Leading Real Estate Companies of the World, in Lima.

But those transplants have not completely abandoned the city center, said Mr. Zalaquett of Keller Williams: ''Whoever can buy a second home here doesn't need to sell their primary residence.''

There is no central database for property transactions in Peru. Mr. Becerra estimated average prices in the city's Lima Top sector, which includes La Molina, Miraflores, San Isidro, San Borja, Surco and Barranco, at about $2,288 a square meter ($215 a square foot). In the less affluent neighborhoods of the Modern Lima sector, including Jesús María, San Miguel, Lince, Magdalena del Mar, Pueblo Libre and Surquillo, where demand is higher, prices average $1,871 a square meter ($175 a square foot), he said. In new developments across the city, prices rose 7 percent year over year, a reflection of perennial demand for housing, Mr. Becerra said.

Demand remains strong at the middle and lower end of the market, said Jose Luis Alzamora, CEO of TALE Inmobiliaria, a Lima property developer. ''The main offices of everything are in Lima,'' he said. ''That's always put pressure on people who want to live here. That's why we sell to ***working-class*** buyers, who need to buy somewhere to live, rather than the A market, who are now diversifying and largely stopping their investment in Peru.''

Mr. Zalaquett of Keller Williams said the ''sweet spot'' for Lima apartments outside the wealthiest neighborhoods ranges from $80,000 to $150,000.

A report from AESI, the real estate association, estimated that average prices across metropolitan Lima rose 14.7 percent from February 2021 to February 2022. According to data from the Central Reserve Bank of Peru shared by Mr. Becerra, prices per square meter are expected to increase 6 percent by the end of 2022. But Mr. Tassara, the developer, attributed rising prices to higher construction costs, ''not because the market's incredible.''

Who Buys in Lima

Middle-income Peruvians power Lima's property market, Mr. Alzamora said. ''People continue to get mortgages to buy their first home, or to move somewhere better than where they are,'' he said. ''Politics may worry them a bit, but they have more confidence than wealthy buyers.'' The biggest challenge, he said, is finding buildable land to address a perennial housing shortage.

Most foreign buyers are retirees from North America, Spain and Britain, Mr. Becerra said. They look to coastal communities outside central Lima, drawn by relatively low prices and an enviable climate. Expatriate Peruvians are a ''significant'' part of the high-end market, he said.

Foreigners who move to Lima for corporate postings usually rent rather than buy, Mr. Zalaquett said. ''I haven't had any foreign buyers. And Peruvians who moved abroad are only looking to sell the homes they kept here,'' he said.

Buying Basics

There are few restrictions on foreign buyers in Peru. ''Non-Peruvians can't own land within about 30 miles of our borders, but there are no cities there anyway,'' said Jorge Picon, co-founder of Picon Asociados, a legal and tax consulting firm in Lima. The buying process is the same for foreigners and Peruvians, he said, though money-laundering laws have tightened, so ''money has to come from a country that's not considered a tax haven by Peruvian law, like Panama. That could become a problem.''

Foreigners must open an account at a Peruvian bank to execute a property transaction, ''but anyone can do that in five minutes here,'' Mr. Picon said. Foreigners can obtain mortgages through Peruvian banks, though many choose to pay cash, he said.

Notaries oversee property transactions in Peru. ''They control the process, from basic due diligence on the property to creating the deed to paying taxes due upon completion of the transaction,'' Mr. Picon said.

Many property transactions take place in U.S. dollars, Mr. Picon said.

Websites

Peru Tourism: peru.travel

Peru government: gob.pe

La Molina government: munimolina.gob.pe

Languages and Currency

Spanish; nuevo sol (1 nuevo sol = $0.27)

Taxes and Fees

Foreign buyers and Peruvian citizens pay the same taxes on home purchases, said Oscar Picon, co-founder of Picon Asociados and Jorge Picon's brother. ''A 3 percent tax on the value of the property is the only tax anyone pays upon purchase,'' he said, noting that an 18 percent value-added tax applies only to new construction purchased from the developer. Independent professionals like lawyers and accountants do not charge a value-added tax on their services, but legal or accounting firms must apply the VAT.

Until 2016, foreign property sellers in Peru had to pay a flat 30 percent tax on capital gains. To encourage foreign investment, the government reduced the tax rate for individual non-Peruvians to 5 percent on capital gains. Foreign corporations must still pay the 30 percent tax.

Notary fees are set by the government at approximately 1.5 percent of the property value. Real estate commissions in Peru average 3 to 5 percent, Ms. Pinto said.

Annual property taxes on this home total about $3,000, Mr. Bertetti said.

Contact

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/20/realestate/peru-house-hunting.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/20/realestate/peru-house-hunting.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Clockwise from above: the 12,055-square-foot house has seven bedrooms and eight bathrooms

ceilings in the great room are nearly 20 feet high

and a steel sculpture and wooden roof form a canopy over the home's back deck. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA PERÚ SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY)

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2022

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[***China Projects Power on Rink And Ski Slope***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SY-PTH1-DXY4-X35H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 16, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Sports Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1388 words

**Byline:** By Amy Qin

**Body**

China said it succeeded on a vow by Xi Jinping, the country's top leader, to nurture millions of winter sports enthusiasts. But will the interest last after the Winter Games end?

Follow our latest coverage of the 2022 Winter Olympics.

BEIJING -- In the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou, which has sweltering temperatures for much of the year, children are ditching their flip flops for skis and hitting the indoor slopes.

Out west, high up on the Tibetan Plateau, Qinghai Province has become an unlikely center for curling, the traditional Scottish sport known as ''ice kettle'' in Chinese.

Over in the northeastern province of Liaoning, a group of retired men gather every day in the winter to strap on helmets and hockey pads and face off on an outdoor ice rink.

Such scenes, once rare, are growing more common as the ruling Communist Party charges ahead with an ambitious campaign to transform China -- large parts of which have never seen a single flake of natural snow -- into a global winter sporting power.

The campaign was started in 2015 when China's leader, Xi Jinping, pledged that the country, which had just won the right to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, would groom 300 million ice and snow sports enthusiasts by the time of the Games. Mr. Xi has made achieving sporting success a key pillar of his signature vision of a ''Chinese dream,'' a nationalistic promise of prosperity and rejuvenation for the country.

In a country where Mr. Xi's words are often taken as gospel, many could have predicted what came next: almost overnight, brands, investors, local governments and the public raced to respond. Ski resorts and ice rinks mushroomed around the country. Elementary and middle schools rushed to create winter sports programs. Companies specializing in snow apparel and après-ski entertainment flooded in.

''It was like a rocket taking off, suddenly everything changed,'' said Carol Zhang, 50, a figure skating coach in Shenzhen, a humid, subtropical city in China's south. Ms. Zhang said the number of students she instructs has nearly tripled since 2015. ''So many children want to do winter sports now,'' she added.

Just weeks before the start of the Winter Olympics in Beijing, Chinese state media triumphantly proclaimed that Mr. Xi's targets had been met. The country now has 654 full-sized ice rinks, 803 ski resorts and 346 million people who have ''taken part in winter sports or related activities at least once,'' the official news agency said.

Officials have said the number of people was calculated using a random sampling method. Some analysts have expressed skepticism about the figures, pointing to the vague definition of sports participants.

Still, there is little doubt that the campaign has made an impact. Ski resorts in China had more than 20 million skier days in the 2018-19 season, according to a recent industry report. A skier day is the equivalent of one lift ticket that is bought and used. That's double the number in 2014 and about one-third the number of skier days in the United States during the same time. China is aiming to build a $157 billion snow sports market by 2025 -- nearly as much as the global sports market was worth in 2020.

At resorts near Beijing, cars with Thule ski racks have begun appearing in parking lots. An après-ski culture with Chinese characteristics is emerging, one that often features hot springs, hot pot and karaoke.

The craze for winter sports is not limited to skiing. Interest in snowboarding, hockey, figure skating and curling has ballooned.

When Jing Gang, 41, moved back to his hometown, Tianjin, from Finland in 2007, he was dismayed to find that there were only two small ice rinks and almost no understanding of hockey, the sport he had grown to love while studying abroad.

''I used to carry the stick around and people would stop me and ask, 'Are you going fishing?''' Mr. Jing recalled. Others, he said, ''thought it was a combat sport and very violent.''

Now, just over a decade later, Tianjin has three big ice hockey rinks and a full youth league comprising around 20 teams. Mr. Jing, who now manages one of those rinks, said the sport was gaining popularity in cities across China.

Shan Zhaojian, a Chinese ski historian, drew a parallel between Mr. Xi's push and a similar effort spearheaded by Mao Zedong, who believed that mass participation in physical activity was necessary for a healthy ***working class***.

''To build up a strong nation, you need at the very minimum to have a strong body,'' Mr. Shan said of Mr. Xi's thinking.

China was not starting entirely from scratch. In the northeast and in the far west, skiing and skating traditions stretch back generations. China has also won gold medals in speedskating and figure skating.

But officials, real estate giants and international brands wanting to develop the market faced challenges, least of which were a lack of natural snowfall in much of China and the relative dearth of sports infrastructure and public transportation to ski resorts.

In the capital, Beijing, the government invested heavily in water-intensive snow-making machinery and new high-speed rail lines. Now, residents can zip seamlessly between the city's center and the multibillion-dollar ski resorts and the powder-blanketed mountains that lie on its fringes.

In the country's hotter southern region, the solution was to build ski resorts indoors. The Guangzhou Sunac Snow World, the world's second-largest indoor ski resort, features four artificial snow runs that stretch four football fields in length. It is part of a massive complex that also includes a water world, a theme park and several hotels.

Yet some sports remain out of reach for the masses. Ski lift tickets can cost upward of $100, while a full set of hockey gear can set a buyer back as much as $4,000 -- a fortune in a country where the median per capita disposable income is just over $4,700.

The cost is just one potential deterrent; many Chinese also regard winter sports as too dangerous, an impression that is not always wrong.

In a country with a shortage of qualified instructors, injuries are inevitable. More than 80 percent of China's 13 million skiers are beginners. Many novices wear stuffed animals strapped around their bottoms -- mostly turtles, but other cartoonish creatures, too. These help to cushion falls and to alert others on the mountain to keep their distance.

The fear of falling is what led Bran Yang, 26, an education consultant in Beijing, to take his first snowboarding lessons on an artificial ''dry'' slope (think a giant downward-sloping treadmill with no snow.) He had been inspired by the videos of snowboarders he had seen on Douyin, the Chinese version of TikTok, and also the advertisements in China featuring Eileen Gu, the Chinese American star skier.

Mr. Yang said he was hoping to graduate to the bunny slopes soon to test his new skills on real snow for the first time. But would he wear a butt turtle?

''Definitely; I don't want to get hurt,'' Mr. Yang said. ''Plus I think it's kind of cute.''

Mr. Yang's willingness to keep trying makes him an outlier. Only a fraction of first-time Chinese skiers give the sport a second go.

Officials and companies are hoping that the youth will be more committed. More than 2,000 schools around China now offer skating or skiing programs. As of 2020, 11 schools in Xining, the capital of Qinghai, had curling programs.

Young athletes were once mostly groomed by the state, but some wealthy parents are increasingly paying for private club training and equipment, seeing the experience in part as a résumé booster for overseas college applications.

It is unclear if the enthusiasm for winter sports will continue after the Games. Already, some ice rinks have fallen into disrepair and smaller ski resorts have closed down. But experts say such consolidation is to be expected.

Promoting the spirit of sports is one of the main goals of Mr. Jing, the ice rink manager in Tianjin, who also writes about hockey on his blog, ''Hockey Dad.''

''Cheer them on, don't urge them on without thinking,'' Mr. Jing recently wrote in a post aimed at other Chinese hockey parents. ''Our main goal as hockey parents should be to infuse your children with the passion and the love to play.''

Amy Chang Chien contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/world/asia/olympics-china-snowsports.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/15/world/asia/olympics-china-snowsports.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Children taking speedskating lessons in Beijing. President Xi Jinping has made sporting success a pillar of the ''Chinese dream.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES) (A1)

Above, curling at an elementary school in northern China in 2020. Left, indoor ski resorts like this one in Chengdu, with slopes up to four football fields long, bring snow sports to hotter regions. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZHANG CHI/XINHUA, VIA GETTY IMAGES

NOEL CELIS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES) (B13)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***At the U.S. Open, Saving the House That Built Golf***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65P4-SHH1-JBG3-63DN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 14, 2022 Tuesday 23:25 EST

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**Section:** SPORTS; golf

**Length:** 1873 words

**Byline:** Bill Pennington

**Highlight:** Francis Ouimet, an amateur who improbably won the 1913 U.S. Open at the Country Club, grew up across the street. Now his home will be given back to the game, and the course, that made him famous.

**Body**

Francis Ouimet, an amateur who improbably won the 1913 U.S. Open at the Country Club, grew up across the street. Now his home will be given back to the game, and the course, that made him famous.

BROOKLINE, Mass. — The small, 19th-century home with the golf course view is hardly noticeable to the hundreds of drivers whizzing by at 40 miles an hour on Clyde Street in the Boston suburb of Brookline. While the two-story house once stood like a sentry overlooking acres of cow pasture, the neighborhood is now replete with luxury housing, four-lane roads and a bustle worthy of a community just seven miles from downtown.

The location does not look like a landmark to the birthplace of American golf. But it is, in ways both tangible and symbolic. This week, the site will be newly in the spotlight as the U.S. Open returns for a fourth time to the Country Club in Brookline.

Neighbors of the Clyde Street property have recently noticed a flurry of activity at the residence as contractors’ vans filled the driveway daily for what is clearly a moneyed restoration project. In late April, two workers peeled back attic ceiling panels of the 1893 dwelling and then had to duck as a pair of antique golf clubs tumbled to the floor.

“They’re Francis’s clubs!” one of the workers, Aldeir Filho, yelped. His colleague Christian Herbet dashed down the stairs to alert the crew of tradesmen below.

From the second floor, Herbet shouted: “We found Mr. Ouimet’s clubs.”

In 1913, Francis Ouimet, then a 20-year-old self-taught amateur golfer, left the second-floor bedroom he shared with his brother at 246 Clyde Street and crossed the street to the Country Club, where he defeated the world’s two most accomplished British professionals, Ted Ray and Harry Vardon, to win the U.S. Open.

The stunning upset by Ouimet, the son of immigrants and a caddie at the club, was front-page news across the nation and has been credited with spawning explosive nationwide growth in the game. While there were only 350,000 American golfers in 1913, that number had swelled to 2.1 million less than 10 years later. The fame of Ouimet’s groundbreaking accomplishment — no amateur had ever won the U.S. Open and few golfers from ***working-class*** roots had ever played in championships — has endured for 109 years, no doubt helped by a popular 2005 movie, “The Greatest Game Ever Played.”

The house that Ouimet’s father, Arthur, just happened to purchase across from the Country Club has often played a prominent factor in Francis Ouimet’s winsome story. The humble dwelling astride a tony country club came to represent the two worlds Ouimet daringly traversed when he walked down his unadorned wooden front steps and marched onto the club’s gilded grounds for the last 18 holes of the 1913 U.S. Open. About four hours later, he was carried from the last green on the shoulders of cheering fans. The duality of Ouimet’s life on either side of Clyde Street, including the cramped, meager confines of his upbringing, is a robust part of the narrative. There are, for example, 17 scenes depicting life in the Ouimet house in the 2005 movie.

And yet, until recently, preserving or formally recognizing the home’s significance was never a priority. While the structure remained in the Ouimet family for 94 years, it changed ownership multiple times. The exterior and interior were altered and a tall white fence rose in the front yard to eclipse most of the ground floor from the road.

As housing prices in Brookline soared across the decades, some people at the nearby club, which is a founding member of the United States Golf Association, worried what might happen if the property was bought and redeveloped. Years ago, for instance, what had been the family barn next to the Ouimet house was sold, rebuilt and turned into condominiums.

“If you let that house be torn down,” Fred Waterman, the club historian, said of the Ouimet house in an interview last month, “you’ve allowed a very important part of American sports history to disappear.”

Tom Hynes, a member of the Country Club who has a Boston real estate background that stretches to the 1960s, casually befriended the owners of the house, Jerome and Dedie Wieler, not long after they moved to the neighborhood in 1989. Hynes lives nearby and would see the Wielers walking their dog almost daily.

“When you’re ready to sell your house,” Hynes told the couple, “I’m your buyer.”

The Wielers answered that they were not selling and were curious why Hynes would want it. Hynes explained Ouimet’s history to the Wielers, who knew nothing of golf. But the Wielers were intrigued by a heartwarming story.

“Someday, maybe 20 years from now, you might be selling and please let me know,” said Hynes, who added that he would remind the Wielers about once a year. “I just wanted the house returned to golf.”

Late in 2020, the Wielers contacted Hynes, who set foot in the house at 246 Clyde Street for the first time and 30 minutes later had a handshake agreement to buy the property for $875,000.

Hynes set about trying to defray the purchase cost by raising money with the intent of donating the house to the club, which could use it for myriad activities, including staff and guest housing on the second floor. The decision was also made to restore the house to make it appear as it did when the Ouimets lived there in 1913.

“When you walk into the house we want you to have the feeling of what it was like to have walked into the family’s home 109 years ago,” Waterman said.

But first, there was much work to do. While the house was in good shape, it needed innumerable improvements to meet modern building codes. The cost of the restoration swelled. As Hynes, the nephew of a three-term Boston mayor who has brokered some of the city’s most sweeping real estate deals, said: “I started going around town with my tin cup out.”

Hynes had a potent, almost divine ally in his fund-raising mission. It was as if Francis Ouimet was mystically assisting him. Ouimet, who [*died in 1967*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1967/09/03/90591080.pdf?pdf_redirect=true&amp;ip=0), remained a lifelong resident of the Boston area and continued to win golf championships as an amateur for many years after 1913. He also had a career in finance.

In 1949, a Ouimet college scholarship program for caddies was created. Since then, the Ouimet Fund has awarded nearly $44 million to more than 6,300 men and women. The need-based scholarships can be worth as much as $80,000 across four years of study.

As Hynes began to solicit help for his restoration, he occasionally was surprised to find donors who were unflinchingly generous with their money. They were Ouimet Scholars, now middle-aged, who believed they would have never attended college without the fund’s assistance.

Additionally, more than 40 members of the Country Club have contributed, most donating $25,000 each. The first phase of the renovation was finished last week.

A tour of the 1,550-square-foot, six-room Ouimet house these days is like stepping back in time since its appearance has been curated to match an early-20th-century style. The wallpaper, lighting, drapes and shades are vintage. The furnishings are faithful to the period: chairs, sofas and tables from the early 1900s presented to the club by an architect who heard about the renovation. Common rooms were small then, but add to the cozy, familial feel.

Just inside the first-floor entry is an old, preserved wooden wall telephone, the kind with a crank on the side. It is rigged so visitors can lift the receiver and hear a recording of Ouimet describing his U.S. Open victory. He is joined on the audiotape by Eddie Lowery, who was Ouimet’s 10-year-old caddie. The two remained lifelong friends.

Elsewhere on the first floor are mementos acknowledging what took place nearby in 1913, including newspaper clippings and photographs. The tall, imposing street-side fence has been removed to reveal newly planted sod with a border of perennials.

The second phase, which will renovate the building’s exterior by adding new clapboard, windows and a cedar shingle roof, will not be complete until next year. After that, Hynes hopes to hand off the house to the club. Since the club, which has about 1,300 members, has yet to take possession of the Ouimet house, its president, Lyman Bullard, said there was no decision yet on access or its primary use.

Hynes, who mentioned being sensitive to neighbors of a property in a residential area, does not envision the house being open to the public, or offering tours like a museum. But Waterman felt there might be a sense of obligation to share the house, and its history, in some way.

In the movie “The Greatest Game Ever Played,” there is an early bit of foreshadowing: a scene of the young Francis Ouimet dutifully but surreptitiously practicing his putting at night after his parents had gone to bed. If that might be Hollywood mythmaking, there is no disputing the golf-centric, stirring view from Ouimet’s second-floor bedroom window. Across Clyde Street, Francis could see the Country Club’s pristine 17th hole. The vista now is altered by the decades-long growth of trees sprouting on the perimeter of the grounds. But standing at the bedroom window, with the house’s revitalized original flooring creaking underfoot, the manicured 17th hole is still plainly visible.

Francis Ouimet’s boyhood dreams seem present, not distant.

His impact on golf, even American sport, is alive in the spirit of his home.

In 1913, the golf icon Gene Sarazen, then known as Eugenio Saraceni, was an 11-year-old caddie in the New York suburbs. The son of Sicilian immigrants, he read about Ouimet’s stunning victory over the renowned British professionals. As Waterman noted, Sarazen said to himself at the time: “If he can do it, I can do it.”

When Sarazen was 20, like Ouimet, he won the U.S. Open, the first of the seven major golf championships he won from 1922 to 1935.

For Waterman and Hynes, one of their fondest hopes is that the Ouimet house, newly returned to golf, is not done influencing future U.S. Open champions. Hynes floated the possibility that one of the golfers in this year’s field might wish to stay in the house during the competition.

Calling that “the ultimate thing,” Waterman added: “It would be a player who says, ‘I want to wake up in Francis Ouimet’s bedroom because he walked down the stairs and won the U.S. Open. Maybe that’s what will happen for me.’ ”

PHOTOS: Francis Ouimet, top, won the U.S. Open with help from his 10-year-old caddie, Eddie Lowery. The house Ouimet lived in, above, has now been restored, with vintage wallpaper and telephone. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX GAGNE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Ouimet lining up the putt that ended the match in which he defeated the British professionals Ted Ray and Harry Vardon to win the 1913 U.S. Open. (PHOTOGRAPH BY PUBLISHED BY RANDOM HOUSE 1962) (B11); Francis Ouimet‘s victory as a 20-year-old amateur in the 1913 U.S. Open is credited with spawning golf’s explosive growth in the U.S. (PHOTOGRAPH BY GEORGE GRANTHAM BAIN COLLECTION (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS)); The living room of the Ouimet house, above, with vintage furniture. Fred Waterman, far left, is the club historian at the Country Club. Tom Hynes, left, was instrumental in buying and preserving the house. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ALEX GAGNE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B14)

**Load-Date:** June 14, 2022

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[***With Indoor Ski Resorts and Curling Schools, China Lifts Xi’s Sports Dream***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SS-31Y1-DXY4-X2CR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 15, 2022 Tuesday 09:51 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; asia

**Length:** 1452 words

**Byline:** Amy Qin

**Highlight:** China said it succeeded on a vow by Xi Jinping, the country’s top leader, to nurture millions of winter sports enthusiasts. But will the interest last after the Winter Games end?

**Body**

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Follow our latest coverage of the [*2022 Winter Olympics*](https://www.nytimes.com/news-event/winter-olympics-beijing?name=styln-beijing-winter-olympics&amp;region=HOMEPAGE&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click).

BEIJING — In the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou, which has sweltering temperatures for much of the year, children are ditching their flip flops for skis and hitting the indoor slopes.

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Such scenes, once rare, are growing more common as the ruling Communist Party charges ahead with an ambitious campaign to transform China — large parts of which have never seen a single flake of natural snow — into a global winter sporting power.

The campaign was started in 2015 when China’s leader, Xi Jinping, pledged that the country, which had just won the right to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, would groom 300 million ice and snow sports enthusiasts by the time of the Games. Mr. Xi has made achieving sporting success a key pillar of his signature vision of a “Chinese dream,” a nationalistic promise of prosperity and rejuvenation for the country.

In a country where Mr. Xi’s words are often taken as gospel, many could have predicted what came next: almost overnight, brands, investors, local governments and the public raced to respond. Ski resorts and ice rinks mushroomed around the country. Elementary and middle schools rushed to create winter sports programs. Companies specializing in snow apparel and après-ski entertainment flooded in.

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Still, there is little doubt that the campaign has made an impact. Ski resorts in China had more than 20 million skier days in the 2018-19 season, according to a [*recent industry report*](https://www.vanat.ch/2020%20China%20Ski%20Industry%20White%20Book.pdf). A skier day is the equivalent of one lift ticket that is bought and used. That’s double the number in 2014 and about one-third the number of skier days in the United States during the same time. China is aiming to build a $157 billion snow sports market by 2025 — nearly as much as the global sports market was worth in 2020.

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China was not starting entirely from scratch. In the [*northeast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/08/sports/olympics/china-speed-skating-qitaihe.html) and in the [*far west*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/19/sports/skiing/skiing-china-cave-paintings.html), skiing and skating traditions stretch back generations. China has also won gold medals in speedskating and figure skating.

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Amy Chang Chien contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Children taking speedskating lessons in Beijing. President Xi Jinping has made sporting success a pillar of the “Chinese dream.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY KEVIN FRAYER/GETTY IMAGES) (A1); Above, curling at an elementary school in northern China in 2020. Left, indoor ski resorts like this one in Chengdu, with slopes up to four football fields long, bring snow sports to hotter regions. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZHANG CHI/XINHUA, VIA GETTY IMAGES; NOEL CELIS/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES) (B13)

**Load-Date:** February 16, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Marine Le Pen Has Already Won***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6598-GSY1-JBG3-648T-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 24, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 2; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1646 words

**Byline:** By Rachel Donadio

**Body**

SEMUR-EN-AUXOIS, France -- Marine Le Pen, the leader of France's far-right National Rally, has worked hard during this election campaign to soften, even detoxify, her image. It seems to be working. ''I think she's full of good ideas,'' Cyrielle Bernard, a 19-year-old who lives in this picturesque Burgundy town, told me one afternoon last week, chatting in the tobacconist shop where she works. Of all the candidates, she said, ''I think she's the most logical.''

President Emmanuel Macron won in Semur-en-Auxois in the first round of voting this month, but Ms. Le Pen took the larger Burgundy Franche-Comté region, with 27 percent of the vote over Mr. Macron's 26 percent. Ms. Le Pen's success comes from casting herself as the defender of the countryside and the ***working class***, focusing on cost-of-living issues and defending social protections. She has also been helped by an image makeover in which she opened up about raising her children as a single mother and now combines tough talk on immigration with social media posts about her cats.

The stigma she has long carried in mainstream politics has been quickly wearing off, and people are supporting her more openly than ever before.

As I drove around rural Burgundy after the first round of voting this month, I came away with a strong sense that while Mr. Macron may well defeat her in the second round this Sunday, in many ways, Ms. Le Pen has already won. In the first round, she put Mr. Macron on the defensive and convinced almost a quarter of voters that she has their best interests at heart. In the second round, polls predict she could easily win more than 40 percent, potentially 10 points more than in 2017.

The election being fought this time is less about change than about protection -- who will protect the French: from the rising cost of living, the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, immigrants (for some), as well as who will protect France's generous social welfare system.

Other voters are also seeking protection from the elite. The same winds that brought Brexit and helped elect President Donald Trump are also blowing through France. Ms. Le Pen has positioned herself to appear closer to the people than Mr. Macron, the ultimate technocrat, who has spent five years unable to shake his reputation as ''president of the rich.''

That was largely the impression of the Le Pen voters I spoke with in Balot, a small village in Burgundy, where Ms. Le Pen won the first round of France's presidential elections by a landslide. In the 2017 election that brought Mr. Macron into office, Balot, a dot on the map amid flat green farmland and fields of canary-yellow rapeseed, about 80 percent of voters supported Ms. Le Pen.

''She's more frank,'' Annabelle Germain, 29, told me when I knocked on the door of a house along the main road. Ms. Germain, who works as a house cleaner, dislikes Mr. Macron. ''He always has that smirk,'' she said. That smirk is a problem for Mr. Macron. He has a tendency to talk down to people -- to say ''let me explain to you,'' rather than listen.

Back in Semur-en-Auxois, Ms. Bernard, who told me that she thought Ms. Le Pen had ''good ideas,'' seemed evidence of how deeply entrenched Ms. Le Pen's hard-line views on immigrants have become and how she has successfully recast anti-immigrant rhetoric into practical policy recommendations.

''There are a lot of lies,'' Ms. Bernard said. ''Like that she's 'like her dad,' in quotation marks, but she's totally the opposite. Her father'' -- Jean-Marie Le Pen, a former presidential candidate and the longtime leader of the far-right National Front party -- ''was completely racist. She's not. She wants everyone to respect our ways. If you go to Africa, you respect African law. Her father just wanted to kick them all out.''

Such views are not uncommon, especially in small towns in France with little to no immigration. In fact, 15 years after her father's last run for president, Ms. Le Pen has not significantly diverged from his views on immigration even though she renamed the party, in what has been seen as an attempt to distance herself from him and broaden the base. She wants asylum seekers to be processed abroad and has said her first act as president will be to propose a referendum on immigration.

In La Roche-en-Brenil, a town of almost 900 people, I spoke to a 34-year-old mother of five, Chloé Odermatt, who was pushing a stroller with her 3-month-old baby. She said she'd vote for Ms. Le Pen and liked that she proposed stricter controls on giving immigrants access to state services. ''A lot of them take advantage of the system and aren't integrated in France,'' she told me.

This election has further scrambled the traditional divide between left and right in France. Ms. Le Pen has managed to widen her consensus by combining far-right positions on immigration with a left-leaning defense of public spending and social welfare. Her message resonates, even with younger voters like Ms. Bernard -- she has promised to eliminate income tax for people under 30 -- and her once extreme positions appear less so now that the center right has also adopted much of the same rhetoric, especially on national-identity issues. Help came as well from Éric Zemmour, whose firebrand declarations made her seem more moderate.

Across Burgundy, Le Pen voters kept telling me they wanted Mr. Macron out because prices kept going up and salaries weren't keeping pace. In La Roche-en-Brenil, I asked a Le Pen supporter whether that was entirely Mr. Macron's fault. ''Well, it's not mine,'' Thierry Chenier, 50, said. ''We've tried the right; that didn't work. We've tried the left; that didn't work. Maybe we need to try the far right, with a woman in power.''

Mr. Macron won the election in 2017 telling France it needed to change, pushing through labor reform that makes it easier for businesses to hire and fire. The unemployment rate fell to its lowest in 13 years, but Mr. Macron simultaneously signaled that jobs weren't as secure as they once were. This heightened anxieties. The Le Pen voters I spoke with said they wanted change, but mostly they seemed to want preservation -- keeping their lower retirement age, raising pensions, lowering their cost of living. The change they want may actually be a status quo that Mr. Macron has said is no longer sustainable.

And yet he has made great efforts to shore up the economy. During the pandemic, the Macron government pledged to spend ''whatever it costs'' to support businesses. He quickly started reopening schools and helped employers keep workers on furlough so that they could come back to work when the lockdowns ended. Still, it is hard to win saying, ''Imagine how much worse things could have been.''

Over the past decade, Ms. Le Pen has pulled her party toward a kind of ''social populism,'' said Gilles Ivaldi, a researcher at Sciences Po and a scholar of the far right in France and the West. She proposes ''reducing VAT tax, raising low salaries and pensions, spending more on health and education.''

Mr. Macron, by contrast, has become the embodiment of frightening economic trends, even if they predate him and extend far beyond France.

''The era of high growth is gone,'' Niels Planel, a city councilor in Semur-en-Auxois and the author of a book on French economic inequality, told me. In his view, the government should ''worry about mobility, worry about training, delivering a high-quality education,'' so that workers are ready for today's economy, not yesterday's. Otherwise Ms. Le Pen is likely to maintain her grip on many of France's rural and deindustrialized areas, while Mr. Macron will continue to win more-prosperous urban areas.

Foreign policy is where Mr. Macron has the advantage. Ms. Le Pen has long expressed her respect for Vladimir Putin. She is no longer saying that she wants France to leave the eurozone, however, which scared off voters in 2017.

The other factor potentially working in Ms. Le Pen's favor is the high abstention rate. Voters who supported the far-left candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon in the first round appear to be particularly up for grabs. Those opting out entirely reflect the crisis of representative democracy that's been growing in France at least since the Yellow Vest movement, which began in 2018 with a protest over a proposed hike in fuel taxes and evolved into a broader rebellion. People felt ignored.

What remains is discontent. The Le Pen voters in Balot and La Roche-en-Brenil aren't outliers. Ms. Le Pen's growing consensus, combined with strong anti-Macron sentiment, has eroded the traditional alliances that have kept the far right from power. ''Lots of voters are tired of voting against their own convictions in order to block the far right -- that's the biggest worry,'' said Mr. Ivaldi, the scholar of the far-right in France. That anti-far-right alliance, he added, is ''much weaker than 10 or 20 years ago.''

In their televised debate this week before the second round, Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen offered radically different visions for France. The next day Ms. Bernard told me she thought Ms. Le Pen had won. ''Marine knew how to change over the past five years,'' she wrote me in a text message. ''She understood her mistakes.''

''Macron thinks he's always right,'' she added. ''And unfortunately in five years he hasn't changed.'' Mr. Macron may not have changed, but France certainly has.

Rachel Donadio is a Paris-based writer and journalist, a contributing writer for The Atlantic and a former Rome bureau chief and European culture correspondent for The Times.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTIAN HARTMANN/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2022

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[***Republican Concedes Governor's Race in New Jersey, 10 Days After Polls Closed***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642P-GFD1-JBG3-6416-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 13, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1212 words

**Byline:** By Tracey Tully

**Body**

Jack Ciattarelli acknowledged on Friday that he lost the race for governor of New Jersey to the Democratic incumbent, Phil Murphy.

RARITAN, N.J. -- Jack Ciattarelli, a Republican who ran a spirited campaign to unseat New Jersey's Democratic governor, conceded defeat on Friday, acknowledging 10 days after polls closed that he had no path to victory.

Mr. Ciattarelli trailed Gov. Philip D. Murphy on Friday by roughly 74,000 votes, or about three percentage points, after a nearly two-year campaign that energized rank-and-file suburban and rural voters, who turned out in numbers that caught Democrats largely off guard.

Mr. Ciattarelli's strong showing and a hard-fought win by Republicans in Virginia sent tremors through the Democratic Party as it looked ahead to next year's midterm elections and the party's ability to hold on to its slim majority in Congress.

In New Jersey, Republicans also flipped about a half-dozen legislative seats, including one held by Stephen M. Sweeney, a labor leader who for more than a decade was considered the second most powerful lawmaker in the state.

Mr. Sweeney, the Democratic president of the State Senate, lost to a political newcomer, Edward Durr, who ran on a shoestring budget and admitted to being stunned by the win and largely unprepared for his new life as a lawmaker.

Mr. Ciattarelli, a former state assemblyman, has said that the election results are a rejection of the left-leaning policies championed by Mr. Murphy, a former Goldman Sachs executive who notched a raft of progressive victories during his first term.

''Every single time misguided politicians take this state too far off track, the great people of this state push, pull and prod it right back to where it belongs,'' Mr. Ciattarelli said on Friday. ''Right back to where it needs to be: the common-sense center.''

''I'm proud of how we helped reinvigorate the Republican Party and mobilized new people who have never been involved before,'' he said.

Mr. Ciattarelli, 59, was making his second bid for governor; in conceding the race, he said that he intended to run again in four years.

The race was far closer than any public poll and most political strategists had predicted.

But there were widely divergent opinions on what the takeaways were.

Republicans and many moderate Democrats agree with Mr. Ciattarelli that the results signal a need to refocus priorities on bread-and-butter issues like taxes and suburban affordability.

But Mr. Murphy's progressive allies have argued that the lackluster turnout among Democrats was instead a mandate to deliver on promises to help low-income and ***working-class*** families, and to address systemic racial and economic injustice, in Trenton and in Washington, where intraparty fighting has thwarted key pillars of President Biden's agenda.

Mr. Murphy, in a statement, said that his administration would continue to ''govern as we have since Day 1.''

''This election was not simply a choice of candidates, but of direction, and the people of New Jersey have chosen to keep moving forward,'' Mr. Murphy said.

''We will continue to stand with New Jersey's middle class and everyone striving to get there,'' he added.

Registered Democrats outnumber Republicans in New Jersey by more than one million voters. And there was little doubt that Mr. Ciattarelli's campaign had re-energized the state's moribund Republican Party, particularly in congressional swing districts where lawmakers are expected to face stiff challenges during the midterm elections.

''It was anti-Biden sentiment out there,'' said Michael Suleiman, the chairman of the Democratic Party in Atlantic County, which is along the Jersey Shore. ''A lot of anger. You could just feel the anger of Republican voters.''

The Associated Press declared Mr. Murphy the winner a day after the Nov. 2 election when he held a roughly one percentage point advantage over Mr. Ciattarelli.

Over the past nine days, Mr. Murphy's lead only grew as mail and provisional ballots were slowly tallied in liberal-leaning strongholds, prompting Democratic strategists to accuse Mr. Ciattarelli of stoking distrust in the election system.

Mr. Murphy's campaign manager, Mollie Binotto, criticized the delay as an ''assault on the integrity of our elections,'' and the governor called it ''dangerous.''

While being careful to say there was no evidence of election fraud, Mr. Ciattarelli had maintained that it was statistically possible that he could come within one point of Mr. Murphy after the approximately 70,000 emergency provisional ballots were counted, a threshold at which his campaign said it would consider asking a judge to authorize a recount.

At one point on election night, Mr. Ciattarelli held a substantial lead as election workers struggled to count and report the nearly 550,000 paper mail ballots as well as votes cast electronically during the nine days of early voting.

But the race was not nearly as close as it had once appeared.

By Friday afternoon, Mr. Murphy's lead had reached 2.9 points -- a full percentage point more than the margin of victory in Virginia, where the former Democratic governor, Terry McAuliffe, conceded his race against a Republican financier, Glenn Youngkin, the morning after polls closed.

Mr. Murphy is the first Democrat to win a second term as New Jersey governor since 1977, when Brendan Byrne was re-elected.

The vote-counting delays were primarily blamed on a learning curve linked to new electronic voting equipment and the high volume of mail ballots, which represented about one-fifth of the approximately 2,556,000 votes cast statewide. The paper ballots needed to be counted manually, starting on Election Day, and many counties completed that tally only early this week.

Even though some counties have not finished counting emergency and provisional ballots, Ciattarelli campaign officials acknowledged late on Thursday that the 74,000-vote gap was unlikely to shrink significantly.

''Enough votes have been counted,'' Mr. Ciattarelli said. ''There does not appear to be a path to victory.''

Mary H. Melfi, the Republican county clerk in Hunterdon County, said she expected the delays linked to the new electronic poll books -- which were purchased to offer early, machine voting in New Jersey for the first time -- would ease during the next election.

''It was a rush to get equipment,'' said Ms. Melfi, a former president of the New Jersey Association of Counties. ''It was a rush to set it up.''

There was no evidence, she said, of fraud.

''I think our process is pretty darn good and it's accountable,'' she said. ''Voter confidence took a hit because voters are not used to waiting two weeks to get the results.''

After the election, a new Facebook group, Audit NJ, began calling for a ''forensic audit'' of the results, quickly gathering more than 50,000 followers, many of whom expressed doubt in the accuracy of the count.

On Friday, Mr. Ciattarelli reiterated that there was no evidence of fraud as he called for a standardized reporting process among the state's 21 counties to try to stop conspiracy theories from emerging.

''Sadly, in our current climate,'' he said, ''that slow count and the constantly changing online numbers gives rise to doubt in the system.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/nyregion/jack-ciatterelli-concedes-nj-gov.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/nyregion/jack-ciatterelli-concedes-nj-gov.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Jack Ciattarelli, a Republican who ran against Gov. Philip D. Murphy, conceded on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Bryan Anselm for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 13, 2021

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[***In Presidential Vote, Neither Candidate Excites France's Muslims***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6591-MGT1-DXY4-X2MB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 23, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1655 words

**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi and Aida Alami

**Body**

In Sunday's decisive runoff election, they have a distasteful choice between Macron and Le Pen. They won't necessarily back Macron.

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

He likened the choice confronting him in France's presidential runoff on Sunday -- featuring Mr. Macron and Marine Le Pen, whose far-right party has a long history of anti-Muslim positions, racism and xenophobia -- as ''breaking your ribs or breaking your legs.''

Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen are now fighting over the 7.7 million voters who backed Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leftist leader who earned a strong third-place finish in the first round of the election. Were they to break strongly for one of the candidates, it could prove decisive.

Nearly 70 percent of Muslims voted for Mr. Mélenchon, the only major candidate to have consistently condemned discrimination against Muslims, according to the polling firm, Ifop.

By contrast, Mr. Macron garnered only 14 percent of Muslim voters' support this year, compared to 24 percent in 2017. Ms. Le Pen got 7 percent in the first round this year. Nationwide, according to Ifop, the turnout of Muslim voters was a couple of percentage points higher than the average.

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

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

''If I vote for Macron, I'd be participating in all the bad things he's done against Muslims,'' Mr. Bouadla, 50, said over the course of a long walk in Bondy, a city just northeast of Paris. He vacillated between abstaining for the first time in his life or reluctantly casting a ballot for Mr. Macron simply to fend off someone he considered ''worse and more dangerous.''

Most polls show that Mr. Macron's lead, about 10 percentage points, provides a comfortable path to re-election, but it is far narrower than his 32 percentage point margin of victory over Ms. Le Pen in 2017.

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

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

France's estimated 6 million Muslims account for 10 percent of the population, but their political influence has long been undermined by high abstention rates and divisions based on class and ancestry. Given that history, Mr. Mélenchon's strong Muslim backing may have signaled a shift, analysts say.

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

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

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

The source of much of the service workforce of the capital, the department also inspires fear and anxiety especially among older French people, whose feelings about immigration and crime are fanned by the right-wing news media and politicians. Éric Zemmour, the far-right TV pundit who came in fourth in the first round, following a campaign focused on attacking Islam, described the department as a ''foreign enclave'' suffering from ''religious colonization.''

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

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

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

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

In 2017, Mr. Macron had reassured many Muslims that he would be more open on issues of French secularism, known as ''laïcité, diversity and multiculturalism,'' said Vincent Tiberj, a sociologist at Sciences Po Bordeaux university who has studied the voting patterns of French Muslims. Mr. Macron even called colonization a ''crime against humanity'' during a visit to Algeria.

In a major speech on what Mr. Macron described as an Islamist-driven separatist movement in French society, Mr. Macron acknowledged that successive governments had encouraged the trend by settling immigrants in areas of ''abject poverty and difficulties,'' like Seine-Saint-Denis.

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

Mr. Macron hardened his positions after the beheading of a middle-school teacher, Samuel Paty, by an Islamist fanatic angry that the teacher had shown caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad in a class on blasphemy.

In response, Mr. Macron pushed forward his anti-separatism law despite widespread criticism from international and national human rights organizations, including the government's National Human Rights Commission. The law gave the government greater power over religious establishments, schools and other associations.

Following the law's adoption in August 2021, the authorities carried out 24,877 investigations through last January, according to the government. They closed 718 mosques, Muslim schools and associations for encouraging separatism, seizing assets worth 46 million euros.

But many establishments have been closed for vague, unwarranted reasons, according to an investigation of 20 cases by an umbrella group of academics and rights groups, the Observatory of Associative Liberties.

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

In a TV debate over the law, the interior minister, Gérald Darmanin, tried to outflank Ms. Le Pen on the right, accusing Ms. Le Pen of being ''soft'' against Islamism. The minister overseeing public schools further alienated Muslims by saying that the hijab, or head scarf, was ''not desirable in society.'' And the minister of higher education ordered an investigation into what she called ''Islamo-leftism'' in academic research.

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

''I vote against Macron,'' said Ahmed Leyou, 63, a taxi driver in Trappes, a city southwest of Paris, who voted for Ms. Le Pen in the first round and planned to do it again on Sunday. ''I'm Muslim, an Arab, but French. Marine Le Pen can't tell me to go back home. She can't do anything against me.''

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

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

''You can't humiliate people,'' Father Gaudin said, referring to the 2021 law and criticizing the recurring political debate over whether Muslim women should be allowed to wear headscarves and in what circumstances.

At a campaign stop last week, Mr. Macron praised a young Muslim woman's decision to wear a head scarf as a feminist choice made of her own volition -- a change from 2018 when he described it as not ''in keeping with the civility in our country'' and against the equality between men and women. In a TV debate between the two candidates on Wednesday, Mr. Macron said that Ms. Le Pen's position on the hijab -- to ban it in public -- would lead to ''civil war.''

Put on the defensive, Ms. Le Pen said in the past week that the issue was a ''complex problem'' that the National Assembly would have to debate and that she was not ''close-minded.'' Her top aides eventually said that banning the wearing of the hijab was not a priority.

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

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

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

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

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/world/europe/france-muslims-presidential-vote.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/22/world/europe/france-muslims-presidential-vote.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Prayers in Angers, France. A 2021 law closed hundreds of mosques and Muslim schools.

A poster of Samuel Paty, the teacher killed after he showed cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

A mosque in Bondy, France, north of Paris. The residents are largely poor, immigrant and Muslim.

Campaign posters for Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who drew 7.7 million votes in the first election round.

Abdelkrim Bouadla, third from left, with youths in Bondy. He has deep concerns over both presidential candidates. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES HILL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2022

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[***Close-Up Picture of the Partisan Segregation in the U.S.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62GJ-KGH1-JBG3-61W1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 20, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1916 words

**Byline:** By Emily Badger, Josh Katz, Kevin Quealy and Tim Wallace

**Body**

The broad outlines of America's partisan divides are visible on any national map. Republicans typically dominate in most Southern and Plains states, and Democrats in Northeastern and West Coast ones. Democrats cluster in urban America, Republicans in more rural places.

But keep zooming in -- say, to the level of individual addresses for 180 million registered voters -- and this pattern keeps repeating itself: within metro areas, within counties and cities, even within parts of the same city.

Democrats and Republicans live apart from each other, down to the neighborhood, to a degree that raises provocative questions about how closely lifestyle preferences have become aligned with politics and how even neighbors may influence one another.

As new research has found, it's not just that many voters live in neighborhoods with few members of the opposite party; it's that nearly all American voters live in communities where they are less likely to encounter people with opposing politics than we'd expect. That means, for example, that in a neighborhood where Democrats make up 60 percent of the voters, only 50 percent of a Republican's nearest neighbors might be Democrats.

Democrats and Republicans are effectively segregated from each other, to varying degrees by place, according to the Harvard researchers Jacob Brown and Ryan Enos. And at least over the past decade, they believe this partisan segregation has been growing more pronounced.

The maps atop this page show their estimates of partisanship down to the individual voter, colored by the researchers' best guess based on public data like demographic information, voter registration and whether voters participated in party primaries.

We can't know how any individual actually voted. But these maps show how Democrats and Republicans can live in very different places, even within the same city, in ways that go beyond the urban-suburban-rural patterns visible in aggregated election results.

''We know that with groups in general, when they're separated, bad things happen,'' Mr. Enos said. That has proved true with racial segregation, and religious and ethnic divides -- patterns of separation that make it easier to demonize one another, and harder to share resources or power.

''The question with political parties is whether those are sufficiently like those other groups that we should worry about that happening,'' he said.

By living apart, opposing partisans might scorn aid for one another (with a term like ''blue-state bailouts'') or become more likely to buy into myths about one another (like widespread voter fraud). Other processes like racial segregation, Mr. Enos added, have shown a tendency to accelerate.

This growing residential separation doesn't necessarily mean that partisans are searching out cities -- or neighborhoods, or even individual streets -- where the neighbors are politically like-minded. Several forces have been pushing them apart, including broad changes in whom the two parties represent. The closer we look among all these dots, however, the harder it gets to explain these patterns.

For each individual voter, tied to an address, the researchers looked at their thousand nearest voters, weighting those next door more heavily than those a mile away. Drawn this way, about 25 million voters -- urban Democrats especially -- live in residential circles where at most only one in 10 encounters is likely to be with someone from the opposite party. Democrats in parts of Columbus, Ohio, and Oklahoma City live this way. So do Republicans in the reddest parts of Birmingham, Ala., and Gillette, Wyo.

Even when Democrats and Republicans are more equally represented in the same ZIP code or census tract, Mr. Brown and Mr. Enos still find traces of segregation. That means the two groups don't appear randomly jumbled together. A Republican in a more mixed Denver suburb is still more likely to live close to other Republicans than mere chance would suggest.

''If we get down to a very low level and we still see this sorting going on,'' Mr. Enos said, ''it probably means there's something pretty fundamental going on here.''

Educational shift, geographic switch

So what can explain these patterns?

Over time, the Democratic Party has increasingly aligned with urban voters, and the Republican Party with voters outside of cities, deepening geographic polarization nationally.

Highly educated white voters are also shifting toward the Democrats as ***working-class*** white voters move toward Republicans. Educational realignment has geographic consequences, too, with the changes concentrated in highly educated suburbs and more ***working-class*** towns and rural communities. None of these voters have to move to effectively ''sort'' on a map; rather, their preferences change in place (in ways that may show up in their voting behavior before voters update their party registration).

''Party coalitions have shifted in a direction that aligns really well with spatial differences in a way it didn't use to,'' said Greg Martin, a Stanford political scientist who has also studied these trends.

Racial segregation also feeds partisan clustering, given that African-American voters in particular are overwhelmingly Democratic and also residentially segregated (metro Milwaukee's map of partisan segregation, for one, resembles its map of racial segregation). But Mr. Brown and Mr. Enos find that racial segregation alone doesn't explain the levels of partisan separation they find.

Lifestyle preferences that seemingly have little to do with partisanship are also increasingly correlated with it. If you like city living and use transit, you're more likely a Democrat; if you prefer large-lot houses and pickup trucks, you're more likely a Republican. And so voters of the same party might choose to live in the same places for such features, not necessarily to be around one another, and it would produce partisan clustering.

Yet even when Republicans and Democrats live in the same city, or in the same part of town -- essentially the same kind of place -- they still appear separated from each other to a degree. Much of that is probably about housing. Even within the same census tract, there may be pockets of apartment buildings (more likely home to Democrats) and streets with single-family homes (more likely home to Republicans).

But housing can't explain the full effect, either. Across 98 percent of census tracts nationwide, Democrats and Republicans live with at least some segregation. That's true even within suburban neighborhoods southwest of Kansas City, Mo., where the residents are almost all white and homeowners, and the houses are all single-family.

That leaves a more intriguing question: Are people really paying attention to the politics of their neighbors and acting on it in some way?

''I do think that something new is happening at the neighborhood level around partisan politics,'' said Nancy Rosenblum, a political theorist at Harvard who has written a book about neighbors. Interactions between neighbors have long been distinctly nonpartisan, she said, grounded in values like reciprocity -- I'll lend you my leaf blower, you watch my kid.

But she fears that a more malignant kind of politics is seeping all the way down into neighborhoods: ''The most interesting question to ask here is: How deep does it go? And the test for how deep it goes for me is: How do neighbors in neighborhoods behave during disasters?''

That's when we normally see neighborly reciprocity really come through, she said. ''If we look at Covid -- and we consider Covid a national disaster -- you see something change,'' she said. ''And this is really very discouraging. It could make you weep.''

Now even masks are freighted partisan signals.

Local influencers

There is little evidence that people choose where to live with politics in mind. Other concerns tend to take precedence, like finding a house that's affordable and near a preferred school, the political scientists Clayton Nall and Jonathan Mummolo have argued.

And neighborhoods contribute just one piece of anyone's social circle, along with co-workers, friends and family, to say nothing of the political influences of partisan news and social media.

But there is some evidence that local environments matter. Mr. Brown, a doctoral candidate in government at Harvard, has also looked at what happens to voters who stay at the same address over time, as the partisan makeup of the community shifts around them. As a neighborhood becomes more Democratic or Republican over time, he finds, voters become more likely to change their party registration to match.

In a neighborhood that has gone from slightly more Republican to slightly more Democratic, for example, that increases a nonpartisan voter's likelihood of registering as a Democrat by several percentage points. That's modest, but Mr. Brown said that it's ''a sizable change in something that for the most part is pretty stable.''

He also finds in surveys that voters are more likely to display their partisanship -- wearing clothing with a message, putting out a yard sign or bumper sticker -- when the people around them share their politics.

Other research shows that yard signs can increase candidates' vote shares, and that neighbors may influence political donations. Ricardo Perez-Truglia, a political economist at the University of California, Berkeley, found that people gave more in politically like-minded areas when he sent them a letter reminding them their neighbors could look up their donations. And donors to Barack Obama in 2008 were likely to give more generously in 2012 if they relocated in the intervening years to a more heavily Democratic community.

''This is just one example of many other contexts in which this could be going on,'' Professor Perez-Truglia said. ''If you know that everyone else is of your same party, you don't have anything to lose. You can be very vocal; nobody's going to disagree with you.''

These studies together suggest that as places become more politically homogeneous, people there are more likely to conform and to publicly signal their partisanship. Maybe no one says, ''I want to move here because of all these Biden yard signs.'' But perhaps one neighbor is swayed by the people who put them up, and another neighbor concludes, ''This isn't the place for me.''

Many partisan signals are not so subtle these days. They come from billboard-size Trump yard signs that stand proud even outside of election years. Other signs -- ''love is love,'' ''no human is illegal,'' ''science is real'' -- implicitly reproach anyone who doesn't share those values. And it has become easier over time for entrepreneurs to make and market such messaging, said Donald Green, a political scientist at Columbia who has studied yard signs.

''It's very easy to tell who's who,'' he said, describing the equally divided Hudson Valley community where he has a home, and where signs opposing a state gun control measure are common. ''If you see 'Repeal the SAFE Act' -- I saw four just driving to the Post Office just now -- you know, you just absolutely know.''

It's also possible that partisan segregation is increasing because these patterns are feeding one another. Voters with similar taste in housing and who are realigning by party right now happen to be clustered in space, and they're nudging each other along as they go, in a kind of self-reinforcing cycle.

Additional work by Matthew Bloch.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/17/upshot/a-close-up-picture-of-partisan-segregation-down-to-the-neighborhood.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/17/upshot/a-close-up-picture-of-partisan-segregation-down-to-the-neighborhood.html)

**Load-Date:** April 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction: Sunday, February 09th 2020***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y5T-7FV1-JBG3-63B5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 9, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 499 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the February 09, 2020 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending January 25, 2020. An asterisk (\*) indicates that a book's sales are barely distinguishable from those of the book above it. A dagger (?) indicates that some retailers report receiving bulk orders. For an explanation of our methodology, visit [*http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers*](http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers).

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|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Weeks | Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 |  | 1 | A VERY STABLE GENIUS, by Philip Rucker and Carol Leonnig. (Penguin Press) The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists use firsthand accounts to chart patterns of behavior within the Trump administration. |
| 2 |  | 1 | PROFILES IN CORRUPTION, by Peter Schweizer. (Harper) The author of ?Clinton Cash? gives his evaluations of members of the Democratic Party. |
| 3 | 1 | 101 | EDUCATED, by Tara Westover. (Random House) The daughter of survivalists, who is kept out of school, educates herself enough to leave home for university. |
| 4 | 3 | 20 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Little, Brown) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts and misunderstandings. |
| 5 | 4 | 59 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Crown) The former first lady describes how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. |
| 6 | 6 | 20 | MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE, by Lori Gottlieb. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) A psychotherapist gains unexpected insights when she becomes another therapist?s patient. |
| 7 | 2 | 2 | TIGHTROPE, by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. (Knopf) The Pulitzer Prize-winning authors examine issues affecting ***working-class*** Americans. |
| 8 |  | 1 | THE AGE OF ENTITLEMENT, by Christopher Caldwell. (Simon & Schuster) An assessment of some potential social, cultural and economic causes of our current political fissure. |
| 9 |  | 2 | WHY WE CAN'T SLEEP, by Ada Calhoun. (Grove) The cultural and political contexts of the crises that Generation X women face. |
| 10 | 5 | 2 | RUNNING AGAINST THE DEVIL, by Rick Wilson. (Crown Forum) The Republican strategist offers his insights on how to potentially defeat President Trump in the upcoming election. |
| 11 | 8 | 10 | CATCH AND KILL, by Ronan Farrow. (Little, Brown) The Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter details some surveillance and intimidation tactics used to pressure journalists and elude consequences by certain wealthy and connected men. |
| 12 | 9 | 15 | ME, by Elton John. (Holt) The multi-award-winning solo artist's first autobiography chronicles his career, relationships and private struggles. |
| 13 | 11 | 15 | THE BODY, by Bill Bryson. (Doubleday) An owner?s manual of the human body covering various parts, functions and what happens when things go wrong. |
| 14 |  | 8 | HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST, by Ibram X. Kendi. (One World) A primer for creating a more just and equitable society through identifying and opposing racism. |
| 15 |  | 1 | THE IMPOSSIBLE FIRST, by Colin O'Brady. (Scribner) A memoir by the first person to cross Antarctica alone and without assistance. |

**Load-Date:** February 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***They Fueled A.O.C.’s Win. Can They Shape the N.Y.C. Mayor’s Race?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61KD-9471-DXY4-X3XF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 23, 2020 Wednesday 15:18 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1597 words

**Byline:** Katie Glueck and Dana Rubinstein

**Highlight:** It’s not yet clear if voters want bold ideas from the left or a leader who can manage the city out of a crisis. Or maybe they want both.

**Body**

It’s not yet clear if voters want bold ideas from the left or a leader who can manage the city out of a crisis. Or maybe they want both.

[Live [*N.Y.C. mayoral race primary results.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)]

Last summer, the rising influence of the Democratic Party’s progressive wing in New York seemed almost boundless.

Progressive activists helped [*knock off*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) an incumbent congressman, fueled upsets in several state legislative races and pushed policies on taxation and policing that put an anxious business community further on edge.

Next year, the movement may face its sternest test in the [*New York City mayoral race*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), a wide-open contest that will be the city’s most momentous in decades.

New York officials and strategists across the ideological spectrum say that the Democratic electorate has plainly shifted to the left in recent years, and a unified liberal front helped make the difference in a number of high-profile congressional and legislative races in the city [*and*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) around the country.

But at a time of extraordinary economic crisis, staggering public health challenges and rising gun violence, the mayor’s race may serve as a barometer of whether the electorate will be swayed more by bold, progressive ideas or evidence of managerial competence — or whether they believe a single candidate can deliver both.

The challenge for progressive leaders will be to try to replicate their successes — best exemplified by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s [*shocking win*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in 2018 — to a citywide race with more than 3.7 million registered Democratic voters, in a political landscape where more traditional political gatekeepers still hold influence.

“We have an opportunity to really radicalize and get people behind a lot of the things that we’ve been talking about for a very long time,” said Tiffany L. Cabán, a progressive candidate who nearly won the Queens district attorney race last year and is now running for City Council. “What’s at stake here is the opportunity in this moment to have a mayor that is going to say that this is not about safe, small, incremental change that tinkers around the edges.”

The progressive push fell short in the 2018 Democratic primary for governor, when Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo [*decisively defeated*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) Cynthia Nixon, the candidate of choice for many left-leaning organizations and leaders. Nor was it [*quite sufficient*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) to avoid Ms. Cabán’s narrow defeat, or to win some [*contested*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) [*House*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) contests.

Some Democratic leaders argue that the ideas that excite young progressives have not always resonated in older, ***working-class*** communities of color across the five boroughs. The mayoral primary in June will test whether any candidate can bridge that divide.

“The socialist left is on the rise, particularly in neighborhoods where Black and Latino residents are being gentrified out of existence,” said Representative Hakeem Jeffries, the chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, who represents parts of Brooklyn and Queens and [*may become*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)the first Black House speaker. “To the extent the success of the socialist left is in part tied to gentrifying neighborhoods, it remains to be seen how that will impact a citywide race.”

How left-wing activists and organizations will choose to wield their influence is unclear. Were all the groups affiliated with the progressive movement to align behind one candidate, they could have a sizable impact on the race.

So far, they are not coalescing.

“There’s a big question of whether folks do,” said Jonathan Westin, the executive director of New York Communities for Change. “I think the candidate that is able to cobble together all of those groups is the candidate that is going to win.”

The New York City Democratic Socialists of America has endorsed [*six*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) candidates for the City Council, a move that promises significant organizational assistance. But it has yet to make an endorsement in the mayoral race, and several people affiliated with the organization do not expect it to.

“If we had a mayoral candidate who came from the D.S.A., I think that would have been one thing,” said Susan Kang, a D.S.A. member and a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice. “We’re trying to be very strategic in how we use our labor.”

Another complicating factor is the popularity of Scott Stringer, the city comptroller and a leading mayoral candidate, among some prominent younger progressive lawmakers. In 2018, Mr. Stringer [*endorsed*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) a D.S.A. stalwart, Julia Salazar, in her race for State Senate over the incumbent, Martin Dilan. Ms. Salazar won her race, and Mr. Stringer won her endorsement for mayor, along with several other high-profile endorsements from progressives.

Mr. Stringer has also won the backing of a few key unions, including most recently the Communications Workers of America, an early supporter of Mayor Bill de Blasio.

“Some people are a little bit disappointed that the current progressive front-runner is a white guy and certainly not an insurgent in terms of his background,” said Michael Kinnucan, a New York City D.S.A. member.

Nor is it clear whether several other progressive groups, including the Working Families Party, will play a role in the primary.

“We see ourselves as coalition builders, aligning the left, aligning working people’s institutions behind a candidate, a movement or a set of issues that can help shape a much stronger landscape for working people in New York City,” said Sochie Nnaemeka, the party’s state director.

Ms. Ocasio-Cortez [*offered her endorsement*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) in a number of congressional and state primaries earlier this year, and a number of the mayoral candidates would probably covet her backing. A spokeswoman did not respond to a request for comment about Ms. Ocasio-Cortez’s endorsement plans in the race.

Even if New York progressives don’t unite behind a single candidate, they are already affecting the discourse of the race, as even candidates like [*Raymond J. McGuire*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), a longtime Wall Street executive, sound [*increasingly open*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) to higher taxes on the wealthy.

But some traditional New York City power brokers are skeptical of a fiercely ideological pitch in this race, when city residents face so many tangible challenges.

“People are a little bit beleaguered when it comes to all of these ideological fights,” said Michael Mulgrew, the president of the United Federation of Teachers. “It’s more, ‘OK, who can start to steer this ship toward a better horizon?’”

The upcoming primary will also probe the citywide appeal of progressives’ language and policy proposals after their success in a series of more local races.

For example, there is evidence that [*in some poor and middle-class communities of color*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html), slashing funding for police, a major left-wing priority, is controversial. That’s an issue that has divided the mayoral field.

Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president and a former police officer, and Mr. McGuire have both made overtures to the donor class while stressing their appeal to ***working-class*** Black New Yorkers. Both are betting that a citywide race will draw a diverse range of voters who do not all share the most far-reaching goals — defunding the police or imposing more taxes on the wealthy, for example — of prominent progressive organizations.

“I’ve never walked into one meeting, one civic group, one block association, one NYCHA development meeting where someone said to me, ‘I want less cops on my block,’” said Mr. Adams, who ran a police reform organization while at the New York Police Department. “Just the opposite: ‘Where are my police? What are they doing?’”

Several of the candidates are seeking to present themselves as the right blend of visionary progressive and seasoned administrator — perhaps none more so than Mr. Stringer, who has promised to “[*manage the hell out of this city*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html)” as he also seeks to rack up a list of endorsement from left-wing leaders.

He dismissed concerns that progressives might not want to elect a white man at this moment in history, noting he is the only candidate to have won citywide office and pointing to the racially diverse coalition supporting him.

“I don’t think I would be attracting this very powerful coalition if I was in simply the lane of what I look like,” he said.

Councilman Carlos Menchaca, of Brooklyn, and Dianne Morales, the former nonprofit executive, are running among the most progressive campaigns in the race. Asked whether she had spoken with key left-wing organizations about a possible endorsement, Ms. Morales said “beginnings of conversations” were underway, though she declined to specify which groups she was talking to.

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Mr. Jeffries suggested that in a time of deep crisis, a candidate with a more pragmatic message may have an edge. He also made a point to speak highly of incoming Rep. Jamaal Bowman, who, boosted by leading progressive groups, [*defeated*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) Representative Eliot L. Engel last summer in a district that covers parts of the Bronx and Westchester County. Mr. Jeffries [*had backed*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/06/22/us/elections/results-nyc-mayor-primary.html) Mr. Engel.

“The person who rises to the occasion of a forward-looking, progressive attainable vision is the mayoral candidate who is likely to prevail,” he said.

PHOTO: Scott Stringer, the New York City comptroller, has been endorsed for mayor by several young progressive Democratic lawmakers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 29, 2021

**End of Document**



[***New York City Mayor's Race Tests Strength of Progressives***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61KM-7XG1-JBG3-61T5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 24, 2020 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1579 words

**Byline:** By Katie Glueck and Dana Rubinstein

**Body**

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Next year, the movement may face its sternest test in the New York City mayoral race, a wide-open contest that will be the city's most momentous in decades.

New York officials and strategists across the ideological spectrum say that the Democratic electorate has plainly shifted to the left in recent years, and a unified liberal front helped make the difference in a number of high-profile congressional and legislative races in the city and around the country.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/23/nyregion/nyc-mayors-race-progressives.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/23/nyregion/nyc-mayors-race-progressives.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Scott Stringer, the New York City comptroller, has been endorsed for mayor by several young progressive Democratic lawmakers. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 24, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Trump’s ‘Frack’ Attack on Biden Seems to Be Falling Short***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6129-7BR1-DXY4-X1M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 13, 2020 Tuesday 10:01 EST

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**Section:** CLIMATE

**Length:** 1354 words

**Byline:** Lisa Friedman

**Highlight:** President Trump has made fracking a "Hail Mary" attack on Joe Biden in the industrial Midwest, but three weeks before Election Day, it does not seem to be working.

**Body**

WASHINGTON — During the Democratic presidential primaries, James T. Kunz, who leads the operating engineers union in Western Pennsylvania, worried the party would choose a nominee determined to cripple the natural gas industry that has boosted the livelihoods of thousands of fellow Pennsylvanians.

And in recent weeks, President Trump has repeatedly told voters like Mr. Kunz that Democrats had done just that. Joseph R. Biden Jr. will ban the extraction of gas through hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, he and Vice President Mike Pence have said, over and over — nevermind that the former vice president has said otherwise.

Mr. Kunz isn’t buying it.

“I’m very comfortable endorsing Joe Biden,” Mr. Kunz said.

Lagging in the polls and looking to regain the white, ***working-class*** dominance that narrowly delivered the Upper Midwest to him in 2016, Mr. Trump has made fracking something of a last gasp. His campaign has taken advantage of confusing statements that Mr. Biden has made about fracking despite his consistent position that he will not work to ban the practice.

Mr. Pence, in his debate with Senator Kamala Harris, lobbed the accusation that a Biden administration would ban fracking no fewer than five times.

But it does not appear to be gaining enough traction where Mr. Trump needs it most, in Pennsylvania. Recent polls show Mr. Biden with a [*13-percentage point lead*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/us/politics/polls-show-biden-edging-out-trump-in-iowa-and-wisconsin-and-holding-firm-leads-in-pennsylvania-and-florida.html) in perhaps the most important swing state.

Mr. Kunz is one of more than a half-dozen Western Pennsylvania union officials and members with the steamfitters union, the builder’s guild and construction union [*who had told The New York Times early this year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/us/politics/polls-show-biden-edging-out-trump-in-iowa-and-wisconsin-and-holding-firm-leads-in-pennsylvania-and-florida.html) they would not be able to tell their members to vote for a candidate who supported a fracking ban, but who in recent weeks have sided with Mr. Biden. Each of them had expressed concern that the Democratic Party had turned hostile to the fossil fuel industry as they pressed for the development of renewable energy sources like solar and wind power.

But in interviews this month, they said they took Mr. Biden at his word that addressing climate change would not amount to an attack on the natural gas industry.

“The day they can feed the United States economy energy wise with solar and wind, then thank God for it,” said Kenneth Broadbent, business manager of the Steamfitters Local 449 who has endorsed Mr. Biden. “But they’re going to need natural gas, and Biden understands that.”

The alliance between Western Pennsylvania workers and liberal Democrats remains uneasy.

“Fracking is bad, actually,” Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, the lead sponsor of the progressive Green New Deal who served as a co-chairwoman of Mr. Biden’s climate change task force, [*tweeted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/us/politics/polls-show-biden-edging-out-trump-in-iowa-and-wisconsin-and-holding-firm-leads-in-pennsylvania-and-florida.html) after the vice-presidential debate.

Evan Weber, political director of the Sunrise Movement, a youth-led group of climate activists, criticized Ms. Harris’ performance during the vice-presidential debate, saying “the American people want climate action, and polls show Democrats have no reason to shy away from being bold.”

And even in Pennsylvania, there is evidence that fracking may not be the dominant issue that both Mr. Trump and Mr. Biden seem to think it is.

Several union leaders and members who said they are supporting Mr. Biden said the Trump administration made policy decisions that hurt their way of life, like reshaping the courts with conservative judges who oppose laws protecting union wages on federally-funded projects.

“Four more years of President Trump is just going to destroy our pensions,” said Thomas R. Melcher, business manager of the Pittsburgh Regional Building Trades Council, an umbrella organization of construction unions.

Mr. Melcher ticked off a list of what he felt were failed promises that Mr. Trump made: to bring manufacturing back, save coal and deliver a major infrastructure package.

“He says a lot of things, but everything that comes out of his mouth is a lie,” Mr. Melcher said of the president.

But even union leaders who back Mr. Biden acknowledged their rank-and-file is divided. And at least one powerful union leader, Shawn Steffee, a business agent and executive board member with the Boilermakers Local 154, has come out strongly for Mr. Trump.

“Joe Biden and Kamala Harris want nothing to do with the fossil fuel industry. He’s flip flopped so many times, and President Trump has embraced fossil fuels, natural gas and coal,” Mr. Steffee said.

A 35-year Democrat before voting for Mr. Trump in 2016, Mr. Steffee said he plans to vote Republican again and believes most of his membership will, too. Their top issue: energy.

“Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have been totally unclear,” Mr. Steffee said, citing a comment Mr. Biden made last year that he will “[*end fossil fuel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/us/politics/polls-show-biden-edging-out-trump-in-iowa-and-wisconsin-and-holding-firm-leads-in-pennsylvania-and-florida.html)” even as he vowed to protect fracking. “You can’t have it both ways,” Mr. Steffee said, adding, “My members and my local, we’re done riding the fence. We made a stand.”

Charlie Gerow, a Republican strategist in Pennsylvania, said the Trump campaign’s line of attack is having an effect.

“I think Trump tying Biden to the Green New Deal works in areas not only where fracking is significant, but across the state. I think it’s helping Trump in the suburbs,” he said. He dismissed the polls showing Mr. Biden leading in Pennsylvania by double digits.

“That’s just about exactly where it was four years ago. Donald Trump has always outperformed polls and certainly outperformed them in Pennsylvania,” Mr. Gerow said.

G. Terry Madonna, a political-science professor at Franklin &amp; Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa., conducts frequent polling in the state, and sees a critical difference between 2020 and 2016: Hillary Clinton paid little attention to white ***working class*** voters when she campaigned, while Mr. Biden makes them a singular focus.

Mr. Trump “is not doing as well in these old mining and mill towns as he did four years ago,” Mr. Madonna said, “and he’s getting hammered in the suburbs” in large part because of his handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr. Madonna said he is skeptical of the importance of fracking in statewide elections. But, he noted, “when you win by 44,000 voters,” as Mr. Trump did in Pennsylvania four years ago, “you’ve got to be careful because a little thing here or there can make a difference.”

Ms. Harris was an [*original co-sponsor of the Green New Deal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/07/us/politics/polls-show-biden-edging-out-trump-in-iowa-and-wisconsin-and-holding-firm-leads-in-pennsylvania-and-florida.html) when it was proposed as a resolution, and in the Democratic primaries her platform included banning fracking. Mr. Biden has said the Green New Deal is a “crucial framework for meeting the climate challenges we face” but has not endorsed it. His plan calls for spending $2 trillion over four years to boost clean energy and eliminate fossil fuel emissions from the power sector by 2035.

He has pledged to end new permits for hydraulic fracturing on federal lands and waters, but said fracking “has to continue because we need a transition” to renewable energy.

“The Green New Deal is not my plan,” Mr. Biden said during the presidential debate last month. When asked at the vice-presidential debate what the Biden administration’s stance toward the Green New Deal would be, Ms. Harris did not answer.

In Western Pennsylvania, union members backing Mr. Biden said they want to help address climate change and also continue building gas infrastructure. They said they believe Mr. Biden will find a way to do both.

“The Democratic Party needs to be middle of the road. We’re for jobs. We’re for energy. We’re for people making a middle class way of life,” Mr. Broadbent said.

Jim Harding, a steamfitter in Allegheny County who has worked on gas sites for 30 years, said he is leaning toward Mr. Biden, and the attacks from the Trump campaign on fracking have not swayed him. He said he is not worried that once in office Mr. Biden will work with more liberal Democrats to eliminate gas and other fossil fuels.

“I think we have his ear,” Mr. Harding said, adding, “If not, he’ll hear from us, believe me.”

PHOTO: Former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. in Erie, Pa., on Saturday. He appears to be gaining traction in Pennsylvania despite steady attacks from President Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANG W. LEE/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 18, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Mountains of Garbage Rise Outside Summit***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642G-H9P1-DXY4-X253-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 12, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1121 words

**Byline:** By Jenny Gross

**Body**

At COP26, delegates address the need to curb emissions and mass consumption to save the planet while the reality of today's throwaway society is all too apparent nearby.

GLASGOW -- In Gaelic, ''Glasgow'' translates to ''dear green place,'' a nod to the parks, gardens and flourishing green spaces throughout the city. But according to Chris Mitchell, who was a garbage collector there for more than two decades, the only thing flourishing in Glasgow these days is ''a mountain of waste.''

As diplomats at the U.N. climate summit in Glasgow this week preach about the need to curb both greenhouse gas emissions and mass consumption to protect the planet, the reality of today's throwaway society can be seen just a short way from the conference's doorstep.

Outside the gleaming center of Scotland's largest city, dumpsters and trash cans are overflowing. The city's rat population has surged, with four garbage workers hospitalized because of attacks over the past five months. And litter is strewn across streets.

Mr. Mitchell, a senior official for the GMB Scotland trade union, which represents the city's 1,000 garbage collectors among other workers, said they staged an eight-day strike that ended on Monday because they were tired of poor working conditions, lack of respect from management and low wages. It is a cry that has been echoed throughout Britain, the United States and other parts of the world, where essential workers who carried communities through the worst of the pandemic are saying they will no longer stand for being overworked and underpaid.

''We kept people safe,'' said Mr. Mitchell, 45, who started working as a garbage collector when he was 16. ''We cared for the most vulnerable. We cared for the elderly.'' He appreciated the nightly clap for key workers during the pandemic. But now that coronavirus cases have subsided from peak levels, he feels the government has ''abandoned low paid workers who have saved this nation.''

In parts of the city, trash is now collected only once every three weeks, down from once every two weeks about a year ago. That means garbage collectors, many of whom make less than 20,000 British pounds ($27,000) a year, have to carry heavier loads up and down steps.

On top of the less frequent collections, volumes of trash per household climbed over the past two years, a reflection of increased spending on takeout and online deliveries, according to Mr. Mitchell.

''The pandemic has created waste upon waste upon waste,'' he said.

The city of about 635,000 has urged residents to reduce their waste to help protect the environment, but garbage collectors like Jack McGowan, 26, say that reducing collections is not an effective way to achieve that.

''The bins are always like that,'' he said on Wednesday, gesturing to several overflowing dumpsters behind a block of apartments in Scotstoun, an area west of the Glasgow city center. ''We need better pay. Respect as well.''

Mr. McGowan said he lives with his mother because he cannot afford a mortgage on his salary of £19,000 a year.

He said he had already seen four rats jump out of trash cans that morning alone.

Glasgow promotes its recycling program and efforts to become more environmentally friendly. But Mr. McGowan said he saw examples every day of people putting nonrecyclable trash in recycling bins.

Garbage collectors said they were likely to strike again in the run-up to Christmas if they do not get pay increases. In a statement, the Glasgow City Council said that the leader of the council had already had extensive conversations with the union and that the ''door remains open to all trade union colleagues.''

Fiona Ross, a council spokeswoman, said she could not go into further detail because talks were continuing.

Meanwhile, the delegates inside the COP26 summit in Glasgow say they are making some progress toward an agreement to avert catastrophic levels of climate change.

On Wednesday, the United States and China issued a joint statement in which they pledged to do more to cut emissions this decade and in which China committed for the first time to address emissions from methane. Separately, the United Nations climate agency released a draft of an accord that urged nations ''to accelerate the phasing out'' of greenhouse gas emissions.

But outside the climate talks, there is a mounting frustration over the disconnect between policymakers and those most affected by climate change. There have been daily protests organized by youth activists, who say that pledges by countries that they will commit to goals that are decades away is not enough.

''Nobody really wants to incur the cost of preventing climate change today,'' said Sayantan Ghosal, an economics professor at the University of Glasgow's business school. ''They're willing to do it tomorrow, but they're not willing to do it today.''

There has also been a gap between world leaders and business executives on the one hand, who have talked this week about the urgent need for a transition to clean energy, and the ***working class*** people on the other who will be most affected by the rising costs associated with that transition.

Many of the lowest paid workers in society, including garbage collectors, are more worried about increasing prices of food, rent and energy than about increasing temperatures. They often do not have the flexibility to spend more on food and clothing that are more sustainable.

As the U.S. economy picks up again, after a lull during the pandemic, people are quitting their jobs in record numbers, according to data from the U.S. Department of Labor. There are five million fewer people working than before the pandemic began, and employers have struggled to find enough health care workers, waiters, truck drivers and butchers.

This has given employees newfound leverage and power.

The number of workers on strike in the United States increased in October to more than 25,000, versus an average of about 10,000 in the previous three months, according to data collected by the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

The shortages have disrupted Britain, which has struggled to find workers to make up for the thousands of European workers who left in five years since Britain voted to leave the European Union.

Mr. Mitchell, the senior union official, said that 20 drivers had left the garbage collection team in recent weeks for other truck driving jobs that are offering better pay.

Peter Welsh, a union spokesman, said Scotland needed to invest in the workers who will help deliver a transition to a greener economy.

''There are huge, huge challenges that I don't quite think mainstream politics have begun to grasp and understand,'' he said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/world/europe/glasgow-garbage-strike.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/world/europe/glasgow-garbage-strike.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Above, trash erupting from dumpsters not far from the U.N. climate summit in Glasgow. Chris Mitchell, left, is an official for the union that represents the city's garbage collectors, which held an eight-day strike to bring attention to demands for higher pay. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIERAN DODDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 12, 2021

**End of Document**



[***There's More Than One Way To Show Pride and Solidarity***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6313-8NC1-DXY4-X49M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 27, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 823 words

**Byline:** By Melissa Kravitz Hoeffner

**Body**

There are plenty of ways to celebrate, from several grass-roots marches to a 10K run with beer tastings.

With its corporate logos, television coverage and please-the-crowds spirit, the NYC Pride March -- even in its abbreviated format this year -- is not for everyone. ''Real pride is not rainbow capitalism,'' said Sarah Hallonquist, an entrepreneur and activist who described the term ''real pride'' as one ''for queer people, by queer people, planned by queer activists,'' and one that embraces all socio-economic groups, including ***working-class*** people. ''Every single person has a voice in what's being said.''

For Ms. Hallonquist and many others, the NYC Dyke March, which takes place every year on the last Saturday in June -- the day before NYC Pride's main event -- is the place to be. Since 1993, the Dyke March has united up to 10,000 participants, whether they identify as lesbians, queer or trans. ''Everyone who identifies as a dyke is welcome,'' said Nate Shalev, one of the dozens of organizers of the march, which goes down Fifth Avenue from Bryant Park to Washington Square Park.

''It's a very peaceful march,'' said Marlene Colburn, 68, who remembers the first event 29 years ago, when the Lesbian Avengers, an activist group, rolled a bed down Fifth Avenue. Organizers of the protest have never requested a permit, preferring for volunteer marshals to link arms at crosswalks and direct traffic themselves. Many on-duty police officers who monitor the crowd are L.G.B.T.Q. To date, there has been only one known arrest.

''It's empowering, and we're scrappy,'' said Valarie Walker, 55, a longtime volunteer. Drummers and groups like Dykes on Bikes rev up the energy, and marchers lead the way with a banner that has been repainted for nearly three decades (this year's theme: Black Dyke Power).

''There's a reunion quality to the Dyke March that is unparalleled,'' said Liz Alpern, 35, a chef and cookbook author. ''You run into every ex you've ever had, all your girlfriend's exes, every gay person you've ever worked with, everyone. It feels like family. It's all the people you want to see, all the people you don't want to see, and you're happy to see all of them.''

The Dyke March is one of many Pride events with an increasingly homegrown and personal feel. This month Andrew Solis, a dog trainer, organized two Pride-themed ''paw-rades,'' leading packs of rescue dogs and their owners through Brooklyn in glittery, rainbow drag. Last weekend, Woldy Kusina, a chef, hosted a multicultural queer brunch. And a new organization, Beers with Queers, is planning a 10K run this weekend, where along the way, participants will taste Pride-themed craft beers at various Queens breweries. Countless house parties, barbecues and meet-ups at Jacob Riis Park in Queens have taken place throughout June. There's a niche Pride gathering for everyone, it seems.

Dyke Beer, which produces both craft beer and events that aim to raise awareness of a dwindling roster of lesbian bars and other public gathering spots, has put together several sold-out events this month. ''Pride to me feels like Christmas, but bigger,'' said Loretta Chung, who started the company last year with Ms. Hallonquist.

Last weekend Dyke Beer organized a ''lost lesbian-bar'' walking tour in the West Village, during which over 40 guests visited the sites of former watering holes for lesbians that have become pizzerias, trendy restaurants and vacant storefronts. In the tradition of the Dyke March, which Mx. Chung, who identifies as nonbinary, regularly attends, Dyke Beer's events mission is to bring lesbians out into the streets to stake their claim in modern society while honoring their history. ''I think it's awesome to see a flood of queer women taking over huge blocks in New York City,'' Mx. Chung said of the march. ''With Dyke Beer, what we're doing is creating space. We're a community.''

Community and history are at the center of another event, the Queer Liberation March, which was organized by the group Reclaim Pride Coalition two years ago, billing itself as an attempt to give the march back to the people, in the spirit of the original event in 1970. Back then, participants could risk losing their jobs, in stark contrast to today, when many executives and their workers are encouraged to participate, often with corporate branding. ''I don't need the mainstream, or a bank, to validate me as a queer person,'' said Blake Pruitt, one of Reclaim's organizers. On Sunday, the Queer Liberation March will follow the route of the Dyke March the day before, from Bryant Park to Washington Square Park. (Covid vaccines will be offered at the start and finish of both marches.)

''When people ask when Pride is, I'm like, what do you mean?'' Mr. Pruitt said. ''Pride is an opportunity to gather and be with community and bring attention to the issues still facing the queer community,'' he continued. ''It's real, it's present.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/24/nyregion/pride-weekend-events-nyc.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/24/nyregion/pride-weekend-events-nyc.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Cubbyhole in Manhattan's West Village during an event last week to raise awareness about the plight of lesbian bars. Dyke Beer, above left, organizes L.G.B.T.Q. events like the ''lost lesbian bars'' tour, above right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA NAOMI LEWKOWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Macron May Keep the Presidency, but Le Pen Has Already Won; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658T-B6X1-JBG3-626R-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 22, 2022 Friday 16:24 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1635 words

**Byline:** Rachel Donadio

**Highlight:** The French election has shown the vigor and entrenchment of the far right.

**Body**

SEMUR-EN-AUXOIS, France — Marine Le Pen, the leader of France’s far-right National Rally, has worked hard during this election campaign to soften, even detoxify, her image. It seems to be working. “I think she’s full of good ideas,” Cyrielle Bernard, a 19-year-old who lives in this picturesque Burgundy town, told me one afternoon last week, chatting in the tobacconist shop where she works. Of all the candidates, she said, “I think she’s the most logical.”

President Emmanuel Macron won in Semur-en-Auxois in the first round of voting this month, but Ms. Le Pen took the larger Burgundy Franche-Comté region, with [*27 percent of the vote over Mr. Macron’s 26 percent*](https://www.lemonde.fr/resultats-elections/bourgogne-franche-comte/). Ms. Le Pen’s success comes from casting herself as the defender of the countryside and the ***working class***, focusing on cost-of-living issues and defending social protections. She has also been helped by an image makeover in which she opened up about raising her children as a single mother and now combines tough talk on immigration with social media posts about her cats.

The stigma she has long carried in mainstream politics has been quickly wearing off, and people are supporting her more openly than ever before.

As I drove around rural Burgundy after the first round of voting this month, I came away with a strong sense that while Mr. Macron may well defeat her in the second round this Sunday, in many ways, Ms. Le Pen has already won. In the first round, she put Mr. Macron on the defensive and convinced almost a quarter of voters that she has their best interests at heart. In the second round, polls predict she could easily win more than 40 percent, potentially 10 points more than in 2017.

The election being fought this time is less about change than about protection — who will protect the French: from the rising cost of living, the pandemic, the war in Ukraine, immigrants (for some), as well as who will protect France’s generous social welfare system.

Other voters are also seeking protection from the elite. The same winds that brought Brexit and helped elect President Donald Trump are also blowing through France. Ms. Le Pen has positioned herself to appear closer to the people than Mr. Macron, the ultimate technocrat, who has spent five years unable to shake his reputation as “president of the rich.”

That was largely the impression of the Le Pen voters I spoke with in Balot, a small village in Burgundy, where Ms. Le Pen won the first round of France’s presidential elections [*by a landslide.*](https://www.francetvinfo.fr/elections/resultats/cote-d-or_21/balot_21330) In the 2017 election that brought Mr. Macron into office, Balot, a dot on the map amid flat green farmland and fields of canary-yellow rapeseed, about 80 percent of voters supported Ms. Le Pen.

“She’s more frank,” Annabelle Germain, 29, told me when I knocked on the door of a house along the main road. Ms. Germain, who works as a house cleaner, dislikes Mr. Macron. “He always has that smirk,” she said. That smirk is a problem for Mr. Macron. He has a tendency to talk down to people — to say “let me explain to you,” rather than listen.

Back in Semur-en-Auxois, Ms. Bernard, who told me that she thought Ms. Le Pen had “good ideas,” seemed evidence of how deeply entrenched Ms. Le Pen’s hard-line views on immigrants have become and how she has successfully recast anti-immigrant rhetoric into practical policy recommendations.

“There are a lot of lies,” Ms. Bernard said. “Like that she’s ‘like her dad,’ in quotation marks, but she’s totally the opposite. Her father” — Jean-Marie Le Pen, a former presidential candidate and the longtime leader of the far-right National Front party — “was completely racist. She’s not. She wants everyone to respect our ways. If you go to Africa, you respect African law. Her father just wanted to kick them all out.”

Such views are not uncommon, especially in small towns in France with little to no immigration. In fact, 15 years after her father’s last run for president, Ms. Le Pen has [*not significantly diverged from his views*](https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2022/04/19/le-programme-de-marine-le-pen-reste-avant-tout-herite-du-front-national-de-son-pere_6122812_4355770.html?utm_medium=Social&amp;utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1650385149-2) on immigration even though she renamed the party, in what has been seen as an attempt to distance herself from him and broaden the base. She wants asylum seekers to be processed abroad and has said her first act as president will be to propose [*a referendum on immigration*](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/2022-presidential-election/article/2022/04/07/despite-her-softened-image-marine-le-pen-is-still-decidedly-far-right_5979901_16.html).

In La Roche-en-Brenil, a town of almost 900 people, I spoke to a 34-year-old mother of five, Chloé Odermatt, who was pushing a stroller with her 3-month-old baby. She said she’d vote for Ms. Le Pen and liked that she proposed stricter controls on giving immigrants access to state services. “A lot of them take advantage of the system and aren’t integrated in France,” she told me.

This election has further scrambled the traditional divide between left and right in France. Ms. Le Pen has managed to widen her consensus by combining far-right positions on immigration with a left-leaning defense of public spending and social welfare. Her message resonates, even with [*younger voters*](https://www.politico.eu/article/france-presidential-election-2022-emmanuel-macron-marine-le-pen-young-euroskeptics/) like Ms. Bernard — she has promised to eliminate income tax for people under 30 — and her once extreme positions appear less so now that the center right has also adopted much of [*the same rhetoric*](https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/12/france-god-religion-secularism/620528/), especially on national-identity issues. Help came as well from Éric Zemmour, whose firebrand declarations made her seem more moderate.

Across Burgundy, Le Pen voters kept telling me they wanted Mr. Macron out because prices kept going up and salaries weren’t keeping pace. In La Roche-en-Brenil, I asked a Le Pen supporter whether that was entirely Mr. Macron’s fault. “Well, it’s not mine,” Thierry Chenier, 50, said. “We’ve tried the right; that didn’t work. We’ve tried the left; that didn’t work. Maybe we need to try the far right, with a woman in power.”

Mr. Macron won the election in 2017 telling France it needed to [*change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/19/world/europe/france-election-emmanuel-macron.html), pushing through labor reform that makes it easier for businesses [*to hire and fire*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/23/business/france-labor-jobs.html). The unemployment rate fell to its [*lowest in 13 years*](https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20220218-government-hails-great-french-victory-as-unemployment-falls-to-13-year-low-jobs), but Mr. Macron simultaneously signaled that jobs weren’t as secure as they once were. This heightened anxieties. The Le Pen voters I spoke with said they wanted change, but mostly they seemed to want preservation — keeping their lower retirement age, raising pensions, lowering their cost of living. The change they want may actually be a status quo that Mr. Macron has said is no longer sustainable.

And yet he has made great efforts to shore up the economy. During the pandemic, the Macron government pledged to spend “whatever it costs” to support businesses. He quickly started reopening schools and helped employers keep workers [*on furlough*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/03/business/france-workers-restaurants-hotels.html) so that they could come back to work when the lockdowns ended. Still, it is hard to win saying, “Imagine how much worse things could have been.”

Over the past decade, Ms. Le Pen has pulled her party toward a kind of “social populism,” said Gilles Ivaldi, a researcher at Sciences Po and a scholar of the far right in France and the West. She proposes “reducing VAT tax, raising low salaries and pensions, spending more on health and education.”

Mr. Macron, by contrast, has become the embodiment of frightening economic trends, even if they predate him and extend far beyond France.

“The era of high growth is gone,” Niels Planel, a city councilor in Semur-en-Auxois and the author of a book on French economic inequality, told me. In his view, the government should “worry about mobility, worry about training, delivering a high-quality education,” so that workers are ready for today’s economy, not yesterday’s. Otherwise Ms. Le Pen is likely to maintain her grip on many of France’s rural and deindustrialized areas, while Mr. Macron will continue to win more-prosperous urban areas.

Foreign policy is where Mr. Macron has the advantage. Ms. Le Pen has long expressed her respect for Vladimir Putin. She is no longer saying that she wants France to leave the eurozone, however, which scared off voters in 2017.

The other factor potentially working in Ms. Le Pen’s favor is the high abstention rate. Voters who supported the far-left candidate Jean-Luc Mélenchon in the first round appear to be particularly up for grabs. Those opting out entirely reflect the crisis of representative democracy that’s been growing in France at least since the [*Yellow Vest movement*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/03/world/europe/france-yellow-vest-protests.html), which began in 2018 with a protest over a proposed hike in fuel taxes and evolved into a broader rebellion. People felt ignored.

What remains is discontent. The Le Pen voters in Balot and La Roche-en-Brenil aren’t outliers. Ms. Le Pen’s growing consensus, combined with strong anti-Macron sentiment, has eroded the traditional alliances that have kept the far right from power. “Lots of voters are tired of voting against their own convictions in order to block the far right — that’s the biggest worry,” said Mr. Ivaldi, the scholar of the far-right in France. That anti-far-right alliance, he added, is “much weaker than 10 or 20 years ago.”

In their televised debate this week before the second round, Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen offered radically different visions for France. The next day Ms. Bernard told me she thought Ms. Le Pen had won. “Marine knew how to change over the past five years,” she wrote me in a text message. “She understood her mistakes.”

“Macron thinks he’s always right,” she added. “And unfortunately in five years he hasn’t changed.” Mr. Macron may not have changed, but France certainly has.

Rachel Donadio is a Paris-based writer and journalist, a contributing writer for The Atlantic and a former Rome bureau chief and European culture correspondent for The Times.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTIAN HARTMANN/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** April 23, 2022

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[***It Took 10 Days. But Murphy’s Republican Rival Has Conceded.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:642F-7VJ1-DXY4-X1XB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 11, 2021 Thursday 23:53 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1222 words

**Byline:** Tracey Tully

**Highlight:** Jack Ciattarelli acknowledged on Friday that he lost the race for governor of New Jersey to the Democratic incumbent, Phil Murphy.

**Body**

Jack Ciattarelli acknowledged on Friday that he lost the race for governor of New Jersey to the Democratic incumbent, Phil Murphy.

RARITAN, N.J. — Jack Ciattarelli, a Republican who ran a spirited campaign to unseat New Jersey’s Democratic governor, conceded defeat on Friday, acknowledging 10 days after polls closed that he had no path to victory.

Mr. Ciattarelli trailed Gov. Philip D. Murphy on Friday by roughly [*74,000 votes,*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-new-jersey.html) or about three percentage points, after a nearly two-year campaign that energized rank-and-file suburban and rural voters, who turned out in numbers that caught Democrats largely off guard.

[*Mr. Ciattarelli’s strong showing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/murphy-wins-nj-governor.html) and a hard-fought win by Republicans in [*Virginia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/us/elections/youngkin-wins-virginia-governor.html) sent tremors through the Democratic Party as it looked ahead to next year’s midterm elections and the party’s ability to hold on to its slim majority in Congress.

In New Jersey, Republicans also flipped about a half-dozen legislative seats, including one held by [*Stephen M. Sweeney*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/stephen-sweeney-durr-nj-election.html), a labor leader who for more than a decade was considered the second most powerful lawmaker in the state.

Mr. Sweeney, the Democratic president of the State Senate, lost to a political newcomer, [*Edward Durr*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/nyregion/steve-sweeney-durr-nj-election.html), who ran on a shoestring budget and admitted to being stunned by the win and largely unprepared for his new life as a lawmaker.

Mr. Ciattarelli, a former state assemblyman, has said that the election results are a rejection of the left-leaning policies championed by Mr. Murphy, a former Goldman Sachs executive who notched a raft of progressive victories during his first term.

“Every single time misguided politicians take this state too far off track, the great people of this state push, pull and prod it right back to where it belongs,” Mr. Ciattarelli said on Friday. “Right back to where it needs to be: the common-sense center.”

“I’m proud of how we helped reinvigorate the Republican Party and mobilized new people who have never been involved before,” he said.

Mr. Ciattarelli, 59, was making his second bid for governor; in conceding the race, he said that he intended to run again in four years.

The race was far closer than any public poll and most political strategists had predicted.

But there were widely divergent opinions on what the takeaways were.

Republicans and many moderate Democrats agree with Mr. Ciattarelli that the results signal a need to refocus priorities on bread-and-butter issues like taxes and suburban affordability.

But Mr. Murphy’s progressive allies have argued that the lackluster turnout among Democrats was instead a mandate to deliver on promises to help low-income and ***working-class*** families, and to address systemic racial and economic injustice, in Trenton and in Washington, where intraparty fighting has thwarted key pillars of President Biden’s agenda.

Mr. Murphy, in a statement, said that his administration would continue to “govern as we have since Day 1.”

“This election was not simply a choice of candidates, but of direction, and the people of New Jersey have chosen to keep moving forward,” Mr. Murphy said.

“We will continue to stand with New Jersey’s middle class and everyone striving to get there,” he added.

Registered Democrats outnumber Republicans in New Jersey by more than one million voters. And there was little doubt that Mr. Ciattarelli’s campaign had re-energized the state’s moribund Republican Party, particularly in congressional swing districts where lawmakers are expected to face stiff challenges during the midterm elections.

“It was anti-Biden sentiment out there,” said Michael Suleiman, the chairman of the Democratic Party in Atlantic County, which is along the Jersey Shore. “A lot of anger. You could just feel the anger of Republican voters.”

The Associated Press declared Mr. Murphy [*the winner*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/murphy-wins-nj-governor.html) a day after the Nov. 2 election when he held a roughly one percentage point advantage over Mr. Ciattarelli.

Over the past nine days, Mr. Murphy’s lead only grew as mail and provisional ballots were slowly tallied in liberal-leaning strongholds, prompting Democratic strategists to accuse Mr. Ciattarelli of stoking distrust in the election system.

Mr. Murphy’s [*campaign manager*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/nyregion/jack-ciattarelli-phil-murphy.html), Mollie Binotto, criticized the delay as an “assault on the integrity of our elections,” and the governor called it “dangerous.”

While being careful to say there was no evidence of election fraud, Mr. Ciattarelli had maintained that it was statistically possible that he could come within one point of Mr. Murphy after the approximately 70,000 emergency provisional ballots were counted, a threshold at which his campaign said it would consider asking a judge to authorize a recount.

At one point on election night, Mr. Ciattarelli held a substantial lead as election workers struggled to count and report the nearly 550,000 paper mail ballots as well as votes cast electronically during the nine days of early voting.

But the race was not nearly as close as it had once appeared.

By Friday afternoon, Mr. Murphy’s lead had reached 2.9 points — a full percentage point more than the [*margin of victory in Virginia*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/11/02/us/elections/results-virginia.html), where the former Democratic governor, Terry McAuliffe, conceded his race against a Republican financier, [*Glenn Youngkin*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/02/us/elections/youngkin-wins-virginia-governor.html), the morning after polls closed.

Mr. Murphy is the first Democrat to win a second term as New Jersey governor since 1977, when Brendan Byrne was re-elected.

The vote-counting delays were primarily blamed on a learning curve linked to new electronic voting equipment and the high volume of mail ballots, which represented about one-fifth of the approximately 2,556,000 votes cast statewide. The paper ballots needed to be counted manually, starting on Election Day, and many counties completed that tally only early this week.

Even though some counties have not finished counting emergency and provisional ballots, Ciattarelli campaign officials acknowledged late on Thursday that the 74,000-vote gap was unlikely to shrink significantly.

“Enough votes have been counted,” Mr. Ciattarelli said. “There does not appear to be a path to victory.”

Mary H. Melfi, the Republican county clerk in Hunterdon County, said she expected the delays linked to the new electronic poll books — which were purchased to offer early, machine voting in New Jersey for the first time — would ease during the next election.

“It was a rush to get equipment,” said Ms. Melfi, a former president of the New Jersey Association of Counties. “It was a rush to set it up.”

There was no evidence, she said, of fraud.

“I think our process is pretty darn good and it’s accountable,” she said. “Voter confidence took a hit because voters are not used to waiting two weeks to get the results.”

After the election, a new Facebook group, Audit NJ, began calling for a “forensic audit” of the results, quickly gathering more than 50,000 followers, many of whom expressed doubt in the accuracy of the count.

On Friday, Mr. Ciattarelli reiterated that there was no evidence of fraud as he called for a standardized reporting process among the state’s 21 counties to try to stop conspiracy theories from emerging.

“Sadly, in our current climate,” he said, “that slow count and the constantly changing online numbers gives rise to doubt in the system.”

PHOTO: Jack Ciattarelli, a Republican who ran against Gov. Philip D. Murphy, conceded on Friday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Bryan Anselm for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 13, 2021

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[***Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction: Sunday, April 05th 2020***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YKR-8S91-JBG3-64C5-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 492 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the April 05, 2020 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending March 21, 2020. An asterisk (\*) indicates that a book's sales are barely distinguishable from those of the book above it. A dagger (?) indicates that some retailers report receiving bulk orders. For an explanation of our methodology, visit [*http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers*](http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers).

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|  |  | Weeks | Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 | 1 | 2 | UNTAMED, by Glennon Doyle. (Dial) The activist and public speaker describes her journey of listening to her inner voice. |
| 2 | 2 | 4 | THE SPLENDID AND THE VILE, by Erik Larson. (Crown) An examination of the leadership of the prime minister Winston Churchill. |
| 3 | 4 | 14 | THE MAMBA MENTALITY, by Kobe Bryant. (Melcher/MCD/Farrar, Straus & Giroux) Various skills and techniques used on the court by the late Los Angeles Lakers player. |
| 4 | 5 | 109 | EDUCATED, by Tara Westover. (Random House) The daughter of survivalists, who is kept out of school, educates herself enough to leave home for university. |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | OPEN BOOK, by Jessica Simpson with Kevin Carr O?Leary. (Dey St.) The singer, actress and fashion designer discloses times of success, trauma and addiction. |
| 6 | 3 | 2 | THE GIFT OF FORGIVENESS, by Katherine Schwarzenegger Pratt. (Pamela Dorman) Stories, interviews and reflections on the act of letting go of resentment. |
| 7 | 11 | 67 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Crown) The former first lady describes how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. |
| 8 | 10 | 28 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Little, Brown) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts and misunderstandings. |
| 9 | 9 | 3 | JOHN ADAMS UNDER FIRE, by Dan Abrams and David Fisher. (Hanover Square) How the man who became the second president served as the defense lawyer for the British soldiers who stood accused in the Boston Massacre in 1770. |
| 10 | 12 | 4 | THE HOPE OF GLORY, by Jon Meacham. (Convergent) The Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer delves into the seven last sayings of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels. |
| 11 | 7 | 4 | UNKNOWN VALOR, by Martha MacCallum. (Harper) The Fox News anchor weaves stories of combat veterans who fought during World War II. |
| 12 |  | 1 | HOW TO BE AN ARTIST, by Jerry Saltz. (Riverhead) The Pulitzer Prize-winning critic prescribes methods to nurture a creative life. |
| 13 |  | 25 | MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE, by Lori Gottlieb. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) A psychotherapist gains unexpected insights when she becomes another therapist?s patient. |
| 14 |  | 1 | DEADLIEST ENEMY, by Michael T. Osterholm and Mark Olshaker. (Little, Brown) How epidemics and pandemics can disrupt everyday life and world order. |
| 15 |  | 1 | DEATHS OF DESPAIR AND THE FUTURE OF CAPITALISM, by Anne Case and Angus Deaton. (Princeton University) An examination of the economic and social difficulties besieging the ***working class*** and benefiting the wealthy. |

**Load-Date:** April 6, 2020

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[***Black Authors Break Onto Brazil's Literary Scene***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64SB-PJK1-JBG3-6106-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 13, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10

**Length:** 1397 words

**Byline:** By Ernesto Londoño

**Body**

Young Black Brazilians are publishing on their own terms, achieving the critical and commercial success that eluded past generations of writers from marginalized communities.

RIO DE JANEIRO -- Itamar Vieira Júnior, whose day job working for the Brazilian government on land reform took him deep into the impoverished countryside, knew next to nothing about the mainstream publishing industry when he put the final touches on a novel he had been writing on and off for decades.

On a whim, in April 2018, he sent the manuscript for ''Torto Arado,'' which means crooked plow, to a literary contest in Portugal, wondering what the jury would make of the hardscrabble tale of two sisters in a rural district in northeastern Brazil where the legacy of slavery remains palpable.

''I wanted to see if anyone saw value in it,'' Mr. Vieira, 42, said. ''But I didn't have much hope.''

To his astonishment, ''Torto Arado'' won the 2018 LeYa award, a major Portuguese-language literary prize focused on discovering new voices. The recognition jump-started Mr. Vieira's career, making him a leading voice among the Black authors who have jolted Brazil's literary establishment in recent years with imaginative and searing works that have found commercial success and critical acclaim.

''Torto Arado'' was the best-selling book in Brazil in 2021, with more than 300,000 copies sold to date. The previous year, that distinction went to Djamila Ribeiro's ''A Little Anti-Racist Handbook,'' a succinct and plainly written dissection of systemic racism in Brazil.

Mr. Vieira and Ms. Ribeiro, 41, are part of a generation of Black Brazilians who became the first in their families to get a college degree, taking advantage of programs enacted by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who governed Brazil from 2003 to 2010.

The two are among the highest profile figures of a literary boom that includes contemporary writers and authors who are experiencing posthumous acclaim that eluded them when their seminal works were initially published.

''Writers from marginalized communities have been producing important work for decades,'' said Fernanda Rodrigues de Miranda, a literature professor in São Paulo, ''but they had trouble getting visibility.''

For her doctoral dissertation, Ms. Rodrigues, who is Black, compiled all of the published novels she could find written by Black women from 1859 to 2006.

She was stunned by the literary quality of novels that had gathered dust in drawers, having never been widely read or discussed. And she concluded that the few authors who found commercial and critical success were creatively circumscribed by white literary gatekeepers.

The starkest example is Carolina Maria de Jesus, whose memoir, ''Child of the Dark,'' was a literary sensation when it was published in 1960. The book, a compilation of diary entries by Ms. Jesus, a single mother of three, offers a raw account of daily life in a São Paulo slum where dwellers picked through garbage for food and slept in shacks patched together with slabs of cardboard.

The book's success enabled Ms. Jesus -- who died in 1977 -- to buy a house in a better neighborhood. But publishers showed little interest in her subsequent works, which were commercial flops.

''White readers had a lot of curiosity about Black lives, but they wanted to read stories about fragility,'' Ms. Rodrigues said. ''Authors wanted to write about other issues, other facets of their identity. They were interested in writing about love, about humor, about searching for a meaningful and fulfilling life,'' she said.

An opportunity to showcase new literary talent arose in 2012 with the creation of a literary festival in Rio de Janeiro started as part of an ill-fated effort to restore security in favelas -- poor, ***working-class*** communities frequently controlled by drug-trafficking gangs.

While the efforts to improve security largely failed, the literary festival thrived and endures today, said Julio Ludemir, one of its founders.

''It showed that there are readers living in favelas, which until then had been deemed impossible,'' he said. ''But it also showed that there were writers.''

The festival kick-started the careers of several authors, including Geovani Martins, 30, who attended a writing workshop at the festival while he was living in Vidigal, a favela that clings to a mountainside hovering over some of Rio de Janeiro's most expensive neighborhoods.

His debut -- ''The Sun on My Head,'' a collection of short stories published in 2018 -- became a best seller in Brazil and has been translated into several languages. Its tales of adolescent angst, sparkling with slang, often take place in communities where young lives are hemmed in by racism and the violence fueled by the drug trade.

Mr. Martins' success notwithstanding, until recently Black authors had a hard time getting book deals from mainstream Brazilian publishers, Ms. Ribeiro said. She set out to upend how the industry approached these young writers by curating a series of books in 2017 dedicated to Black authors.

It included inexpensive titles, priced at less than $4. Book events were held in outdoor public places, which attracted large crowds. Covers included photos of the authors, and the writing tended to be accessible.

Ms. Ribeiro, who studied philosophy, said that when she wrote and marketed books, she thought of her mother, who, like her grandmother, had worked as a maid and did not have a college education.

''I always want to write in a way that my mother would understand,'' she said. ''I felt a calling to be generous enough to write in the same accessible way that generous authors before me wrote, because otherwise you only legitimize the power spheres of those who are privileged.''

The formula worked exceptionally well. One of Brazil's top publishers approached Ms. Ribeiro in 2018 to write a book about Black feminism, which became a mainstream hit.

''We wanted to democratize reading, and it was a major success,'' Ms. Ribeiro said. ''There was an unmet demand from a part of the population that wanted to see itself represented.''

Mr. Vieira, a geologist, managed to use his day job at Brazil's land reform agency, where he has worked since 2006, to do field research. He studied the politics and power dynamics that shape the lives of rural workers, including some who toil in conditions analogous to modern-day slavery.

That experience, he said, made the characters in his novel more layered and their fictional hometown, Água Negra, which means black water, feel authentic.

''Readers tell me they see themselves reflected in the story,'' he said, ''which is in many ways a story about how our society came to be.''

Mr. Vieira says a major reason Black Brazilian writers are making their mark, writing and publishing on their own terms, is because of a shift in how race and racism are being discussed in the country today.

''For many years, Brazil tried to whiten its population and people avoided speaking about race in Brazil,'' he said. ''In the last decades, the Black rights movement and the study of structural racism has clarified our role in society.''

Many Black writers are still struggling to figure out how they fit within it. Pieta Poeta, 27, a Black transgender man from Belo Horizonte, made waves by winning a 2018 national slam poetry festival.

But he has had to self-publish his poetry books, including the most recent: ''Do You Still Wanna Yell at Me?'' -- an exhortation, he said, for readers to imagine what it is like to be a Black, transgender person in today's Brazil.

He said his work had gotten darker in recent years -- and he writes under a pen name -- reflecting the political turbulence and social upheaval that has rattled Brazil since the election in 2018 of Jair Bolsonaro, a right-wing president known for his divisive, and often offensive, messaging.

''To be Brazilian means one is either constantly paralyzed by fear or constantly having to cry foul,'' he said.

And yet, his work has an undertone of resilience, if not outright hope, as reflected in his short poem ''Autocide'':

I wanted to die.but it wasn't a death wish per seIt was an absence of lifeAnd no sense of how long thingstaketo stop hurting so deeply.Of the time it takes for our backsTo bear the world, its weight.

Lis Moriconi contributed reporting.Lis Moriconi contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/12/world/americas/brazil-black-authors.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/12/world/americas/brazil-black-authors.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Itamar Vieira Júnior, a celebrated novelist, says a major reason Black Brazilian writers are making their mark is because of a shift in how race and racism are being discussed in the country today.

The Megafauna bookstore in São Paulo, Brazil, carries a large selection of books by Black authors. The country's recent literary boom includes Black writers overlooked in their lifetimes who are now receiving acclaim.

''I felt a calling to be generous enough to write in the same accessible way that generous authors before me wrote,'' Djamila Ribeiro said, ''because otherwise you only legitimize the power spheres of those who are privileged.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR MORIYAMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 13, 2022

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[***Spotlight Wisconsin: Angry Packers Fans And a Surging Virus***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:611K-YKF1-DXY4-X3GK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 10, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13; POLL WATCH

**Length:** 1462 words

**Byline:** By Giovanni Russonello

**Body**

With the coronavirus raging in the state, particularly in the politically competitive northeast, the president faces an uphill battle to repeat his 2016 victory.

Welcome to Poll Watch, our weekly look at polling data and survey research on the candidates, voters and issues that will shape the 2020 election. Follow our daily updates on the latest presidential election polls.

You know the story well: Not a single public poll in 2016 showed Donald J. Trump beating Hillary Clinton in Wisconsin, and forecasters suggested he had almost no shot. FiveThirtyEight gave him less than a one-in-six chance of winning the state.

But after the votes were counted, with turnout down in key Democratic areas, Mr. Trump eked out a victory by fewer than 30,000 votes.

This year, again, virtually every poll has shown the Democrat, Joseph R. Biden Jr., with at least a slight edge over Mr. Trump. A New York Times/Siena College survey last month gave Mr. Biden a five-percentage-point advantage among likely voters. Polls taken since then by CNN and NBC News/Marist College have each given Mr. Biden an outright, 10-point lead.

And with the coronavirus now raging in Wisconsin, particularly in the politically competitive northeastern region, Mr. Trump faces an uphill battle toward repeating his victory from four years ago.

''Certainly, with the sharp rise in cases here, it's on the agenda for voters,'' said Charles Franklin, a political scientist who runs the Marquette Law School poll, which is seen as the definitive political survey in the state. ''His handling of Covid does appear to be having a bigger effect on people's vote than either the economy or his handling of the protests.''

Marquette has released a Wisconsin poll each month since June, and in every one Mr. Biden has held a single-digit lead among likely voters that was within the margin of error. This reflects the steadiness of a race in which Wisconsinites largely know where they stand: Roughly four in five voters have consistently expressed a strong opinion of Mr. Trump's leadership, whether positive or negative, according to Marquette's data.

But if there are any small signs of momentum, it appears to be breaking Mr. Biden's way. His 48 percent approval rating in the poll released this week was his best in a Marquette survey all year, capping a 14-point rise since February. Mr. Trump, meanwhile, was seen positively by 42 percent of Wisconsin voters, leaving his net favorability rating more than 10 points in the red, where it has languished since June.

Concern about the pandemic has ticked upward recently. More than six in 10 Wisconsin voters in the Marquette poll described themselves as at least fairly worried -- including 27 percent who said they were very worried, up from 21 percent last month. Fully 50 percent of Wisconsin voters said they did not expect the virus to be under control for at least another year, running counter to Mr. Trump's insistence that it is already being handled effectively.

And that's not the only issue where he's hurting. While Mr. Trump has made Wisconsin a focal point of his ''law and order'' messaging, particularly after protests broke out over the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wis., 54 percent of Wisconsin voters said in the Marquette survey that they disapproved of how he had handled this year's unrest. Just 37 percent approved.

Republicans' rise among white men without college degrees

Since the rise of the Tea Party movement a decade ago, white men without college degrees in Wisconsin have shifted toward the Republican Party in large numbers -- a development that predated Mr. Trump's rise, but that he certainly accelerated. Dr. Franklin cited Marquette numbers showing that in 2012, non-college-educated white men in Wisconsin were just five points more likely to be Republicans than Democrats. By this year, the difference had grown to 23 points.

Dr. Franklin said that former Gov. Scott Walker, a Republican, had introduced a newly ***working-class*** political lexicon in the early 2010s, when he waged an attack on public-sector unions.

''Walker didn't spend as much time emphasizing pro-business messages in a way that you would've heard previous generations of Republicans saying, 'What's good for business is good for the state,''' Dr. Franklin said. ''Walker was saying: 'They're hard-working taxpayers who need their money, and these unions are taking money from them.'''

But as much as Republicans' appeals have resonated with many ***working-class*** white men, there has not been commensurate movement among women without college degrees. And while Democrats haven't notched big gains in their vote share among any particular group, they have avoided losing ground among demographics that are growing more quickly -- such as college graduates, Latinos and voters in cities.

In Democratic strongholds like Milwaukee and Madison, the state's two biggest municipalities, the margins actually improved slightly for Democrats between the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections. Dane County, which includes Madison, is the state's fastest-growing county, and is probably the No. 1 area where Democrats will be looking to run up the score.

And with Wisconsin's heavily white population growing older, thanks to the aging of the baby boom generation, Mr. Trump's underperformance among voters 65 and older in polls this year could help Mr. Biden across the state.

The virus hits the gridiron

Green Bay, a heavily blue-collar city in the northeastern part of the state, has been in the news recently as the coronavirus has surged. The Packers, the town's beloved N.F.L. team, announced this week that for the time being no fans would be allowed to attend games at Lambeau Field. Data released by the N.F.L. Players Association at the end of last month showed that Green Bay had a higher rate of infection than any other team's market.

For Mr. Trump, all of this puts an unwelcome focus on the coronavirus in the most politically volatile region of the state.

''Green Bay, Appleton and other cities in that region have moved pretty noticeably in a Democratic direction since 2010,'' Dr. Franklin said. ''The surrounding counties in the region, though, have stayed very Republican, and to the north and west of Green Bay have become even more Republican than before. So the result is, the whole region is still pretty competitive.''

Brown County, which includes Green Bay, broke for Mr. Trump by nine points in 2016, but with Mr. Biden turning back Mr. Trump's advantage among suburbanites and building his support among the urban Democratic base, it could be up for grabs this year.

Turnout helps Democrats -- and pollsters?

Over all, Wisconsin's population is almost evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, but there's still a slight Democratic tilt to the electorate, especially when voter engagement is high, since Democrats tend to do better among demographics with lower turnout.

And this year, signs are pointing to what could be a historically high level of participation. Seventy-five percent of registered voters said they were certain to cast a ballot, according to the latest Marquette poll, compared with 71 percent on the eve of the 2016 election. And official statistics on requests for absentee ballots suggest that if anything, voters are even more engaged than they're telling pollsters.

''In our data, about 33 percent say they're going to vote absentee by mail -- but election officials have already sent out 1.2 million ballots,'' Dr. Franklin said, referring to ballots mailed to voters who have expressly requested them. ''That would give us about 36 percent of the total registered voters, so that would be a little over what we have in our polling data, though not out of line with it.''

State estimates suggest that Wisconsinites could cast upward of 3.1 million ballots this year, for the first time in history.

A high-turnout election would most likely lift Democrats -- but it could help pollsters too. In 2016, a late break toward Mr. Trump, combined with unexpectedly low participation among Democratic voters, threw the state to him.

Unlike some researchers in other states, Marquette's team in 2016 made sure to weight its data by education levels, and it did not significantly underestimate Mr. Trump's strength among white voters without degrees. But what did surprise Dr. Franklin that year was Mr. Trump's success in the suburbs, which he won by 16 points, according to Wisconsin exit polls.

This year, however, Mr. Biden's lead over Mr. Trump among suburbanites has been steady and strong: Marist's most recent poll of Wisconsin put him up by 12 points in the suburbs -- and on handling the coronavirus, suburban voters chose Mr. Biden over the president by 22 points.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/09/us/politics/wisconsin-polls-trump-biden.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/09/us/politics/wisconsin-polls-trump-biden.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Virtually every poll of Wisconsin this year has shown Joseph R. Biden Jr. with at least a slight edge over President Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Hilary Swift for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 10, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Outside Climate Summit, Trash in Glasgow Piles High***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6429-DCY1-JBG3-61CR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 11, 2021 Thursday 12:47 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1162 words

**Byline:** Jenny Gross

**Highlight:** At COP26, delegates address the need to curb emissions and mass consumption to save the planet while the reality of today’s throwaway society is all too apparent nearby.

**Body**

At COP26, delegates address the need to curb emissions and mass consumption to save the planet while the reality of today’s throwaway society is all too apparent nearby.

GLASGOW — In Gaelic, “Glasgow” translates to “dear green place,” a nod to the parks, gardens and flourishing green spaces throughout the city. But according to Chris Mitchell, who was a garbage collector there for more than two decades, the only thing flourishing in Glasgow these days is “a mountain of waste.”

As diplomats at the [*U.N. climate summit in Glasgow*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/11/climate/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit?name=styln-cop26&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=LegacyCollection&amp;variant=show&amp;is_new=false) this week preach about the need to curb both greenhouse gas emissions and mass consumption to protect the planet, the reality of today’s throwaway society can be seen just a short way from the conference’s doorstep.

Outside the gleaming center of Scotland’s largest city, dumpsters and trash cans are overflowing. The city’s rat population has surged, with four garbage workers treated at area hospitals because of attacks over the past 10 months. And litter is strewn across streets.

Mr. Mitchell, a senior official for the GMB Scotland trade union, which represents the city’s 1,000 garbage collectors among other workers, said they staged an eight-day strike that ended on Monday because they were tired of poor working conditions, lack of respect from management and low wages. It is a cry that has been echoed throughout Britain, the United States and other parts of the world, where essential workers who carried communities through the worst of the pandemic [*are saying they will no longer stand for being overworked and underpaid*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/business/economy/strikes-labor-pandemic.html).

“We kept people safe,” said Mr. Mitchell, 45, who started working as a garbage collector when he was 16. “We cared for the most vulnerable. We cared for the elderly.” He appreciated the nightly clap for key workers during the pandemic. But now that coronavirus cases have subsided from peak levels, he feels the government has “abandoned low paid workers who have saved this nation.”

In parts of the city, trash is now collected only once every three weeks, down from once every two weeks about a year ago. That means garbage collectors, many of whom make less than 20,000 British pounds ($27,000) a year, have to carry heavier loads up and down steps.

On top of the less frequent collections, volumes of trash per household climbed over the past two years, a reflection of increased spending on takeout and online deliveries, according to Mr. Mitchell.

“The pandemic has created waste upon waste upon waste,” he said.

The city of about 635,000 has urged residents to [*reduce their waste to help protect the environment*](https://www.netzeronation.scot/take-action/reduce-re-use-recycle), but garbage collectors like Jack McGowan, 26, say that reducing collections is not an effective way to achieve that.

“The bins are always like that,” he said on Wednesday, gesturing to several overflowing dumpsters behind a block of apartments in Scotstoun, an area west of the Glasgow city center. “We need better pay. Respect as well.”

Mr. McGowan said he lives with his mother because he cannot afford a mortgage on his salary of £19,000 a year.

He said he had already seen four rats jump out of trash cans that morning alone.

Glasgow promotes its recycling program and efforts to become more environmentally friendly. But Mr. McGowan said he saw examples every day of people putting nonrecyclable trash in recycling bins.

Garbage collectors said they were likely to strike again in the run-up to Christmas if they do not get pay increases. In a statement, the Glasgow City Council said that the leader of the council had already had extensive conversations with the union and that the “door remains open to all trade union colleagues.”

Fiona Ross, a council spokeswoman, said she could not go into further detail because talks were continuing.

Meanwhile, the delegates inside the COP26 summit in Glasgow say they are making some progress toward an agreement to avert catastrophic levels of climate change.

On Wednesday, [*the United States and China issued a joint statement*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/11/10/world/cop26-glasgow-climate-summit) in which they pledged to do more to cut emissions this decade and in which China committed for the first time to address emissions from methane. Separately, the United Nations climate agency released a draft of an accord that urged nations “to accelerate the phasing out” of greenhouse gas emissions.

But outside the climate talks, there is a mounting frustration over the disconnect between policymakers and those most affected by climate change. There have been daily protests organized by youth activists, who say that pledges by countries that they will commit to goals that are decades away is not enough.

“Nobody really wants to incur the cost of preventing climate change today,” said Sayantan Ghosal, an economics professor at the University of Glasgow’s business school. “They’re willing to do it tomorrow, but they’re not willing to do it today.”

There has also been a gap between world leaders and business executives on the one hand, who have talked this week about the urgent need for a transition to clean energy, and the ***working class*** people on the other who will be most affected by the rising costs associated with that transition.

Many of the lowest paid workers in society, including garbage collectors, are [*more worried about increasing prices of food, rent and energy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/france-climate-change-energy-prices.html) than about increasing temperatures. They often do not have the flexibility to spend more on food and clothing that are more sustainable.

As the U.S. economy picks up again, after a lull during the pandemic, people are quitting their jobs in record numbers, according to data from the U.S. Department of Labor. [*There are five million fewer people working than before the pandemic began*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/business/economy/us-economy.html), and employers have struggled to find enough health care workers, waiters, truck drivers and butchers.

This has given employees newfound leverage and power.

[*The number of workers on strike in the United States increased in October to more than 25,000*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/business/economy/strikes-labor-pandemic.html), versus an average of about 10,000 in the previous three months, according to data collected by the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University.

The shortages have disrupted Britain, which has struggled to find workers to make up for the thousands of European workers who left in five years since Britain voted to leave the European Union.

Mr. Mitchell, the senior union official, said that 20 drivers had left the garbage collection team in recent weeks for other truck driving jobs that are offering better pay.

Peter Welsh, a union spokesman, said Scotland needed to invest in the workers who will help deliver a transition to a greener economy.

“There are huge, huge challenges that I don’t quite think mainstream politics have begun to grasp and understand,” he said.

PHOTOS: Above, trash erupting from dumpsters not far from the U.N. climate summit in Glasgow. Chris Mitchell, left, is an official for the union that represents the city’s garbage collectors, which held an eight-day strike to bring attention to demands for higher pay. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIERAN DODDS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 6, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Black Authors Shake Up Brazil’s Literary Scene***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64S5-R3Y1-JBG3-60MG-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 12, 2022 Saturday 11:35 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1493 words

**Byline:** Ernesto Londoño

**Highlight:** Young Black Brazilians are publishing on their own terms, achieving the critical and commercial success that eluded past generations of writers from marginalized communities.

**Body**

Young Black Brazilians are publishing on their own terms, achieving the critical and commercial success that eluded past generations of writers from marginalized communities.

RIO DE JANEIRO — Itamar Vieira Júnior, whose day job working for the Brazilian government on land reform took him deep into the impoverished countryside, knew next to nothing about the mainstream publishing industry when he put the final touches on a novel he had been writing on and off for decades.

On a whim, in April 2018, he sent the manuscript for “Torto Arado,” which means crooked plow, to a literary contest in Portugal, wondering what the jury would make of the hardscrabble tale of two sisters in a rural district in northeastern Brazil where the legacy of slavery remains palpable.

“I wanted to see if anyone saw value in it,” Mr. Vieira, 42, said. “But I didn’t have much hope.”

To his astonishment, “Torto Arado” won [*the 2018 LeYa award*](https://www.leya.com/pt/gca/areas-de-actividade/premio-leya/vencedor-2018/), a major Portuguese-language literary prize focused on discovering new voices. The recognition jump-started Mr. Vieira’s career, making him a leading voice among the Black authors who have jolted Brazil’s literary establishment in recent years with imaginative and searing works that have found commercial success and critical acclaim.

“Torto Arado” was the best-selling book in Brazil in 2021, with more than 300,000 copies sold to date. The previous year, that distinction went to Djamila Ribeiro’s “A Little Anti-Racist Handbook,” a succinct and plainly written dissection of systemic racism in Brazil.

Mr. Vieira and Ms. Ribeiro, 41, are part of a generation of Black Brazilians who became the first in their families to get a college degree, taking advantage of programs enacted by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who governed Brazil from 2003 to 2010.

The two are among the highest profile figures of a literary boom that includes contemporary writers and authors who are experiencing posthumous acclaim that eluded them when their seminal works were initially published.

“Writers from marginalized communities have been producing important work for decades,” said Fernanda Rodrigues de Miranda, a literature professor in São Paulo, “but they had trouble getting visibility.”

For her doctoral dissertation, Ms. Rodrigues, who is Black, compiled all of the published novels she could find written by Black women from 1859 to 2006.

She was stunned by the literary quality of novels that had gathered dust in drawers, having never been widely read or discussed. And she concluded that the few authors who found commercial and critical success were creatively circumscribed by white literary gatekeepers.

The starkest example is Carolina Maria de Jesus, whose memoir, “Child of the Dark,” was a literary sensation when it was published in 1960. The book, a compilation of diary entries by Ms. Jesus, a single mother of three, offers a raw account of daily life in a São Paulo slum where dwellers picked through garbage for food and slept in shacks patched together with slabs of cardboard.

The book’s success enabled Ms. Jesus — who died in 1977 — to buy a house in a better neighborhood. But publishers showed little interest in her subsequent works, which were commercial flops.

“White readers had a lot of curiosity about Black lives, but they wanted to read stories about fragility,” Ms. Rodrigues said. “Authors wanted to write about other issues, other facets of their identity. They were interested in writing about love, about humor, about searching for a meaningful and fulfilling life,” she said.

An opportunity to showcase new literary talent arose in 2012 with the creation of a literary festival in Rio de Janeiro started as part of an ill-fated effort to restore security in [*favelas*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/12/lens/in-brazils-favelas-caught-between-police-and-gangsters.html) — poor, ***working-class*** communities frequently controlled by drug-trafficking gangs.

While the efforts to improve security largely failed, the literary festival thrived and endures today, said Julio Ludemir, one of its founders.

“It showed that there are readers living in favelas, which until then had been deemed impossible,” he said. “But it also showed that there were writers.”

The festival kick-started the careers of several authors, including Geovani Martins, 30, who attended a writing workshop at the festival while he was living in Vidigal, a favela that clings to a mountainside hovering over some of Rio de Janeiro’s most expensive neighborhoods.

His debut — “The Sun on My Head,” a collection of short stories published in 2018 — became a best seller in Brazil and has been translated into several languages. Its tales of adolescent angst, sparkling with slang, often take place in communities where young lives are hemmed in by racism and the violence fueled by the drug trade.

Mr. Martins’ success notwithstanding, until recently Black authors had a hard time getting book deals from mainstream Brazilian publishers, Ms. Ribeiro said. She set out to upend how the industry approached these young writers by curating a series of books in 2017 dedicated to Black authors.

It included inexpensive titles, priced at less than $4. Book events were held in outdoor public places, which attracted large crowds. Covers included photos of the authors, and the writing tended to be accessible.

Ms. Ribeiro, who studied philosophy, said that when she wrote and marketed books, she thought of her mother, who, like her grandmother, had worked as a maid and did not have a college education.

“I always want to write in a way that my mother would understand,” she said. “I felt a calling to be generous enough to write in the same accessible way that generous authors before me wrote, because otherwise you only legitimize the power spheres of those who are privileged.”

The formula worked exceptionally well. One of Brazil’s top publishers approached Ms. Ribeiro in 2018 to write a book about Black feminism, which became a mainstream hit.

“We wanted to democratize reading, and it was a major success,” Ms. Ribeiro said. “There was an unmet demand from a part of the population that wanted to see itself represented.”

Mr. Vieira, a geologist, managed to use his day job at Brazil’s land reform agency, where he has worked since 2006, to do field research. He studied the politics and power dynamics that shape the lives of rural workers, including some who toil in conditions analogous to modern-day slavery.

That experience, he said, made the characters in his novel more layered and their fictional hometown, Água Negra, which means black water, feel authentic.

“Readers tell me they see themselves reflected in the story,” he said, “which is in many ways a story about how our society came to be.”

Mr. Vieira says a major reason Black Brazilian writers are making their mark, writing and publishing on their own terms, is because of a shift in how race and racism are being discussed in the country today.

“For many years, Brazil tried to whiten its population and people avoided speaking about race in Brazil,” he said. “In the last decades, the Black rights movement and the study of structural racism has clarified our role in society.”

Many Black writers are still struggling to figure out how they fit within it. Pieta Poeta, 27, a Black transgender man from Belo Horizonte, made waves by winning a 2018 national slam poetry festival.

But he has had to self-publish his poetry books, including the most recent: “Do You Still Wanna Yell at Me?” — an exhortation, he said, for readers to imagine what it is like to be a Black, transgender person in today’s Brazil.

He said his work had gotten darker in recent years — and he writes under a pen name — reflecting the political turbulence and social upheaval that has rattled Brazil since [*the election in 2018 of Jair Bolsonaro*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/28/world/americas/jair-bolsonaro-brazil-election.html), a right-wing president known for [*his divisive, and often offensive,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/28/world/americas/brazil-president-jair-bolsonaro-quotes.html) messaging.

“To be Brazilian means one is either constantly paralyzed by fear or constantly having to cry foul,” he said.

And yet, his work has an undertone of resilience, if not outright hope, as reflected in his[*short poem “Autocide”*](https://www.instagram.com/p/B_3mMovJFNp/):

I wanted to die.

but it wasn’t a death wish per se

It was an absence of life

And no sense of how long things

take

to stop hurting so deeply.

Of the time it takes for our backs

To bear the world, its weight.

Lis Moriconi contributed reporting.

Lis Moriconi contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: Itamar Vieira Júnior, a celebrated novelist, says a major reason Black Brazilian writers are making their mark is because of a shift in how race and racism are being discussed in the country today.; The Megafauna bookstore in São Paulo, Brazil, carries a large selection of books by Black authors. The country’s recent literary boom includes Black writers overlooked in their lifetimes who are now receiving acclaim.; “I felt a calling to be generous enough to write in the same accessible way that generous authors before me wrote,” Djamila Ribeiro said, “because otherwise you only legitimize the power spheres of those who are privileged.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY VICTOR MORIYAMA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Big Reveal***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6286-4JP1-JBG3-60SF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 21, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 19; FICTION

**Length:** 757 words

**Byline:** By Adam Haslett

**Body**

FOREGONEBy Russell Banks

Leonard Fife, the protagonist of Russell Banks's furiously driven new novel, has been hiding all his life -- from the world and from himself. On the outside he's a successful documentary filmmaker, a semifamous left-wing figure in Canada, where he fled to from New England in 1968, supposedly to avoid the draft. He resides in a well-appointed Montreal apartment with Emma, his wife and producer of 40 years, and has managed to be both materially comfortable and morally righteous. But at 78, ill and on the verge of death, he's now consumed by the need to confess that his life is as riddled with lies and betrayal as his body is with cancer.

To tell his story, he invites a former student, Malcolm, and a small crew to his apartment for what his acolyte believes is the chance to make a film about his mentor's career. Fife, however, has a different purpose. To tell Emma -- through the camera and in the spotlight -- what he cannot bring himself to tell her in private: that before meeting her he abandoned two wives and two children and that he moved to Canada to escape not Vietnam but his own hollow self.

''Foregone'' is Fife's confession. In the present timeline of the novel, we never leave the film shoot. Where we go is deep into his bleak experience as a boy, young man and young father. Emma either already knows what Fife has to say, or doesn't want to hear it. She'd rather he stop the interview and protect his reputation. But like a man desperate to expel a demon, which he can be free of only if his wife witnesses the exorcism, Fife insists repeatedly that she stay and listen. His mind addled by medication, he's transported into his past, leaving the reader to guess how much of what we read is ever heard by his captive audience and how much is the dying man's flight of memory.

One of the main strands of Banks's fiction has long been what you might call a ***working-class*** New England existentialism. In bitterly eloquent novels such as ''Affliction,'' ''The Sweet Hereafter'' and ''Continental Drift,'' he has chronicled the blunted, pragmatic affect of Northern white men and the women unfortunate enough to be entangled with them. ''Foregone'' is in the same vein, only here the protagonist is an artist. And what Banks reveals of this artist's life is a profound emptiness, seeded early on, which Fife has run from ever since.

Fife's parents exhibited an ''unbroken sadness and lassitude and constant low-level anxiety and detachment and pessimism bordering on despair,'' which he believes he ''caught'' from them. At 16, in the first of many attempts to escape the inheritance of his grim home outside Boston, he drives to Texas, where he's molested by a blind, middle-aged man and drinks himself into oblivion trying to forget the episode. By 19, he has fled to Florida, married a woman he met in a bar, gotten her pregnant and brought her back to Boston, where their relationship soon unravels. His second marriage, to a Virginian heiress attracted to his pose as a ''serious young man'' and writer, lasts longer and frames the bulk of his memories of his younger self. But it ends in the same fashion -- with his disappearance.

As always, Banks's prose has remarkable force to it. Like Emma, the reader too might prefer that Fife stop torturing himself in public, indulging in what is at times a kind of baroque self-recrimination complete with the sexist presumptions of the postwar American male. But there is such brio in the writing, such propulsion as the lashes are applied, that we follow Fife into the depths. The book's real theme is the curse of being convinced that one is unlovable. And who among us hasn't suffered that conviction to one degree or another? Such hollowness will haunt Fife till the end. He has managed to remain with Emma all these years only because early on she professed not to ''need him more than he needed her,'' a self-sufficiency they took as a mutual ''compliment.'' Only it isn't. It's a fantasy détente with the human condition of vulnerability. A condition that only now, in his final hours, does Fife no longer seek to hold at bay.

To his credit, Banks has never solicited his readers' approval of his characters, and many are unlikely to be charmed by Leo Fife. But what they will find in ''Foregone'' is a character, a novel and a writer determined not to go gentle into that good night.Adam Haslett is the author of ''Imagine Me Gone,'' ''Union Atlantic'' and ''You Are Not a Stranger Here.''FOREGONEBy Russell Banks305 pp. Ecco. $28.99.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/02/books/review/russell-banks-foregone.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/02/books/review/russell-banks-foregone.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Russell Banks (PHOTOGRAPH BY NANCIE BATTAGLIA)

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***A Surging Virus. Angry Packers Fans. Can Trump Hold On to Wisconsin?; Poll Watch***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:611D-MXT1-DXY4-X1P8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 9, 2020 Friday 13:10 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1483 words

**Byline:** Giovanni Russonello

**Highlight:** With the coronavirus raging in the state, particularly in the politically competitive northeast, the president faces an uphill battle to repeat his 2016 victory.

**Body**

With the coronavirus raging in the state, particularly in the politically competitive northeast, the president faces an uphill battle to repeat his 2016 victory.

Welcome to [*Poll Watch*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch), our weekly look at [*polling data*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) and survey research on the candidates, voters and issues that will shape the [*2020 election*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch). Follow our daily updates on [*the latest presidential election polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch).

You know the story well: [*Not a single public poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) in 2016 showed Donald J. Trump beating Hillary Clinton in Wisconsin, and forecasters suggested he had almost no shot. [*FiveThirtyEight*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) gave him less than a one-in-six chance of winning the state.

But after the votes were counted, with turnout down in key Democratic areas, Mr. Trump eked out a victory by [*fewer than 30,000 votes*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch).

This year, again, [*virtually every poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) has shown the Democrat, Joseph R. Biden Jr., with at least a slight edge over Mr. Trump. A [*New York Times/Siena College survey*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) last month gave Mr. Biden a five-percentage-point advantage among likely voters. Polls taken since then by [*CNN*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) and [*NBC News/Marist College*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) have each given Mr. Biden an outright, 10-point lead.

And with the coronavirus now [*raging in Wisconsin*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch), particularly in the politically competitive northeastern region, Mr. Trump faces an uphill battle toward repeating his victory from four years ago.

“Certainly, with the sharp rise in cases here, it’s on the agenda for voters,” said Charles Franklin, a political scientist who runs the Marquette Law School poll, which is seen as the definitive political survey in the state. “His handling of Covid does appear to be having a bigger effect on people’s vote than either the economy or his handling of the protests.”

Marquette has released a Wisconsin poll each month since June, and in every one Mr. Biden has held a single-digit lead among likely voters that was within the margin of error. This reflects the steadiness of a race in which Wisconsinites largely know where they stand: Roughly four in five voters have consistently expressed a strong opinion of Mr. Trump’s leadership, whether positive or negative, according to Marquette’s data.

But if there are any small signs of momentum, it appears to be breaking Mr. Biden’s way. His 48 percent approval rating in [*the poll released this week*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) was his best in a Marquette survey all year, capping a 14-point rise since February. Mr. Trump, meanwhile, was seen positively by 42 percent of Wisconsin voters, leaving his net favorability rating more than 10 points in the red, where it has languished since June.

Concern about the pandemic has ticked upward recently. More than six in 10 Wisconsin voters in the Marquette poll described themselves as at least fairly worried — including 27 percent who said they were very worried, up from 21 percent last month. Fully 50 percent of Wisconsin voters said they did not expect the virus to be under control for at least another year, running counter to Mr. Trump’s insistence that it is already being handled effectively.

And that’s not the only issue where he’s hurting. While Mr. Trump has made Wisconsin a focal point of his “law and order” messaging, particularly after protests broke out over the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wis., 54 percent of Wisconsin voters said in the Marquette survey that they disapproved of how he had handled this year’s unrest. Just 37 percent approved.

Republicans’ rise among white men without college degrees

Since the rise of the Tea Party movement a decade ago, white men without college degrees in Wisconsin have shifted toward the Republican Party in large numbers — a development that predated Mr. Trump’s rise, but that he certainly accelerated. Dr. Franklin cited Marquette numbers showing that in 2012, non-college-educated white men in Wisconsin were just five points more likely to be Republicans than Democrats. By this year, the difference had grown to 23 points.

Dr. Franklin said that former Gov. Scott Walker, a Republican, had introduced a newly ***working-class*** political lexicon in the early 2010s, when he waged an attack on public-sector unions.

“Walker didn’t spend as much time emphasizing pro-business messages in a way that you would’ve heard previous generations of Republicans saying, ‘What’s good for business is good for the state,’” Dr. Franklin said. “Walker was saying: ‘They’re hard-working taxpayers who need their money, and these unions are taking money from them.’”

But as much as Republicans’ appeals have resonated with many ***working-class*** white men, there has not been commensurate movement among women without college degrees. And while Democrats haven’t notched big gains in their vote share among any particular group, they have avoided losing ground among demographics that are growing more quickly — such as college graduates, Latinos and voters in cities.

In Democratic strongholds like Milwaukee and Madison, the state’s two biggest municipalities, the margins actually improved slightly for Democrats between the 2012 and 2016 presidential elections. Dane County, which includes Madison, is the state’s fastest-growing county, and is probably the No. 1 area where Democrats will be looking to run up the score.

And with Wisconsin’s heavily white population growing older, thanks to the aging of the baby boom generation, Mr. Trump’s underperformance among voters 65 and older in polls this year could help Mr. Biden across the state.

The virus hits the gridiron

Green Bay, a heavily blue-collar city in the northeastern part of the state, has been in the news recently as the coronavirus has surged. The Packers, the town’s beloved N.F.L. team, [*announced*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) this week that for the time being no fans would be allowed to attend games at Lambeau Field. Data released by the N.F.L. Players Association at the end of last month showed that Green Bay had a higher rate of infection than any other team’s market.

For Mr. Trump, all of this puts an unwelcome focus on the coronavirus in the most politically volatile region of the state.

“Green Bay, Appleton and other cities in that region have moved pretty noticeably in a Democratic direction since 2010,” Dr. Franklin said. “The surrounding counties in the region, though, have stayed very Republican, and to the north and west of Green Bay have become even more Republican than before. So the result is, the whole region is still pretty competitive.”

Brown County, which includes Green Bay, broke for Mr. Trump by nine points in 2016, but with Mr. Biden turning back Mr. Trump’s advantage among suburbanites and building his support among the urban Democratic base, it could be up for grabs this year.

Turnout helps Democrats — and pollsters?

Over all, Wisconsin’s population is almost evenly split between Democrats and Republicans, but there’s still a slight Democratic tilt to the electorate, especially when voter engagement is high, since Democrats tend to do better among demographics with lower turnout.

And this year, signs are pointing to what could be a historically high level of participation. Seventy-five percent of registered voters said they were certain to cast a ballot, according to the latest Marquette poll, compared with 71 percent on the [*eve of the 2016 election*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch). And official statistics on requests for absentee ballots suggest that if anything, voters are even more engaged than they’re telling pollsters.

“In our data, about 33 percent say they’re going to vote absentee by mail — but election officials have already sent out 1.2 million ballots,” Dr. Franklin said, referring to ballots mailed to voters who have expressly requested them. “That would give us about 36 percent of the total registered voters, so that would be a little over what we have in our polling data, though not out of line with it.”

State [*estimates*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) suggest that Wisconsinites could cast upward of 3.1 million ballots this year, for the first time in history.

A high-turnout election would most likely lift Democrats — but it could help pollsters too. In 2016, a late break toward Mr. Trump, combined with unexpectedly low participation among Democratic voters, threw the state to him.

Unlike some researchers in other states, Marquette’s team in 2016 made sure to weight its data by education levels, and it did not significantly underestimate Mr. Trump’s strength among white voters without degrees. But what did surprise Dr. Franklin that year was Mr. Trump’s success in the suburbs, which he won by 16 points, according to Wisconsin [*exit polls*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch).

This year, however, Mr. Biden’s lead over Mr. Trump among suburbanites has been steady and strong: Marist’s most recent [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/column/poll-watch) of Wisconsin put him up by 12 points in the suburbs — and on handling the coronavirus, suburban voters chose Mr. Biden over the president by 22 points.

PHOTO: Virtually every poll of Wisconsin this year has shown Joseph R. Biden Jr. with at least a slight edge over President Trump. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Hilary Swift for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** October 12, 2020

**End of Document**



[***House Hunting in Peru: A Modern Mountain Perch Above Lima; International real estate***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:658D-26S1-DXY4-X3BK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 20, 2022 Wednesday 10:57 EST

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1670 words

**Byline:** Michael Kaminer

**Highlight:** Political upheaval has stunted the high-end market in Peru’s capital, but domestic buyers are keeping demand high at the middle and lower end of the market.

**Body**

Political upheaval has stunted the high-end market in Peru’s capital, but domestic buyers are keeping demand high at the middle and lower end of the market.

An Airy Seven-Bedroom Villa in Lima, Peru

$2 MILLION (7.4 MILLION PERUVIAN NUEVO SOL)

A stone mountain rises behind this geometric 12,055-square-foot [*house*](https://www.sothebysrealty.com/eng/sales/detail/180-l-692-2bvtvy/av-del-parque-la-planicie-other-peru-pe-12) in La Planicie, an affluent neighborhood in the eastern La Molina district of Lima, Peru. Designed by Peruvian firm [*Domenack Arquitectos*](https://domenack-arquitectos.com/) and built in 2014, the seven-bedroom, eight-bath house incorporates natural elements like an indoor waterfall and volcanic stone around the pool deck.

“All of La Molina is surrounded by large rock formations, and this house has its own mountain,” said Fernando Bertetti of Peru Sotheby’s International Realty, the listing broker. “But the home itself is modern and elegant, and the architects who designed it are very well-known.”

A 50-foot stone walkway leads from a gated street entrance to wooden front doors, which contrast with the concrete facade. The doors open to a foyer with black granite-slab floors. A square archway separates the foyer from a great room with 19.5-foot cathedral ceilings and cojoba wood floors. Full-length windows offer views of the backyard pool and hilly terrain beyond.

The kitchen, with glossy white cabinets and gray quartzite countertops offsetting a wooden breakfast bar, is concealed by a wall that houses a wide ethanol fireplace. The home’s main level also includes a small office, a bar and a two-bedroom guest suite.

On the second floor are five en suite bedrooms including the primary suite, which has a terrace. Two more bedrooms share a bathroom.

An indoor/outdoor waterfall flows from the home’s main level to the basement, which has a screening room, guest bathroom and kitchenette. The waterfall begins at the edge of the concrete pool deck, which is inlaid with Peruvian volcanic stone. A snaking steel sculpture forms a canopy over the rear terrace, and the 60-foot pool is surrounded by landscaping. “Lima is a desert, so anything planted is done by a gardener,” Mr. Bertetti said.

In the mountain behind the house, the owner carved niches called andenes, versions of farming “terraces” used by Inca people in pre-Colombian times. “Each of those little cutouts has a garden or a staircase,” Mr. Bertetti said.

Lima, Peru’s capital and largest city, is home to nearly 9.8 million residents in 43 urban districts covering about 1,000 square miles. Quiet and leafy, La Molina is favored by “wealthy families, expats and embassy workers,” Mr. Bertetti said. “There are only houses here, no tall buildings.” Private schools including the exclusive [*Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt/The American School of Lima*](https://www.amersol.edu.pe/) are a draw, as is the upscale [*Country Club La Planicie*](https://www.cclp.pe/), a half-mile west of the house. San Isidro, Lima’s central business district, is about 10 miles west, as is Jorge Chavez International Airport and Peru’s Pacific coastline.

Market Overview

Many wealthy Peruvians have been nervous since last year’s election of [*Marxist-Leninist*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/19/world/americas/peru-election-pedro-castillo.html) president Pedro Castillo, who in February swore in his third cabinet in six months. As a result, Lima’s luxury market has “frozen,” said Ivan Zalaquett, a partner at [*Keller Williams Peru*](https://kwworldwide.com/regions/kw-peru/) in Lima. “Clients with money think it’s too risky to invest here, and they’re looking in places like Miami.”

Prices at the high end have declined about 20 percent since last year, said Nella Pinto, the head of Peru Sotheby’s International Realty in Lima.

“Unlike other countries, it’s been a buyer’s market,” she said. But Peru’s economy, driven by mining and commodities, “has remained strong, and people are realizing Peru isn’t changing. Prices will only go up.”

According to Ms. Pinto, prices in central Lima’s upscale neighborhoods, including San Isidro and Miraflores, range from $3,000 to $6,000 a square meter. In La Molina, where this home is located, prices average $1,500 a square meter.

Because of inflated property prices abroad, the exodus of wealth is starting to boomerang, said Juan Carlos Tassara, CEO of property developers [*Edifica*](https://edifica.com.pe/) and president of the [*Asociacion de Empresas Inmobiliarias del Peru*](https://asei.com.pe/) (AESI), a real estate industry group. “Peruvians who left are realizing you can’t really get a good return on your investment in the U.S.,” he said.

The pandemic has also shifted Lima’s market dynamic. “There has been an increase in demand for properties outside the city” in surrounding districts and coastal communities, said Alen Becerra, founder and owner of [*Becerra Group/Leading Real Estate Companies of the World*](https://www.becerra-group.com/), in Lima.

But those transplants have not completely abandoned the city center, said Mr. Zalaquett of Keller Williams: “Whoever can buy a second home here doesn’t need to sell their primary residence.”

There is no central database for property transactions in Peru. Mr. Becerra estimated average prices in the city’s Lima Top sector, which includes La Molina, Miraflores, San Isidro, San Borja, Surco and Barranco, at about $2,288 a square meter ($215 a square foot). In the less affluent neighborhoods of the Modern Lima sector, including Jesús María, San Miguel, Lince, Magdalena del Mar, Pueblo Libre and Surquillo, where demand is higher, prices average $1,871 a square meter ($175 a square foot), he said. In new developments across the city, prices rose 7 percent year over year, a reflection of perennial demand for housing, Mr. Becerra said.

Demand remains strong at the middle and lower end of the market, said Jose Luis Alzamora, CEO of [*TALE Inmobiliaria*](https://taleinmobiliaria.com/), a Lima property developer. “The main offices of everything are in Lima,” he said. “That’s always put pressure on people who want to live here. That’s why we sell to ***working-class*** buyers, who need to buy somewhere to live, rather than the A market, who are now diversifying and largely stopping their investment in Peru.”

Mr. Zalaquett of Keller Williams said the “sweet spot” for Lima apartments outside the wealthiest neighborhoods ranges from $80,000 to $150,000.

A report from AESI, the real estate association, estimated that average prices across metropolitan Lima rose 14.7 percent from February 2021 to February 2022. According to data from the Central Reserve Bank of Peru shared by Mr. Becerra, prices per square meter are expected to increase 6 percent by the end of 2022. But Mr. Tassara, the developer, attributed rising prices to higher construction costs, “not because the market’s incredible.”

Who Buys in Lima

Middle-income Peruvians power Lima’s property market, Mr. Alzamora said. “People continue to get mortgages to buy their first home, or to move somewhere better than where they are,” he said. “Politics may worry them a bit, but they have more confidence than wealthy buyers.” The biggest challenge, he said, is finding buildable land to address a perennial housing shortage.

Most foreign buyers are retirees from North America, Spain and Britain, Mr. Becerra said. They look to coastal communities outside central Lima, drawn by relatively low prices and an enviable climate. Expatriate Peruvians are a “significant” part of the high-end market, he said.

Foreigners who move to Lima for corporate postings usually rent rather than buy, Mr. Zalaquett said. “I haven’t had any foreign buyers. And Peruvians who moved abroad are only looking to sell the homes they kept here,” he said.

Buying Basics

There are few restrictions on foreign buyers in Peru. “Non-Peruvians can’t own land within about 30 miles of our borders, but there are no cities there anyway,” said Jorge Picon, co-founder of [*Picon Asociados*](https://consultasvirtuales.piconasociados.com/), a legal and tax consulting firm in Lima. The buying process is the same for foreigners and Peruvians, he said, though money-laundering laws have tightened, so “money has to come from a country that’s not considered a tax haven by Peruvian law, like Panama. That could become a problem.”

Foreigners must open an account at a Peruvian bank to execute a property transaction, “but anyone can do that in five minutes here,” Mr. Picon said. Foreigners can obtain mortgages through Peruvian banks, though many choose to pay cash, he said.

Notaries oversee property transactions in Peru. “They control the process, from basic due diligence on the property to creating the deed to paying taxes due upon completion of the transaction,” Mr. Picon said.

Many property transactions take place in U.S. dollars, Mr. Picon said.

Websites

* Peru Tourism: [*peru.travel*](https://www.peru.travel/en)

1. Peru government: [*gob.pe*](http://gob.pe/)
2. La Molina government: [*munimolina.gob.pe*](https://munimolina.gob.pe/)

Languages and Currency

Spanish; nuevo sol (1 nuevo sol = $0.27)

Taxes and Fees

Foreign buyers and Peruvian citizens pay the same taxes on home purchases, said Oscar Picon, co-founder of [*Picon Asociados*](https://consultasvirtuales.piconasociados.com/) and Jorge Picon’s brother. “A 3 percent tax on the value of the property is the only tax anyone pays upon purchase,” he said, noting that an 18 percent value-added tax applies only to new construction purchased from the developer. Independent professionals like lawyers and accountants do not charge a value-added tax on their services, but legal or accounting firms must apply the VAT.

Until 2016, foreign property sellers in Peru had to pay a flat 30 percent tax on capital gains. To encourage foreign investment, the government reduced the tax rate for individual non-Peruvians to 5 percent on capital gains. Foreign corporations must still pay the 30 percent tax.

Notary fees are set by the government at approximately 1.5 percent of the property value. Real estate commissions in Peru average 3 to 5 percent, Ms. Pinto said.

Annual property taxes on this home total about $3,000, Mr. Bertetti said.

Contact

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For weekly email updates on residential real estate news, [*sign up here*](http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/realestate/). Follow us on Twitter: [*@nytrealestate*](https://twitter.com/nytrealestate).

PHOTOS: Clockwise from above: the 12,055-square-foot house has seven bedrooms and eight bathrooms; ceilings in the great room are nearly 20 feet high; and a steel sculpture and wooden roof form a canopy over the home’s back deck. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA PERÚ SOTHEBY’S INTERNATIONAL REALTY)

**Load-Date:** April 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Feeling Hopeful as Biden Takes Office***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61TC-H5P1-DXY4-X3DM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 20, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 26; LETTERS

**Length:** 693 words

**Body**

Readers are optimistic about the future and offer advice for the incoming administration, such as ''Be bold!''

To the Editor:

On Wednesday Joseph R. Biden Jr. will be sworn in as our 46th president. I am filled with hope and at peace knowing that, whatever the next four years bring, we have as president a wise, caring, gentle and highly qualified leader to take us to a place that felt unreachable just a few months ago.

Imagine news conferences based on facts, addresses to the nation meant to promote harmony and unity, a world awaiting renewed outreach and cooperation, all leading to a better tomorrow.

I no longer fear the future. I welcome it, revel in its promises and believe in its dreams.

Doris FenigBoca Raton, Fla.

To the Editor:

I am 76 years old and I feel as if I have basically lost the last four years of my life ''waiting on the world to change.'' I went from deep anger and depression following Donald Trump's election to amazement as I watched him do in a cruel and heartless way exactly what he said he'd do: dismantle everything Barack Obama had built. In the process he divided our country, our families and our friendships, but hopefully not forever.

I'd like to see Joe Biden rebuild our country, just as he and Barack Obama rebuilt the economy after the Republicans left it in a shambles in 2008. And then, I'd like to see us truly lean forward!

Janie MorrisMemphis

To the Editor:

Re ''Biden Sets Up 10-Day Sprint on Big Issues'' (front page, Jan. 17):

What a refreshing change, from President Trump's rogues gallery of sycophants as cabinet members to what appears to be a faculty guide of stalwart professionals in their fields.

Joe Biden's appointees have knowledge, experience and a public service ethos toward the herculean task of repairing the tragic calamities of the Trump administration. But also, beyond just repair, they will be able to design new, improved programs and solutions for the many problems facing not just the country, but the world at large.

Rather than another four-year course in Mr. Trump's psychopathology, the next four years will show what a government of devoted individuals can achieve -- free of the ''genuflection or propitiation'' (''G.O.P.'') of enablers.

Richard AndresenSacramento

To the Editor:

Re ''Trump's Base Nurses Anger Over Election'' (front page, Jan. 19):

Once Joe Biden takes office, Congress should immediately create a bipartisan Election Commission to investigate claims of election ''irregularities.'' This commission should include both Senators Ted Cruz and Josh Hawley. The results will allow them to save face and claim that they have listened to their constituents and seen the evidence that it was a free and fair election.

This is the only way to get millions of Republicans to acknowledge Mr. Biden's legitimate presidency, so we can actually begin healing. They have all crawled out onto a ledge, and we need to help them find a way back in.

Jesse AllenSanta Fe, N.M.

To the Editor:

President-elect Biden and every Democrat in Congress: This moment calls for boldness. We don't need another Obama or Clinton. We need an F.D.R. and then some.

It would be an error in judgment to govern as centrists in the hope that doing so will appease your most vocal and violent critics. It never does and never will. Those who subscribe to QAnonsense are too far gone, and the relatively sane Republicans will call you a socialist no matter what.

Help build and inspire a diverse ***working-class*** alliance by advancing policies that will transform society. I'm talking about policies like Medicare for All, the Green New Deal and free college. Bring back the Fairness Doctrine. Enact campaign finance reform.

These are the sorts of actions that will garner you enthusiastic, sustainable support. That's the only way to marginalize the extremists, to ensure their demise.

The pre-Trump status quo will not suffice. American exceptionalism has always been a myth, and there's nothing that says the United States can't become a failed state or that fascism can't take root here. This is a trying time, but I remain hopeful. Be bold!

Garrett SnedakerEureka, Calif.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/letters/joe-biden-inauguration.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/letters/joe-biden-inauguration.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Carolyn Kaster/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Mexican Court Rules Abortion Is Not a Crime***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JM-7PW1-JBG3-63PT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 8, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1082 words

**Byline:** By Natalie Kitroeff and Oscar Lopez

**Body**

The ruling, which sets a precedent for the legalization of abortion nationwide, follows years of efforts by a growing women's movement in Mexico.

MEXICO CITY -- Criminalizing abortion is unconstitutional, Mexico's Supreme Court ruled on Tuesday, setting a precedent that could lead to legalization of the procedure across this conservative Catholic country of about 130 million people.

The unanimous ruling from the nation's top court follows years of efforts by a growing women's movement in Mexico that has repeatedly taken to the streets of major cities to demand greater rights and protections.

The decision, which opens the door for Mexico to become the most populous Latin American country to allow abortion, was met with elation by feminist activists and dismay by conservative politicians and the powerful Catholic Church.

''Today is a historic day for the rights of all Mexican women,'' Chief Justice Arturo Zaldívar said after the judges' votes were cast. ''It is a watershed in the history of the rights of all women, especially the most vulnerable.''

The decision does not automatically make abortion legal across Mexico, experts said, but it does set a binding precedent for judges across the country. Abortion rights advocates said they planned to use the ruling to challenge laws in the vast majority of Mexican states that mandate jail time or other criminal penalties for women who have the procedure.

For now, analysts said, women arrested for having an abortion can sue state authorities to have the charges dropped. Activists also plan to push state authorities to free women now serving prison terms for having had abortions.

The Mexican Supreme Court's decision is likely to reverberate across Latin America, where victories by women's rights movements in one country often catalyze efforts in others. The legalization of abortion in Argentina last year was celebrated in other nations, and the green handkerchiefs brandished by activists there have become widespread at women's protests across the region, including in Mexico.

Leaders of the Catholic Church, whose regional influence has been waning but still carries considerable weight, swiftly condemned the ruling.

''Those of us who are convinced of the value of life do not have a need for a homicidal law like the one they are approving,'' read a tweet from the Episcopal Conference of Mexico, an organization of Catholic bishops.

Tuesday's ruling follows efforts by women's groups that began well over a decade ago, with the legalization of abortion in Mexico City in 2007. Groups then successfully pushed for the procedure to be decriminalized in the states of Oaxaca, Hidalgo and Veracruz.

Advocates said they hoped their victory on Tuesday would buoy American women challenging moves by Texas and other states to place ever-tighter restrictions on the procedure.

''If there is a message, it is to look at the leadership of Mexico here: This is possible, it is happening,'' said Giselle Carino, the chief executive of the International Planned Parenthood Federation's Western Hemisphere region. ''When you have adverse conditions, like in Texas, you need to double down on your efforts.''

There was no immediate comment from President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who has faced sharp criticism in the past for his response to the women's movement, which he has dismissed as an effort to undermine his political project.

Mr. López Obrador, a devout Christian, has remained noncommittal on abortion, careful not to inflame his base of ***working class***, socially conservative voters. When asked at his morning news conference on Tuesday about the Supreme Court's deliberations, Mr. López Obrador refused to offer his view on the issue, which he called ''controversial'' and ''polemic.''

''We don't want to encourage any confrontation,'' Mr. López Obrador said. ''If it's already at the Supreme Court, then let it be resolved there.''

In its ruling, the Supreme Court had considered a challenge to the law in the northern state of Coahuila, which had set prison penalties of up to three years for having an abortion. The justices struck down the state law, finding broadly that any criminal penalization of abortion violated Mexico's Constitution.

''It's an enormous step toward legalization in the entire country,'' said Rebeca Ramos, the executive director of GIRE, a reproductive rights group. ''We are absolutely ready to present legal challenges to the denial of safe and legal abortion'' across the country.

Analysts said they expected to see a wave of such efforts nationwide. The Supreme Court justices ''are setting the tone for all local criminal codes to be reformed,'' said Paulina Creuheras González, head of analysis and political risk at Integralia, a Mexico City consulting firm.

Women across Mexico have in recent years protested en masse across the country, demanding not only the right to have an abortion but also an end to the grave and pervasive violence they face, which has become a national crisis.

Last year, an average of 10 women were killed in Mexico every day, according to government figures. More than 2,000 have been murdered in the first seven months of 2021 alone.

In March, hundreds of women stormed the country's National Palace in Mexico City, attacking the rampart around the president's residence with bats, blowtorches and hammers, demanding an end to gender-based violence.

The protest followed a massive demonstration last year that brought tens of thousands of women to the streets, many of them wearing the green handkerchiefs first seen in Argentina. The following day, women in Mexico stayed home from work in a national strike to demand government action.

Religious leaders in the country, which has one of the largest Catholic populations in the world, have been steadfast in their condemnation of abortion.

''We cannot remain indifferent, silent, fearful when life is in such danger,'' said Bishop Alfonso Miranda Guardiola, the secretary general of the Mexican Episcopal Conference, in a sermon on Tuesday.

The chief justice of the Supreme Court, Judge Zaldívar, made clear that he saw Tuesday's ruling as the first step toward a more fundamental transformation in Mexican society.

''Now begins a new path of freedom, of clarity, of dignity and respect for all pregnant people, but above all, for women,'' he said. ''Today is one more step in the historic fight for their equality, for their dignity and for the full exercise of their rights.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/07/world/americas/mexico-supreme-court-decriminalize-abortion.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/07/world/americas/mexico-supreme-court-decriminalize-abortion.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A protest in Mexico City in February 2020 was one of many staged by women's groups calling for legal and safe abortion. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EDGARD GARRIDO/REUTERS) (A7)

**Load-Date:** September 8, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction: Sunday, February 02nd 2020***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y4B-4W61-DXY4-X0W4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 2, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 484 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

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

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|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Weeks | Best Sellers: Hardcover Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 | 1 | 100 | EDUCATED, by Tara Westover. (Random House) The daughter of survivalists, who is kept out of school, educates herself enough to leave home for university. |
| 2 |  | 1 | TIGHTROPE, by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. (Knopf) The Pulitzer Prize-winning authors examine issues affecting ***working-class*** Americans. |
| 3 | 2 | 19 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Little, Brown) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts and misunderstandings. |
| 4 | 3 | 58 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Crown) The former first lady describes how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. |
| 5 |  | 1 | RUNNING AGAINST THE DEVIL, by Rick Wilson. (Crown Forum) The Republican strategist offers his insights on how to potentially defeat President Trump in the upcoming election. |
| 6 | 4 | 19 | MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE, by Lori Gottlieb. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) A psychotherapist gains unexpected insights when she becomes another therapist?s patient. |
| 7 |  | 1 | UNCANNY VALLEY, by Anna Wiener. (MCD/Farrar, Straus & Giroux) A millennial?s memoir is interwoven with a look at changes within Silicon Valley. |
| 8 | 6 | 9 | CATCH AND KILL, by Ronan Farrow. (Little, Brown) The Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter details some surveillance and intimidation tactics used to pressure journalists and elude consequences by certain wealthy and connected men. |
| 9 | 5 | 14 | ME, by Elton John. (Holt) The multi-award-winning solo artist's first autobiography chronicles his career, relationships and private struggles. |
| 10 | 10 | 2 | SUCCESSFUL AGING, by Daniel J. Levitin. (Dutton) A neuroscientist suggests using resilience strategies as we grow older. |
| 11 | 9 | 14 | THE BODY, by Bill Bryson. (Doubleday) An owner?s manual of the human body covering various parts, functions and what happens when things go wrong. |
| 12 | 7 | 2 | BOYS & SEX, by Peggy Orenstein. (Harper) How young men comprehend cultural forces and navigate sexual and emotional relationships. |
| 13 | 12 | 9 | SAY NOTHING, by Patrick Radden Keefe. (Doubleday) A look at the conflict in Northern Ireland known as the Troubles. |
| 14 |  | 3 | THE YELLOW HOUSE, by Sarah M. Broom. (Grove) Identity and inequality are explored in the history of a family and home in New Orleans both before and after Hurricane Katrina. |
| 15 |  | 1 | AMERICAN OLIGARCHS, by Andrea Bernstein. (Norton) An investigative journalist traces the proliferation of the Trump and Kushner dynasties. |

**Load-Date:** February 3, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Four New Poetry Books Mine Their Authors’ Pasts for Music and Meaning; Shortlist***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JX-WNN1-DXY4-X4KK-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 9, 2021 Thursday 10:42 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 1089 words

**Byline:** Stephanie Burt

**Highlight:** Stephanie Burt reviews “Catcalling,” by Lee Soho; “The Collection Plate,” by Kendra Allen; “Maroon Choreography,” by Fahima Ife; and “The Survival Expo,” by Caki Wilkinson.

**Body**

CATCALLING

By Lee Soho

Translated by Soje

103 pp. Open Letter. Paper, $14.95.

Painful and charming, raw and sometimes purposefully childish, Soho’s poems track the Korean poet’s alter ego, Kyungjin, and her sometimes affectionate, sometimes bloody relations with her birth family. “I wore baby clothes and a bridal veil,” she imagines: “Little sister and I were stuck on top of the same wedding cake”; “I slit little sister’s wrist for her. Mom says you slept inside her like it was your grave.” Sexuality, free-flowing angst and “Teen……Spleen,” as the poet puts it, animate a compelling volume of free verse, prose poems and monostichs, turning from tender intimacy to visceral confusion in the space of a few syllables. On good days, the poet inhabits disturbing dream-visions: “We combed each other’s pubic hair with mascara,” “Sharing bites of each other.” On bad days, Kyungjin (who is also a gallery artist) faces down the predictable, virulent sexism of men in the art world: “I like you, Soho, because you’re chill. Lady artists are different from other girls.” “Playing with scars,” asking, “Tie me tighter,” Soho draws both on Korea-specific contexts and on the shock and feminist awe of an international avant-garde, citing Niki de Saint Phalle and Tracey Emin.

The single-named Soje’s spare and clear translations serve the poet well. Writing about the difficulty of “drawing a single boundary,” Soho also mixes verse with visual art, using typography, layout and line drawings to augment her forceful words.

THE COLLECTION PLATE

Poems

By Kendra Allen

78 pp. Ecco. $26.99.

Gospel traditions, erotic need, African American vernacular English and plenty of blank space on well-organized pages come together in “The Collection Plate,” Allen’s debut. Echoes of recent giants from Lucille Clifton to C. D. Wright, musical quotations from Earl Sweatshirt to Ace Hood, support a collection distinguished by winningly colloquial titles: “The invention of the Super Sadness! was an accident.” “The many times I failed to defend my mother to Our Father.” “I ain’t never baked a thing from scratch a day in my life.” Water and swimming and baptism, worship and blasphemy, describe an America in which Black lives ought to matter, but — as in the Flint, Mich., water crisis — they may not: “This American way / results in bodies of children, / a news story, and in extreme / cases, residents plead for / showmanship then evaporate.” Allen excels — like Clifton, like Robert Burns — as she shifts into and out of standard English: “this is either finna make sense / or we gone break.” Amid all the fragments, complete single poems pop out. One comprises a mini-crown of semi-sonnets; another compares, jocularly and then with righteous anger, persecuted Black Americans to “chihuahuas,” who “bark cause that’s what they supposed to do.” Also an essayist (“When You Learn the Alphabet”), Allen writes to honor her elders, among them a centenarian great-grandmother who made a triumph of simple survival: “ain’t no need to sorrow the sticky / stuff / when kids gotta learn to grieve too.”

MAROON CHOREOGRAPHY

By Fahima Ife

125 pp. Duke University. Cloth, $84.95; paper, $21.95.

Ife’s poems approach African American, West Indian and global Black experiences through the perspective of demanding theoretical frameworks. “Sinuous / and sensuous / as night is / singular,” engaged like Allen with “the sound of my grandmother’s lost voice,” Ife invokes recent thinkers for whom the inherited rules and categories of what we have learned to call civilization look like acts of Western oppression. Against those categories, with sublimity and verve, Ife’s verse raises up a defiant “queeribbeanness,” celebrating “unruly contemporary dancers” and other “black bodies” that “struggle to name our lives as sovereign, on our own terms.” Spectacularly allusive in its canny, concise segments, sometimes programmatic but more often simply learned, Ife’s “tremulous / antegrammatical” work invokes “the black morning of baldwin / across the river in another country.” James Baldwin sits beside Fred Moten, Saidiya Hartman and the mushroom expert and anthropologist Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing in the 20-page visual poem that doubles as Ife’s bibliography: the X’s and parallels in its lists of titles complement the slim, asymmetrical stanzas in the body of Ife’s book. The cruelties of the middle passages, of lynching, of white supremacy recede in the Louisiana-based Ife’s utopian imagination, where divisions among human, animal and plant life also fade away: All its central figures, no longer in danger, become “not runaway slave not fugitive,” “not seven fugitives / only trees.”

THE SURVIVAL EXPO

Poems

By Caki Wilkinson

78 pp. Persea. Paper, $15.95.

“Our trick plays worked. We wore each other’s sweat. / Our pregnant captain didn’t know it yet.” Wilkinson’s third collection opens where her second left off: with stars of girls’ sports wondering how to grow up. Southern exurbs and small towns, the people who live there and the people who flee, and two such people in particular — one the poet, the other her ***working-class*** cousin — animate her delightful, clever, sometimes wrenching, sometimes rhyming and always clear verse and prose. Wilkinson’s women fear they peaked in their teens. “Juvenilia” recalls exciting days and headstrong choices “in a borrowed car / with a guy called Nuh-Uh at the wheel.” The poet’s cousin, Hope, “runs out and won’t say where she’s headed,” her heady rebellion turned to frustration. The poet, grown, conducts a “Rite Performed With the Aid of High School Exes.” In “I Think About My Neighbors,” the Memphis resident lets herself “wonder how they voted, or will vote,” and to what effect. She may want to flee from them, or from herself: “I’d take a post hole digger / to the extra acreage where my worst thoughts graze / and build a high fence I could shoo them through.” Poems organized around famous quotations, poems using only one vowel (“we helter-skeltered. / We deleted scenes”), poems made from lists of towns’ names entertain in their own right, reminiscent of recent volumes by Sandra Beasley or Denise Duhamel. And yet the collection’s emotional depth comes from work with more conventional, even narrative, structure, fitting the impulsive teenager Wilkinson was inside the careful adult she has become.

Stephanie Burt’s most recent books are “Don’t Read Poetry: A Book About How to Read Poems” and a collection of modern translations, “After Callimachus.” She teaches English at Harvard.

ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN GALL

**Load-Date:** September 15, 2021

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[***For Pride This Weekend, You Do You***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:630D-T3G1-JBG3-62PV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 24, 2021 Thursday 19:55 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 861 words

**Byline:** Melissa Kravitz Hoeffner

**Highlight:** There are plenty of ways to celebrate, from several grass-roots marches to a 10K run with beer tastings.

**Body**

There are plenty of ways to celebrate, from several grass-roots marches to a 10K run with beer tastings.

With its corporate logos, television coverage and please-the-crowds spirit, the [*NYC Pride March*](https://www.nycpride.org/) — even in its abbreviated format this year — is not for everyone. “Real pride is not rainbow capitalism,” said Sarah Hallonquist, an entrepreneur and activist who described the term “real pride” as one “for queer people, by queer people, planned by queer activists,” and one that embraces all socio-economic groups, including ***working-class*** people. “Every single person has a voice in what’s being said.”

For Ms. Hallonquist and many others, the [*NYC Dyke March*](https://www.nycpride.org/), which takes place every year on the last Saturday in June — the day before NYC Pride’s main event — is the place to be. Since 1993, the Dyke March has united up to 10,000 participants, whether they identify as lesbians, queer or trans. “Everyone who identifies as a dyke is welcome,” said Nate Shalev, one of the dozens of organizers of the march, which goes down Fifth Avenue from Bryant Park to Washington Square Park.

“It’s a very peaceful march,” said Marlene Colburn, 68, who remembers the first event 29 years ago, when the [*Lesbian Avengers*](https://www.nycpride.org/), an activist group, rolled a bed down Fifth Avenue. Organizers of the protest have never requested a permit, preferring for volunteer marshals to link arms at crosswalks and direct traffic themselves. Many on-duty police officers who monitor the crowd are L.G.B.T.Q. To date, there has been only one known arrest.

“It’s empowering, and we’re scrappy,” said Valarie Walker, 55, a longtime volunteer. Drummers and groups like Dykes on Bikes rev up the energy, and marchers lead the way with a banner that has been repainted for nearly three decades (this year’s theme: Black Dyke Power).

“There’s a reunion quality to the Dyke March that is unparalleled,” said Liz Alpern, 35, a chef and cookbook author. “You run into every ex you’ve ever had, all your girlfriend’s exes, every gay person you’ve ever worked with, everyone. It feels like family. It’s all the people you want to see, all the people you don’t want to see, and you’re happy to see all of them.”

The Dyke March is one of many Pride events with an increasingly homegrown and personal feel. This month Andrew Solis, a dog trainer, organized two [*Pride-themed “paw-rades*](https://www.nycpride.org/),” leading packs of rescue dogs and their owners through Brooklyn in glittery, rainbow drag. Last weekend, [*Woldy Kusina*](https://www.nycpride.org/), a chef, hosted a multicultural queer brunch. And a new organization, [*Beers with Queers*](https://www.nycpride.org/), is planning a 10K run this weekend, where along the way, participants will taste Pride-themed craft beers at various Queens breweries. Countless house parties, barbecues and meet-ups at [*Jacob Riis Park*](https://www.nycpride.org/) in Queens have taken place throughout June. There’s a niche Pride gathering for everyone, it seems.

[*Dyke Beer*](https://www.nycpride.org/), which produces both craft beer and events that aim to raise awareness of a[*dwindling roster of lesbian bars and other public gathering spots*](https://www.nycpride.org/), has put together several [*sold-out events*](https://www.nycpride.org/) this month. “Pride to me feels like Christmas, but bigger,” said Loretta Chung, who started the company last year with Ms. Hallonquist.

Last weekend Dyke Beer organized a “lost lesbian-bar” walking tour in the West Village, during which over 40 guests visited the sites of former watering holes for lesbians that have become pizzerias, trendy restaurants and vacant storefronts. In the tradition of the Dyke March, which Mx. Chung, who identifies as nonbinary, regularly attends, Dyke Beer’s events mission is to bring lesbians out into the streets to stake their claim in modern society while honoring their history. “I think it’s awesome to see a flood of queer women taking over huge blocks in New York City,” Mx. Chung said of the march. “With Dyke Beer, what we’re doing is creating space. We’re a community.”

Community and history are at the center of another event, the Queer Liberation March, which was organized by the group [*Reclaim Pride Coalition*](https://www.nycpride.org/) two years ago, billing itself as an attempt to give the march back to the people, in the spirit of the [*original event in 1970*](https://www.nycpride.org/). Back then, participants could risk losing their jobs, in stark contrast to today, when many executives and their workers are encouraged to participate, often with corporate branding. “I don’t need the mainstream, or a bank, to validate me as a queer person,” said Blake Pruitt, one of Reclaim’s organizers. On Sunday, the Queer Liberation March will follow the route of the Dyke March the day before, from Bryant Park to Washington Square Park. (Covid vaccines will be offered at the start and finish of both marches.)

“When people ask when Pride is, I’m like, what do you mean?” Mr. Pruitt said. “Pride is an opportunity to gather and be with community and bring attention to the issues still facing the queer community,” he continued. “It’s real, it’s present.”

PHOTOS: Top, Cubbyhole in Manhattan’s West Village during an event last week to raise awareness about the plight of lesbian bars. Dyke Beer, above left, organizes L.G.B.T.Q. events like the “lost lesbian bars” tour, above right. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA NAOMI LEWKOWICZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 24, 2021

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[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Patrick Deneen; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65FB-4451-DXY4-X00V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 13, 2022 Friday 09:16 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 15367 words

**Highlight:** A conversation with the political theorist Patrick Deneen.

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Patrick Deneen. 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.”

[MUSIC]

There is a howling sense of loss and fear animating the modern right, a belief that progressives won the culture war, took over American institutions, and are intent on nothing less than driving their enemies into the sea. From the progressive side, this mentality can be a little baffling. Have Democrats really won that much? And if so, why does so much feel so frustrating? Why can’t Joe Biden pass a climate bill, or a public option, or universal pre-K, or voting rights reform? I used to call this the Iron Law of Opposition. The other side always looks more ruthless, organized and effective to their opponents than they do to themselves. But politics runs on feeling much more than on fact, so whether this perspective on American politics is true, you cannot understand the views, the rhetoric, the tactics, the leadership of the rising populist right without first trying to inhabit the way they see politics over the past few decades.

So that’s what we’re going to do today. But I want to take a moment to set up this argument, because this conversation, and some of the very real surprises it contains, is going to make much more sense with a little more context. My guest today is Patrick Deneen. He’s a professor of political science at the University of Notre Dame. He’s author of the book “Why Liberalism Failed,” and co-author of the Substack “The Post Liberal Order.” And Deneen is fascinating to me, because he has undergone this profound radicalization just in the time I’ve known him. “Why Liberalism Failed” came out in 2018, and received a very respectful hearing among liberals who were grappling with some of the same questions and problems that he was. Barack Obama even promoted it on his “Books I’m Reading” list.

But since then, Deneen has moved towards embracing something more like total political war, counseling conservatives to abandon niceties like pluralism, to use the power of the state to crush their enemies, and to treat this moment at every level as a civilizational struggle. In an essay called “Abandoning Defensive Crouch Conservatism,” Deneen describes the world he sees. Quote, “the national trajectory over the past 75 years has been one of a continuous movement to ever more extreme forms of liberalism.” And that, if you’re liberal, may sound good to you, but he doesn’t think so. He writes, “liberalism’s internal logic leads inevitably to the evisceration of all institutions that were originally responsible for fostering human virtue, family, ennobling friendship, community, university, polity, church.” In another essay, he writes, “liberalism offered to humanity a false illusion of the blessings of liberty at the price of social solidity. It turns out that this promise was yet another tactic employed by an oligarchic order to strip away anything of value from the weak.”

And as that quote suggests, Deneen doesn’t see the problems of modern America as an accident. He sees it as malice. Take a speech at the 2021 National Conservatism Conference. In it, he attacks America’s ruling elites, “who have mutually benefited from the decimation of the ***working class*** of all races in this country, and of all geographic regions of this country. The full flowering of the reality of this ideology reveals it to be an ideology of rapine and plunder, the stripping of the wealth from a ship that they are sinking, while busily stocking the lifeboats until the last moment, when they will be able to cut loose.” If you see your enemies like that, if you see them as that sinister, but also as always winning, as having an almost unbroken record of success, well then, of course, the stakes are high. Of course, you would do almost anything to defeat them. But for all the force of Deneen’s rhetoric, for his fury at people like — I mean, I guess me, who he believes have destroyed the country he loves — I often find it hard to figure out what he’s actually saying should be done, what he would do or counsel others to do with the power he wants the right to win and wield so ruthlessly.

And so I asked him on the show to tell me. One quick note — we taped this episode before the Alito opinion overturning Roe leaked, so just keep that in mind. As always, my email for guest suggestions, things I should read, or watch of hear, feedback is [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Patrick Deneen, welcome to the show.

PATRICK DENEEN: Thanks for having me back, Ezra.

EZRA KLEIN: So you and I, I think, are going to have some pretty real disagreements here. And so I thought it’d be good to begin with some goals for the conversation. So I want to better understand how the world looks and feels to you, because when I read the way you describe it, it’s not always how I recognize it. And I want to get a more specific understanding of what you do with power. And I want to try to make my positions a little more real to you, because I don’t always recognize myself in how you see my side of the debate.

But I also want to ask the same of you, if there are some goals you have for the conversation.

PATRICK DENEEN: Sure, well, in some ways, I wonder whether we see a lot of the same things and understand them differently, or if we really just see fundamentally different things. So that’s one of my goals.

EZRA KLEIN: Yeah, I think that’s a very good framing question. So then let’s begin here. What is defensive crouch conservatism?

PATRICK DENEEN: So this is an adaptation of a phrase that I first encountered, actually, in a blog post by Mark Tushnet, the law professor at Harvard University who condemned and called for an end of defensive crouch liberalism, or progressivism, and accused the progressives, especially in the Court, of seeking too little, and of achieving too little of the ends and purposes of the progressive movement.

And this is one area where as a conservative, I see the world in completely opposite ways, in which progressives have achieved a lot of the ends that they’ve set for themselves. The goals keep pushed further, but their goals seem to be achieved through such institutions as the Court in recent years, whereas the goals that at least once were stated as desires, or positions that were desirable to conservatives, have been increasingly abandoned in the face of that advance.

And so I wrote a piece for a Substack that I write for called “Post Liberal Order,” in which I called for the end of defensive crouch conservatism — in other words, not merely retreating to the next most defensible place, but rather seeking to advance to a goal, a place, a space, that represented more of an advance than a place of defense.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to hold on the Rashomon nature of victory here for a minute, because as you say, you took the inspiration of that from a law professor who believes that liberals, particularly in judicial issues, have gotten nowhere, and have completely given up on their long term goals, and are in a pure defensive crouch. So what do you think we’re not seeing about you — when you write that since the Reagan years, conservatives have consistently lost and lost overwhelmingly to progressive forces, tell me what you’ve lost.

What is the bill of what progressives have won?

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, I mean, I guess we could look at a couple of areas. So one would certainly be that set of issues that are related to family and sexuality. And so you know, a generation, or two generations ago, the burning issues were whether divorce should be either legalized or liberalized — divorce laws. Other burning issues was premarital sex and whether that was or should be normalized. Things like gay marriage weren’t on the horizon at that point.

But they were issues, often related to sexuality, as related to especially heterosexuals. We’re now in a place where most of those issues aren’t even debates. You would more or less regard those as settled. And indeed, we’re at the point now where what was once a hotly debated topic just a decade ago — right, or less, so when Obama ran in his first term, he had to — sort of publicly felt that he had to publicly declare that he was not in favor of gay marriage.

That position was relatively briefly held, whether genuinely held or not, but it was deemed to be politically expedient at the time. And I think people on both the Left and Right regard that issue as largely settled today. So where once there was a kind of sense that we’re defending traditional institutions relating to human sexuality, human marriage, the norms of marriage, the governing customs that shaped and governed human sexual relationships, we’re in a completely different place today in that regard.

And so today, the battles tend to be fought more along the lines of, how far should the kind of now dominant, much more liberalized understanding of these kinds of issues, how far should these extend into the very institutions that once or even today hold traditional views of these relationships, and in particular, church and church affiliated institutions.

And so we’ve gone from a world in which you once had — to use the Reagan era — you once had claims about a moral majority, to an era in which now many of the battles that take place are between those who seek to advance a progressive agenda and those who are trying to create a kind of shield of religious liberty behind which their institutions, to the extent that they have any health in them, and vitality, their institutions can remain in some ways their own.

That’s a very different place that we’ve traveled from the 1980s, and 40 years later through today.

EZRA KLEIN: What’s interesting about that account to me is that I would probably agree that issues of human sexuality are almost unique in the political environment for how much change has been in 30 years, let’s call it. But when you write about the political atmosphere, you write very broadly, right? You didn’t say in that sentence I quoted, the conservatives have lost on issues of human sexuality. You say they’ve lost.

I mean, Mark Tushnet, in his piece, is not primarily talking about issues of human sexuality. He looks around and thinks we’ve lost, and he’s talking about things like campaign finance funding and reform. Obviously, where the court seems to be going on abortion is to deliberalize it. Across a broad range of questions of business regulation, of universal insurance, of how taxes and tax increases are understood in the electorate — that to progressives, there’s no narrative of overwhelming victory here.

And in fact, there’s a deep feeling of continuous disappointment and unfulfilled expectation. Do you think you might be over-reading one particular area as a generalizable fact about politics?

PATRICK DENEEN: I actually think that it’s precisely in many of the — what you regard as the losses, or the lack of advances, for the progressive cause, that has actually led to something of a kind of realignment that we’re seeing in our politics today. And that is to say, the people who have been, I would gather — I would guess, I would stipulate — who have been most negatively affected by the supposed triumphs of conservatives, so-called, which I would call — which I think we would agree, probably we would call them neoliberals, economic libertarians.

That these triumphs have fallen particularly hard on the working classes, the lower classes, regardless of race in the United States, and has led to not only, of course, the rise of — on the one hand, a pushback against some of the woke aspects on the more social conservative side, but have also led on the Right to an internal battle in which the progressive side of the Republican Party is seeking to overthrow, overturn, limit, if not outright banish, the more economically libertarian figures, and share many of the same concerns that you just expressed about the lack of success among — in the progressive movement — on many of those issues.

EZRA KLEIN: So one thing you say in this piece is that conservatives, in your view, have spent several decades denying that objective truth had any claim in the political order. What is objective truth?

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, I guess you know, we might agree on some things as being objective truth, that human beings need — seem to require certain kinds of conditions to flourish. If we want proof about this nature of human reality, we might turn to the occasional social science study that demonstrates that when human beings have very limited sphere of friendships and relationships, they tend to be unhappy. The more they feel isolated, the more various kinds of pathologies arise.

Obviously, the less economic support they have, the provisions that are material and needed for life, the more likely they are to develop certain kinds of both health as well as mental pathologies. These, both economic and relational aspects, have been under continual assault, from both the Left and the Right, I would argue. And that was the argument of my last book, “Why Liberalism Failed,” that both the Left and the Right, in their various liberal guises, have advanced an economic program and a social program that has particularly affected in a negative way those of less means and less education in our country.

And of course, here, reality again — what is truth? Reality again intrudes in the form of deaths of despair, suicides or overdoses, all kinds, again, of both health and mental pathologies that we see in the country today. And here, I would say that this is one area where we might disagree on the causes, but I think we would probably recognize in the sort of feedback from the world that we recognize, and that we can objectively sort of study, that we would say this is a reflection of something that’s true about the human condition.

EZRA KLEIN: But there’s a shift in what you said in that answer that I want to pick out a little bit here, because what you wrote is that conservatives in this case — but as you say, also liberals — deny objective truth. And you say the objective truth is that human beings need some conditions to flourish, that friendship is good, that loneliness is bad, that poverty is destructive. I don’t know anybody, conservative or liberal, who denies any of that.

Now, there’s a lot of disagreement, difficulty, disappointment in how to combat some of this. And we can come back and talk about what gets called depths of despair, which I think is a very complicated set of issues. But one thing I see sometimes in your writing is a tendency to make a very strong claim about how everybody else on the other side, the liberal order, has given up on caring about people, has given up on believing in fundamental institutions, when my experience of them is that they actually believe in many of the same things that you say you believe in.

But for a lot of reasons that are — I’m sure we will end up talking about — these things are harder to control or build through government than one might expect. Now, maybe you could say they failed and, they should be replaced by people who have your policies. But it’s a really different claim to say they don’t believe in these things, from — you think that, say, trade policy was poorly constructed, and that the promised gains didn’t materialize.

Like, I don’t believe in friendship and I was wrong about trade policy are very, very different views of the opposition.

PATRICK DENEEN: So I think one area where maybe you would find that what seem like strong claims on my part have some foundation is that all of these ways in which what I just described as sort of objectively measurable forms of reality that relate to the truth of the human being, and ways in which our society is not well founded and well formed in such ways to support those necessary goods of life, I would place, and conservatives would place, the greatest stress, the sort of most foundational stress on the health of the family.

That, in some ways, the health of all of the rest of these aspects of life, whether it’s relational, whether it’s economic, whether it’s developing the kind of virtues and goods of human life, that those — in some ways, they’re not guaranteed within the family form and the family structure. But in a sense, it’s the necessary, if not sufficient condition. In almost all cases, it’s the necessary condition.

And here, I think I would primarily fault what I see as not just a kind of benign neglect or failed policies, but an actual hostility that is increasingly articulated and become a kind of central tenet in the progressive movement, that regards family with a growing and palpable sense of suspicion, that the family is a structure of inequality, of hierarchy that favors certain types of relationships, that is a structure of patriarchy and injustice.

And look, I’ve been teaching in universities long enough to know that this is a widespread sentiment, especially in the intellectual classes. And it filters down in lots of ways, through journalism, and all the manifold ways that the intellectual class sort of gets the message out. Now, I don’t think, for that matter, that conservatives have done a especially good job of articulating not just a support of family values, but articulating the kinds of both political and social and economic policies that would be more supportive of family.

But I do think that is one area where if there is going to be a successor to the sort of Reagan era conservatism, this is going to be — and really is becoming a central area focus among contemporary, new conservatives.

EZRA KLEIN: I’d like you to substantiate that a little bit more than you did there, because I see it, as somebody who is progressive, pretty differently. So on the one hand, I don’t really know that many people — I’m not actually sure I know any — who are abstractly suspicious or hostile to the idea of the family. Everybody I know is tangled up in complex family, loving, critical, difficult, beautiful family relationships.

If I look at our last two presidents, Barack Obama is a pretty profound family man. Donald Trump, who I think more represents this form of populist conservatism to many in it, very much is not. Now, I don’t think you’re wrong to say — and I’m sure it’s somewhat true in academia — that there are critiques of the family, because of course, the family is a site of some amount of suffering, of difficulty, of abuse, of sexual abuse, of people being hurt in many ways that they have to carry with them through their lives.

And there are questions about what to do with that. But I don’t really think of progressivism, or for that matter conservatism, either — but I’ll defend progressivism here — as having an abstract anti-family agenda. In fact, in my experience, in the time I’ve been covering politics, there’s just a constant, endless stream of discussions about what policies can we pass that will make it easier for families to go about their business — child tax credits. If you look at Build Back Better, universal pre-K.

If you look at — you know, go back to the Obama administration, there was tons of these in his budget. You know, how do you deal with the transportation questions for parents who need to work a job? It can go on and on like this. And again, I’m open to the idea that many policies failed, or policies that should have been passed weren’t. I think there have been destructive effects on family. But I think there’s something strange here. I don’t see the hostility you see.

So I’d like to hear you substantiate the hostility better, not the fact that there are problems in families, but the idea that you’re really facing a movement that doesn’t believe in families.

PATRICK DENEEN: Yeah, hostility — again, I’ll just invoke the university world for a moment. But one sees, for example, efforts in the legal world, increasingly, to throw a kind of spotlight of suspicion on the traditional family form, you could say.

So some of these are, for example, taking on the idea that parents should be seen as in some ways the default guides of their children, efforts that are being undertaken in some legal theories that are attempting to redefine the role of and relationship of parents to children as one of a kind of — in which parents are kind of trustees that are understood to work on behalf of the values of the state or the political order, and that the relationship of parent to child is understood in the light of a kind of deputizing of parents in that role.

So that, what it does, is it creates a situation in which if it’s deemed for whatever political reasons that the parents are not working on behalf of the values of the state, that the children are no longer in some sense — sort of should be understood as the wards of the parents, primarily. In other words, the stress is given to the role of, and the relationship, of the political order in the next generation.

EZRA KLEIN: Can you be specific here? Is there a law that has been passed like this, or is it —

PATRICK DENEEN: No, this is — no, this is development, basically, in law reviews, where a lot of this begins. So it’s developments in the legal world, theoretical developments in the legal world, as is the case in many — this is how arguments about gay marriage really get their start. They begin by appearing in the law journals. They get — you put up a flag, you see how it flies. I’m not predicting, necessarily, these are going to become outright law, but these are efforts of construction by law professors at elite universities.

And you’re seeing it as well in arguments about home schooling, and beginning to move in the direction of the German state and its banning of home schooling. So — just a kind of effort to construct, reconstruct the understanding of the family as basically working for and on behalf of the values of the state, and the presumption being a largely progressive state. Now, you may regard that — this is crazy talk. And you know, where is the proof of this?

But this is precisely the kind of intellectual development that begins at the level, very high levels, very theoretical levels, very intellectual levels, but sifts its way and works its way down into journalism and legal cases. And I think this is a major sort of next step, or next development, arising from the very transformations about family and sexuality that we began by talking about.

EZRA KLEIN: I don’t regard it as crazy talk. But I do regard it as a bit of a two step. And the way I regard it that way is this, that I’ve read — I read a lot of your work for this. I spent a lot of time in Patrick Deneen’s head in the past couple of weeks.

PATRICK DENEEN: I’m really sorry about that.

EZRA KLEIN: It was a pleasure in many ways, and a little unnerving in others, but that’s how it always is. You are describing — you are mounting an assault on politics as it exists. You do not write about, well, I think there is this one marginal legal theory movement that I think should be stopped. Depending on how it actually is, it’s hard for me to know from how you describe it, maybe I’d even agree.

But I want to steel man the position — you could tell me if this is wrong. I want to steel man the position I think you actually hold, because what I think you’re saying in a lot of your work, the way I read it, is that progressivism, liberalism has actually done tangible things, not in law review articles, but in law, that matter here. And I’ll name two. As you mentioned earlier, there was a Supreme Court decision applying a constitutionality to same sex marriage, making it sacrosanct under our law.

I view that as a pro-family measure, but I think you don’t. And then there is, of course, over the past however many decades, been the rise of no fault divorce laws, which allow people to dissolve family structures. Which, I think, if I read you correctly, you have some real concerns about. But I’d like to use those as an example here. I mean, is this what you are talking about? Is this what you’re saying is the hostility to the objective need for a strong family, that we have made it easier to get divorced and made it possible for same sex couples to have a family and raise children together?

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, I would say those are two very visible examples of forms in which a general skepticism, slash maybe hostility, but certainly a general effort to displace the norm of the family for the sovereignty of the individual, and the sovereignty of individual choice. So you go from a relationship that’s regarded as sacrosanct, that’s blessed not only by the state but by the institutions that believe themselves to be carrying on the commands of divinity of God.

And you turn it into a contract of consenting adults. The family is, of course, it’s the last of the really hard institutions for the liberal order. The fundamental premise of liberalism is that we are free and equal human beings, right, that we are self sovereigns, creators of our own destiny. But of course, every human life begins without choice. It begins without me choosing my parents, and without parents choosing their children. It’s a kind of existing contradiction to this ideal of the liberal human being.

And so in some ways, what you’re discerning in my writings isn’t just, oh, I’m looking at this policy or that policy. What’s the general trend and trajectory of all of these things we’ve been talking about, altogether? And let’s add into this what we could see as the burgeoning technologies, the technologies that already exist — right, contraception, abortion, the ability to abort a child.

But also the technologies of reproduction, ones that perhaps promise or suggest the possibility of creating human life outside of the womb, outside altogether of the need of individual human beings to be even knowledgeable about the creation of new life so that we can begin to move to the point where we can select the characteristics of the children that we might wish to have.

These are all part of a general trajectory that I think is a reflection of the belief that the family is the last frontier that has to be overcome for us to become the vision of human beings that lies at the heart of the liberal anthropology, of the belief of what human beings genuinely are.

EZRA KLEIN: Overcome is a word I wouldn’t use, but I do understand why altered would be relevant here. But this is a place where I do want to ask you to be specific. So I’m a child of a divorced home. My parents split up when I was 12. I think something you know as a child of a divorced home is that your parents splitting up does not end they’re bonds to you, doesn’t even end their bonds to each other.

Once chosen at any level, for the most part, in one way or another, these relationships have to maintain some kind of cable between them forever. But my parents made each other unhappy, not through anything horrible. It made us unhappy, as children in that household. Should they have not been allowed to get divorced?

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, I think we live in a world in which that argument conforms to exactly the liberal presuppositions that I was just saying inform so much of the background assumptions that we make in the world.

EZRA KLEIN: But this is a policy question, not just an argument.

PATRICK DENEEN: It is, but in other words, when you frame it — well, should unhappy people stay in an unhappy marriage. In terms of the assumptions that underlie that question, well, you know, who would want someone to be unhappy? If you change the frame of that question in certain ways — so in the first instance, we know, at least social science tells us, and I’m not speaking about you personally. I’m just talking about the aggregate — that children of divorced households do worse by a whole range of measures.

Economically, as a result of all of the upheaval that often puts children through, especially young children, but also psychological, mental issues that arise — in other words, that it seems to be the case, if we are going to give some credence to these measures, that divorce actually makes children, and the children that elicit from marriage, it makes children unhappier, and that civilization has understood that marriage, relationships between human beings, and maybe marriage above all, is a relationship that is difficult, it’s trying.

And it needs external supports. And one way you support that externally is to make the default that it’s difficult to exit that relationship, so that you — in some ways, you’re required to work on the relationship rather than exit the relationship. That might seem like an idealized form or way of putting it, but it builds on an older insight by the economist Albert Hirschman from his book, “Exit, Loyalty, and Voice.”

What Hirschman proposed — he was looking at this in economic terms — and what Hirschman proposed was that there are sort of two responses to a situation in which we might be unhappy. There is the option of exiting that situation. But there’s another way in which we can relate to the condition of unhappiness, which is through voice, which is through the effort to work through, which is to call for reform.

And I think — really, the question we’re faced with is, what is the default when it comes to something like marriage? And here, the sort of social norms, and even social laws will play a big role. What is the default when it comes to this relationship that’s so key and critical in the raising — propagation, and raising of the next generation? And here’s where I would say, I would like that default to be one in which encourages loyalty and voice, in which the easier route of exit is more difficult.

I’m not saying it has to be impossible, but it’s more difficult, and it’s more difficult for the sake of the children that elicit from that marriage, because even children who are in a marriage — an intact marriage of a mother and a father who might be unhappy tend to do better in life. I’m not saying it’s true always and everywhere, but I’m talking about defaults here.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, the social science on that, I do want to note, is very sensitive to what you control for, in terms of the divorce. We don’t tend to do random, experimental trials, of getting some people divorced and some people not. And so these things very much have to do with what you control for. But I don’t necessarily think it’s implausible that if you could do that, you would find that kids who are in a family that stays married relatively happily will do better than kids who aren’t. I think that would be intuitive.

I’ll say two things, and then get your answer, and then move on from this topic. One is that the sort of movement there, to this idea of voice — I mean, I’m sure you know, Patrick, people get divorced. Every family I know who’s gotten divorced, there’s a lot of voice before that. In the very few examples I know of when there is simply a falling of the curtain, unexpectedly and instantly, it’s usually due to a rupture, like an affair or abuse.

Divorce is horrible. People go through it — not quickly. And it’s not easy, particularly with the children. Nothing about it is easy. It’s unbelievably trying on everybody involved. So I can imagine ways you can make it easier for people to work on things. Andrew Yang proposed in 2020 that marriage counseling should be fully subsidized. I agree with that. I think it’s actually a great idea. But I don’t really know what it is you are saying here.

This is what I mean by, I want to understand what you are proposing you would do if you had the power to do it. Would you make no fault divorce not an option? Would you say that the state is going to have marriage counseling, and you’ve got to go through that for a year? You’ve accused sort of liberals of being hostile to marriage. You said the way, or at least one way, in which they’re hostile to marriage is that divorce has become too easy.

And OK, if the post liberals had their chance, or when they look around the world at other regimes — because there are many other regimes — they think what they would do is?

PATRICK DENEEN: Oh, well, I’m actually completely in agreement. I wasn’t aware of that proposal by Andrew Yang. I think it’s a great one. In fact, not only should it be subsidized, but you just suggested a policy I think would be perfectly legitimate, which is that marriage counseling would have to be undertaken for a year, particularly where there are children involved. That’s exactly the kind of thing where it makes exit just not necessarily the most immediate option. Let voice have its turn and its play.

And let the public order support the expression of voice. And that’s one way that the public order would support the exercise of voice. Let’s have some form of counseling for a period of time. One of the interesting studies that I’m always fascinated by is the measures of happiness and unhappiness in marriage. And over the course of a marriage, what studies consistently show is that people are happiest at the beginning of the marriage and into the later part of their marriage.

The time of the greatest stress and unhappiness is, not uncoincidentally, the time when you have children, and especially young children. And having now just gotten to the point where I’m in an empty nest, as they say, I’m very familiar with this phenomenon.

EZRA KLEIN: I got a three-year-old and a 6-month-old.

PATRICK DENEEN: Yeah, so you know what I’m talking about.

EZRA KLEIN: I love my wife. I’m not suggesting we’re having problems, but it’s a lot of stress.

PATRICK DENEEN: It’s a lot of stress. And now, looking back at it from the other side, I recognize just how much stress we were experiencing compared to where we are now. So I think part of the wisdom, I would say, of a civilization that values and honors the long marriage — and I’m not talking law and policy now. I’m talking the sort of general, let’s say, tenor of a civilization, that a long marriage is celebrated.

It’s something to aspire to, the same way you want to have the most followers on Twitter today, or the most followed Instagram — whatever the thing is that people think is the biggest deal. A good civilization, in my view, would be one that honors and celebrates the long marriage, in which the parents become grandparents, and even great grandparents, and they become the sort of senior elders of the family. And they’re celebrated by that, not just by their own family, but by the broader community as a whole.

And I think that backdrop recognizes that marriages wax and wane and happiness. I’m not saying there aren’t marriages that are just deeply, profoundly broken and unhappy, but that maybe in a context in which the default is we celebrate and honor and encourage a marriage of longevity and multigenerational relationships is one in which more and more people would come to realize that one of the goals is to reach the other side, where happiness will bloom in a new and different way, even if you go through those times of trial, difficulty and even, yes, unhappiness.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: What is striking to me about our conversation here is — I don’t know. I want to see if you’ll agree with this. When we last spoke, you had written “Why Liberalism Failed.” And that was a book that has had an influence on me. I’ve thought about it a lot since. And it had an influence on a lot of people. Barack Obama, President Obama, put it on his end of the year reading list that year.

So it did not exactly find a unwilling audience to hear what I take is your core critique, which is that liberalism — using it here as the broad push for individualism, not just the left of the American political spectrum — has created a society of too much choice, too little tradition, and too weak institutions, in a way that has left many people behind. And since then, where it seems to me there’s a lot of possibilities for you to work with people, for there to be some ideas around this — in fact, every time I bring up an idea you’re, like, yeah that’s a good one.

Andrew Yang, that’s a liberal who has a good idea.

Your writing about liberals, Patrick, has gotten incredibly slashing. It has become very much that you are an embattled minority going to war against a majority that hates and oppresses you. And I mean, I can read you a bunch of quotes here. I’ve got them if you’d like them. But there’s a — I actually want to ask you about this directly. There’s a gentleness to your tone as we talk, a desire to look for coalition, an alliance, that strikes me as very true to a lot of the things you believe.

And then there’s, at the same time, in the Patrick I read now, a belief that we’re in this almost apocalyptic struggle, that everything that is good is being destroyed by people who intend to destroy it, watch the common man flail, and take the riches for themselves. And I mean, I can actually read you a quote of yours just like that. And I’m having trouble, because I want to understand that critique of yours, but I’m not eliciting it in this.

And so do you feel there’s a difference between you in this conversation, and you sometimes in the Substack, and some of the pieces you’ve been writing. And if so, why?

PATRICK DENEEN: I don’t recognize it. Maybe it’s just in interacting, one seeks to try to find some degree of overlap. You know, in many ways —

EZRA KLEIN: Can I read you a quote?

PATRICK DENEEN: Yeah, sure.

EZRA KLEIN: “The managerial elite came to see itself as opposed to everything the ***working class*** embodied. Its representatives denounce deplorables who cling to their guns and Bibles, backward looking, loyal to declining places and benighted, they died deaths of despair that were their own fault.” So —

PATRICK DENEEN: And that’s not — OK, seems right to me.

EZRA KLEIN: OK, so that’s great. So then this gives us something specific to sort of unpack here. So one thing in terms of the people, like, say, Obama here, who you quote when you say cling to their guns and bibles. I’m saying here that the people you’re describing, myself included, who I think is probably part of the managerial elite — I managed a publication for many years, I’m part of the laptop class.

PATRICK DENEEN: I probably am too, I’ll have to admit.

EZRA KLEIN: Right — that we have this really vicious view of people dying depths of despair that were their own fault. Right, that’s what you write. But let me read you what Barack Obama says before the part of that that you quote. He says, “you go into some of these small towns in Pennsylvania. And like a lot of small towns in the Midwest, the jobs have been gone now for 25 years, and nothing replaced them. And they fell through the Clinton administration, and the Bush administration.

And each successive administration has said that somehow, these communities are going to regenerate. And they have not.” And so Obama I think very much regrets saying cling to their guns and Bibles. But he explicitly, explicitly — the whole point of that quote is that it is not their fault that people are angry and justifiably so because they have been failed for decades by policy. And so when we talk here, I think we might even agree on some of the policies, and could come to an agreement on them.

But what you want to say, and what you do say, is that people, like, from this class, believe it’s all their fault and they should be left to their despair. And not only is that, I think, not true, but it also really narrows the space for alliances to work on things that could be a value here. That’s the kind of difference that I’m trying to get at.

PATRICK DENEEN: So in part, I think some of what you’re hearing from me is — clearly, I’m a critic of some part of your tribe, and I assume the tribe of people who are going to be listening to this, which are people on the progressive side, who have, I think, often condemned, or been prone to condemn the backward thinking people who live in flyover country, who by their own decision live in flyover country, who could through you know, their own hard work, had they applied themselves, could have gotten out of those backward towns and made something of themselves in the modern economy.

President Obama might have lamented this condition, but I don’t necessarily think he was — his presidency was a model of commitment to making the kinds of policy or jawboning the kinds of encouragement of what our country would need to do to make these places bountiful and viable places for people to live, and for, in particular, those who are not part of the managerial class to thrive.

But I — also, what I want to stress is I hold the same set of critiques toward people who arguably, I guess, are in my tribe, although I don’t even know if I identify in the tribe of conservatives — who hold the same view. A quote that I often juxtapose to that kind of an observation comes from Kevin Williamson, from an essay that he wrote, in which he was quite explicit in condemning the sort of backward, rural, supposed Springsteen hero who simply should just get a U-Haul and pull himself up by his bootstraps, and go somewhere where he can be productive.

And this kind of sentiment is bipartisan, of a certain part, of both of our political parties today. The managerial elite is not left or right. In some ways, it’s a kind of uniparty that has notionally split up the left and right, but which has both advanced policies that I think have been — as well as just kind of priorities — that have been very damaging to the ordinary working person in this country.

EZRA KLEIN: And to signpost this, so you understand what I’m trying to do here too, there’s two sides of that that I’m trying to pull apart. One is your view of at least how the managerial elite think about what they’re doing. I think I just read you a quote, from a quote you used, that directly contradicts the way you described, say, Obama, in this case, as understanding what is happening in a lot of these Midwestern communities.

He is saying that they were failed, and you are saying that he said they are failures. And those things are just not the same. Now, you say then, which I think is a very fair critique, it’s not fully what I agree with, because I have different policy views, but I would at least agree partially, that the Obama administration, certainly in your view, was not a model of trying to address the underlying weaknesses, failures, policy regimes, that have led to a fair amount of economic and social devastation in poor communities.

So that’s why on the other side of this, I’m trying to elicit what it is you want to do. I mean, we talked about this question of divorce, and I don’t think I’m still all that clear about where that ends up. But tell me your positive agenda. If there’s been so much failure among the elites of both parties, and I think that’s completely reasonable — you know, if you had 72 votes in the Senate and the presidency, what would you be passing? What would you do that they all have not?

PATRICK DENEEN: In certain respects, it won’t shock you, Ezra, probably to hear that I’m a former man of the Left, who certainly isn’t comfortable in today’s Left, but doesn’t feel extremely comfortable in today’s Right, either. In a lot of ways, what I would say is that — what I would propose are things that were once recognizably, probably, at the heart, formerly, of the Democratic Party, the Democratic Party I grew up in.

I’m an Irish-Catholic guy. My grandmother had a picture of the Pope and John F. Kennedy up on her kitchen wall. And that’s the kind of world I grew up in, but that party doesn’t seem recognizable to me anymore. And if it seems that party is recognizable to you, maybe we’re just not seeing the same thing. So that answers part of the question that I began with.

But here’s what I would propose. So conservatism arose — and you know this story, and maybe your listeners know this story, conservatism arose in the ’60s, ’70s, as a kind of effort to put together three parts of the American electorate — what’s often described as fusionism, the sort of economic libertarians, social conservatives, Christians — Catholics, particularly — and foreign policy hawks who were anti-Soviet, anti-communist. Those are the three legs of the stool.

And I think the election of Donald Trump, and the wheres he was able to put together — in discovering where the electorate, in this case, the Republican electorate, maybe not even Republican electorate, where a new majority could be born. And it turns out that it wasn’t the old fusion, it’s a new fusion, but it’s also an old fusion in a sense that it’s the old fusion of something of the old Democratic party.

And the first instance, it’s economically — it’s not libertarian. It seeks to promote, especially, an idea of the economy and markets that serve ordinary people. I could broadly call that the common good, but especially make it possible for people to flourish even if they’re not among the top 20 percent earners of America. And that’s clearly the case today, that the people who are in the bottom certainly 50 percent just simply are not flourishing. And that’s not a good civilization. That’s not a good country.

What would this look like in terms of policy? It would mean pro-worker policies. And it would mean the encouragement, through government policy, of domestic production. It would be to move the values of our economy, and more broadly our society, toward production and not consumption. It would become fiercely anti-monopolistic, which I think that’s something we might agree upon.

And yes, it would have to address issues of immigration. That seems to be especially an issue that negatively affects those who are at the lower end of the economic scale. And we can debate over that. But I think it’s not unreasonable to suspect that immigration is more beneficial to the wealthy than to the ***working class***. It would mean to go back to what we’ve been talking about, social policies that don’t merely just tolerate the family, or say a family is good if that’s what you want, but actually encourage and support family.

And that can and should, I would argue, take the form of monetary support, especially for parents of children — remove some of the stress that we were talking about earlier. And this would mean not merely child tax credits or even payments so that a parent can pay for child care outside of the home, but giving parents, young parents, parents of small children, the option for one or both parents to stay home through direct payments, direct transfers from the federal government to families of children, so that if a parent wants to stay home with children and raise those children, it’s possible for them to do that.

So this would be, in my view, social policies that would give priority, would switch the default in some ways, to one in which we publicly praise and support the ideal of the family. And third, a revamped fusion would adopt a foreign policy that decreases the U.S. efforts, in some ways, to advance a kind of imperial liberalism in the world, that recognizes that we live in a multipolar world, and that abandons the foreign policy of which we have to have boots on the ground everywhere and at all times.

And I think those three changes, if you will, or different stresses in what was once the fusionism of the Right, resemble what the old Democratic Party used to be. But for whatever interesting set of reasons, and ones we could discuss, it seems to me that those have gravitated today from the Left to the Right.

EZRA KLEIN: What’s funny about that to me is that they seem to me to resemble what the current Democratic Party is. I mean, let me go through this, like, piece by piece. Immigration, you and I disagree on the empirics of that. I don’t think — I think the evidence is terrible that it’s bad for low wage workers on average. And I think the evidence is there that it’s actually good for them. And there would be a lot of ways to construct it so be even better. But let’s agree that we are going to disagree on immigration.

On the other pieces, though, this sounds frankly a lot like Joe Biden, or at least directionally like Joe Biden is. So on antitrust, Biden has brought in the absolute most aggressive antitrust team we have seen in years. You have Lina Khan at F.T.C. You have Tim Wu at the National Economics Council. Every key member of the new, much more aggressive antitrust movement, almost, is in the administration.

On the issue of children, the Biden administration passed this very big child tax credit. I know you said you don’t just want a tax credit, but the child tax credit is $3,000 or $3,600 per kid, depending on how old the kid is, up to certain income limits and so on. But that is a step in the direction, certainly, of paying parents for having children. And one could go further, but that’s further than we have gone.

In terms of foreign policy, Joe Biden’s foreign policy isn’t mine, but the very big foreign policy thing he’s done with incredible levels of public criticism, and I think a lot of it unmerited — although some of it merited — is withdraw Americans from Afghanistan, and bring that seeming forever war to a genuine close. And I bring all this up not to try to get you to endorse Joe Biden.

But to say that — there is, again, for me, this sort of strange gap between what I hear described as the liberal hostility to the family, to the agenda — nobody’s talking about any of this — and actually what I see covering politics, which is that, particularly on the Democratic side, they may not agree with you on other issues of human sexuality or social issues. But in terms of the economics, there’s a tremendous amount of space for coalition.

And so when I read you describing how you have to give up on pluralism, or you know, how there’s this terrible fight that must be won, there actually seems to be a lot of coalitional possibility here. You seem to be describing something that is much more within the boundaries of not just the politically possible, but the politically in vogue, than I think you either realize or see yourself as saying.

PATRICK DENEEN: It’s really interesting. And I think you’re right, that everything I described is in some way, shape, or form recognizable in Joe Biden. And it’s a striking thing, because Joe Biden is in some ways the last gasp of that Democratic Party I was just talking about. I mean, he’s literally you know, the last generational connection, or among the last generational connections to that old Democratic Party.

But I don’t see that that’s the center of gravity. I see him as in some ways the last gasp, and the one candidate that the Democrats and especially African-Americans in South Carolina believed that could defeat Donald Trump. But the future of the Democratic Party doesn’t seem to me to be Joe Biden, and it doesn’t seem to me to be all of those things that I just expressed.

EZRA KLEIN: But why? I mean, Joe Biden, everything —

PATRICK DENEEN: Well I mean, you tell me why.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, but I want to ask you about the actual alternatives here, because everything I just described — and I didn’t mention the Buy American and onshore manufacturing provisions, but I could have and should have. But most of those were in — not literally every one, but most of these were in Barack Obama’s budgets. And then if you look at the alternative in the primary, the runner up, Bernie Sanders’ plans for every single one of these things were bigger.

It’s not like he didn’t agree with them. It’s always funny to me, J.F.K., I assume you’re — J.F.K. was a very modest president in terms of the amount he wanted to support families or do anything. It was far, far, far more incremental than what we’re talking about with—

PATRICK DENEEN: Oh, sure —

EZRA KLEIN: — Biden, or just about anybody. And he was much more expansionist in his foreign policy, too. So it’s funny to me to have J.F.K. — you’re nostalgia for the Democratic Party seems a little misplaced, and maybe your pessimism about its future also feels to me — maybe this will be good news — a little misplaced. I think there are things you don’t like about where the Democratic Party is going, but I think those things exist in parallel to all the things that you just described.

It strikes me as fundamentally pretty near the consensus of the party right now.

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, that may be the consensus of the party because Joe Biden is currently president. But I don’t know that it’s the consensus of where, certainly, the — let’s say intellectual and political energy going into the future is. I think Biden was, in some ways, the kind of — again, miraculous choice. He wasn’t the first choice of most of the people I was talking to during the primaries. He seemed like the afterthought all along.

I thought that if the Democratic Party had the good sense to nominate him, he would be the one guy that probably could defeat Donald Trump. But it doesn’t seem to me from where I’m sitting and from what I’m reading — and again, maybe we’re just seeing the world quite differently — that the future of the Democratic Party is going to be Joe Biden’s party.

EZRA KLEIN: But I’m asking you about Bernie Sanders, or someone like that, because it sounds to me like what you want is a more economically populist Democratic Party. And I agree with you that Biden has some distinctive qualities. But where the Democratic party is going is much more expansive on things like child tax credits and onshoring manufacturing. I mean, it’s not moving in a neoliberal direction. Like, Bill Clinton is very much the past of it.

Whereas the future — that’s what I’m trying to get you to consider the alternative, Joe Biden as fact, not something else. Like, which one of these things do you think that Bernie Sanders didn’t support?

PATRICK DENEEN: It’s interesting that when Bernie ran, he came out — for example, he came out against immigration, arguing that it was a Koch Brother agenda item.

EZRA KLEIN: In an interview with me. Although that was, to be fair, about open borders, not broad immigration bills.

PATRICK DENEEN: Yeah, OK, so fair enough — OK, all right. Yeah, well — OK, that’s relevant. In other words, I think to the extent that Bernie represents this kind of populist ***working class*** movement, he is someone who could and should — and I think did receive a lot of support. He won Michigan. He received a lot of support from the ***working class***.

The problem is that can the Democratic Party — or let’s say, progressives within the party, which I think is now the younger part of the party, where the energy is — can they support policies in which not only will they support, let’s say, some of the economic policies that support the ***working class***, but the ways of life, the values of the ***working class***, people who work the kinds of jobs with stuff, in construction sites, and electricians, and HVAC workers.

They live in places, often places where they and their family have lived for generations. They are proud of their histories and their traditions. They love America. They fly the American flag on the back of pickup trucks. They espouse values that today do not conform, and indeed are often held in low regard, by the mainstream — I would think the mainstream of what, certainly, the future of the Democratic Party or the progressive movement is oriented toward.

And I think this is why it is now the case that the Right finds it easier to move left on economic issues than the Left finds it to move right on social issues. And this is why, whether you like it or not — and this is not going to result from our conversation, but whether you like it or not, the Republican Party is becoming the ***working class*** party, and the Democratic Party is becoming the party of high tech managerial elite, the college educated, and so forth.

So the question to you is not that you should convince me that I should be a supporter of the Democratic Party. My question would be, why is this party that you’re trying to convince me I should be supporting — why is it no longer supported by the people that once, a generation ago, would have supported your party?

EZRA KLEIN: Well, I’d say two things. One, I’m actually not trying to convince you to support the Democratic Party. I’m trying to —

PATRICK DENEEN: It sounds like it.

EZRA KLEIN: — differentiate. Well, what I’m trying to do is differentiate the revolution you see we need to have from what people are already proposing, because there’s an intensity to the politics that you now espouse that kind of puzzles me when I try to net it out to policy making. But to the question you just asked, I’d say two things. One, I don’t think what you’re picking up there is false. I do think that there’s a genuine out of touch-ness that is a problem for the Democratic Party.

On the other hand, I do think it’s empirically untrue what you’re saying. I mean, if you look at exit polling from 2020, Biden wins 55 percent of voters who make less than $50,000 a year, and 51 percent of voters who make more than $50,000 a year. So in terms of who’s winning lower income voters, it’s actually the Democratic Party, not the Republican Party. Which isn’t to say I don’t think the Democratic Party has its issues there, in not finding itself profoundly culturally out of step with people whose material interests it both claims, and in my view, does represent, is a genuine challenge for it.

But at the same time, I think what I’m trying to understand more in your political project here — and more of a challenge for it than I think sometimes that you admit — is a lot of what you’re proposing is being proposed. A lot of the tangible things you want to do to appeal to the people you say are left behind are already being proposed, offered. Campaigns are being run on them — which is why I’m trying to elicit this, what is the agenda here that is new?

What is the agenda here that is carving out a different future for people than they can currently expect under one of the two parties that can currently vote for?

PATRICK DENEEN: Part of what I find myself arguing against is both what I see as the hostility, or at least the suspicion on the left, of what we might broadly call traditional institutions, institutions — we talked about family, obviously church, religious institutions, smaller communities, localities that are often seen as the locus of prejudice and backwardness. And even today, the nation — right, the political unit that was once regarded as the one thing we could all sort of agree on, that we have affection for the nation. And increasingly, it seems to me the progressive strand of the Left regards the nation with a great deal of suspicion and even condemnation. On the Right, at least under its sort of Paul Ryan form, it was especially the economic policies, the kind of libertarian economic policies that effectively were also working to undermine those sets of institutions, that created the economic conditions of economic concentration, offshoring, the weakening of our industrial and manufacturing base, that also combined to weaken those institutions.

In other words, without a reformulation of both the contemporary political Left and the contemporary political Right, I don’t see anything really getting better. I see, actually, everything continuing to get worse than it is. And for as long as we keep dividing the world between these false choices of liberal left or progressive left and neoliberal right, it seems to me that we’re given this false choice that only will end in a worse situation. So if my writing is strident or seeks to set a very strong set of claims against another set of claims, it’s because in some ways I see that it’s the entire political class and economic class that have to be taken on. And I guess that calls for some rhetoric, and a stance that’s not going to be soft pedaling the situation.

EZRA KLEIN: You do say that. And it’s something I’ve been wanting to talk about in this, because let me pull something out of that comment that I think is really valuable in your thought, which is starting with the question of institutions — asking what institutions it is you want to strengthen. And I see you as having — you could tell me if this is wrong — but I read you as having two primary levels of critique here. And one level of critique is that over a long period of time, a set of policies and cultural understandings have come into force which have given people too much choice, and given people too much cultural license to exercise that choice in ways that have really weakened institutions for people in the bottom half of the income scale, let’s say. So we have geographic mobility that takes people out of the communities they grew up in, and they move to big cities where they can make more money.

We have no fault divorce and gay marriage, which allow people to form or unform family units in ways where you think the default, at the very least, is in the wrong place. We have a general view that people should go off and find their loved ones wherever, and we can kind of keep going through. So one question I’m interested in there is around what choices you think we have today that we should have less of. But on the other level — is I think you believe that all these choices have created a kind of elite class that is so detached from guild, ward and congregation, as you put it, that they are now a corrupt elite. They cannot possibly represent or help guide the people they need to represent, or help guide, because they have no authentic connection to them. And it’s that connection of a high choice society, creating an elite, making fundamentally different choices, that you see as the fundamental corrupting force.

Did I get that in a way that is recognizable to you at least?

PATRICK DENEEN: Yeah, that’s actually probably better than I could have put it myself, but yes. And you know — that in some ways, the rise of the success of that elite class that you — the second point — has considerably relied upon precisely the weakening of the institutions of guild, ward, and congregation. In other words, what liberated this increasingly — let’s say, cosmopolitan, globalized, urban ruling class, was precisely the weakening of those institutions that might once have been sort of the limiting features in which they would have likely led their lives. So the very thing that might be regarded as the sources of success by that ruling class, it turns out, is premised upon a set of consequences that has fallen and rebounded with profound negative effects upon the people who are not members of that class.

EZRA KLEIN: And so then let me ask the two levels of question here I have. And so the first question is, if the ability to make these choices has helped create these problems and weaken these institutions — and I know this somewhat relates to our conversation about marriage. But which choices do you think should be harder to make? And I’m not asking you here for the policies, just which choice sets do you wish were not as easy as they are today? Which — what kind of freedoms do you want to see us roll back?

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, once you frame it like that — boy, you know —

EZRA KLEIN: But that is the question.

PATRICK DENEEN: How far — you know, what year do I want to turn the clock back to?

EZRA KLEIN: But am I—

PATRICK DENEEN: This is —

EZRA KLEIN: But I’m not trying to stack the deck on you. I do think you think we have too much freedom to make these choices. So I think that the — I mean, isn’t the defensive crouch getting out of it, saying, which things need to go backwards, to before we screwed them all up?

PATRICK DENEEN: I think you’re right. I think we have reset the default in a very different way. And so the question becomes, how do you change the default? It’s not a matter of taking away this freedom or this choice, but rather the presumption, for example, I’ve taught at some pretty elite universities. And the presumption is that the students who go to those universities will all enter the economic order at its point of greatest economic opportunity and reward, which in some ways, you could say they also have limited choice once they accept those set of presuppositions.

Right, they’re all going to end up working in New York City, or Washington D.C., or Chicago, or what you will. So once you set up the defaults in that way, the presumption of many choices actually turns out to be, which city am I going to end up living in? Which consulting agency will I end up working for — whereas a different set of defaults is, in what way will I be a contributor to this or that community?

And it might be the one that you came from. And in many ways, of course, that was the default. That would be turning the clock back. Whatever the town, the hamlet, the city, wherever it was that you grew up, that’s where the kind of person who today goes off to Harvard or Princeton or Yale and ends up living in New York City or London, that’s the kind of person that once lived in that town and became the trustees of that town, the major contributors of that town.

These are the George Baileys from Bedford Falls, right, who don’t get out of the town, but end up making the town a much better place. And so the question, to my mind, is not how do we force those people to stay, but how do we rethink a world, if it’s possible — I don’t know, but it seems to me a question worth asking — but how do we think about a world in which we don’t just funnel off all of the talent to like six cities in the world, where they’ll end up contributing to an economy that I think we would both agree is not a very just or good economy right now.

And unless we’re asking that question, then we’re really not going to be addressing this vast, gaping divide in those two features that you just described, of those weakening institutions that are harming especially those who are left behind, and the benefits that are enjoyed by an elite class that have actually, today, a vested interest in having those institutions remain weakened, in sort of securing their places as members of the ruling class.

So it seems to me, just a basic old fashioned class analysis, but what do we do to begin to make the ruling class more responsible to, and more in touch with, and frankly, living among the people whom today they largely seek to escape from?

EZRA KLEIN: And so this is where I think it’s actually a very hard question. I mean, everybody I know in politics is worried about this. There’s a great book by Simon Johnson and Jon Gruber, “Jump-Starting America,” which is all about how to manage regional inequality. Pete Buttigieg’s campaign was at least partially all about this idea, although he was from your town of South Bend.

And there was always something about portraying himself as the icon of rural America when he was working with that kind of university in his backyard. But the tough thing that I don’t hear you talk about that often is technology, because a lot of what has made this both appealing to people and possible for people is technology. It is the speed of travel. It is the low cost of calls. It’s shipping. It is the — I mean, it creates really big agglomeration effects when you can put all the intellectual capital in one place, but then things can be moved anywhere at very, very low cost.

I mean, now you can go on job boards that are nationwide, rather than looking at the job board in your local newspaper. So of course, you’re going to see more opportunities that are nationwide. And I’d be curious to hear you reflect on that a bit, because this gets framed as ideological. But I think in your answer, I hear that you don’t really think there’s a policy or freedom to turn back there.

But what strikes me is even more central is that technology has unlocked a lot of this. And that’s a tougher problem for everybody, because you don’t want to say no more — no more low cost air travel.

PATRICK DENEEN: Right, although I think maybe we would agree that that might be something to put on the table as well — and maybe more for more environmental concerns. But here again, I agree with you, that clearly the technological changes have a considerable amount to do with this. But in some ways, everything you mentioned, or almost everything you mentioned, were exacerbated by certain policies.

So to use your favorite subject, the move away from a productive economy, a manufacturing economy, or an economy that — whether through policy or just simply default produced, it seems, the kinds of businesses, and businessmen, and business community, that saw themselves as in some ways rooted in communities. Not to be nostalgic about it, but the kinds of people who would become the philanthropists of their communities, and the benefactors of their local theaters and civic — you know, operas and performance art centers, and so forth.

And what we’ve increasingly done is rearranged, both through policy, but also through valorization, through what we honor, through what we praise, through what we regard as constituting success, we’ve again changed the default so that being in some scintillating you know, exciting, urban space, working for certain kinds of companies, this is what we regard as the mark of success.

And it’s not merely what we jawbone, what we honor, although that’s I think a significant part of it. And I do think it would be something that would be, I think, have a potentially profound effect if, for example, institutions like my own — elite institutions like a Notre Dame or Harvard, if we began to make it a real key point of what we encourage and praise and place as a kind of goal, for our students to become not merely what we regard as leaders in the national or international system, but as leaders in more local or regional kinds of communities.

In other words, encouraging in various ways, through both what we present to them — the kinds of majors, the kinds of options, the kinds of opportunities, the programming, and so forth, but also the kinds of policies that begin to rethink how we concentrate college graduates, how we concentrate the most economically viable to some select set of places.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: So I want to ask about the second level of that, because a lot of your work is about elites. A lot of your work is a pretty searing critique of today’s elite, this managerial elite, this disconnected, globalized, cosmopolitan elite that has lost touch. But you don’t take it to pure populism.

You say very clearly, quote, “the cure lies in the development of a new elite who are forthright in defending not merely the freedom to pursue the good, and to then shrug the shoulders when ordinary people drown amid a world without guardrails or life vests, but instead is dedicated to the promotion and construction of a society that assists ordinary, fellow citizens in achieving lives of flourishing.”

Now, obviously, from what we’ve talked about before, I disagree with that middle clause there, and how today’s elite look at problems in the world. But nevertheless, tell me about your view that we should move from one elite to another, because I think one way to understand the problems of elites is that they are intrinsic to elites, to having people who have more power and status. And they, over time, protect that power and status, and try to perpetuate it.

And you get the kinds of worlds that we’re talking about in one way or another. So you want to say this shouldn’t be pure populism. We need a different elite, just your elite. What makes you confident you can create an elite that will do what you want it to do, and remain immune to the corruptions that virtually all past elites have been afflicted by?

PATRICK DENEEN: Yeah, no, this is the — it’s always the question, of course, because once one concludes, as I would conclude, that no society can exist, no society has ever existed without a ruling class, without elites, then the question necessarily becomes, well, what should that elite be like? How should it be formed? What should its values be? So when I speak of the formation of a new elite, I think on the one hand, we have a very badly formed elite.

And that’s partly because we’re not actually thinking hard and seriously about what a good elite would look like. So part of that is to think about some of the things we were just talking about — in what ways are we responsible to those people who don’t enjoy our status and position? How much are we examining our own role and complicity in the set of arrangements that — I think we agree, and we recognize exist today — but giving ourselves a pass, because we are such pure and profound believers in our egalitarianism.

And this is where I would begin, by giving a big fail to the elite institutions, especially the universities, which spend, it seems to me, almost no time examining their complicity and their role in perpetuating this system that, on the one hand, they’ll condemn, but never, it seems to me, spend any time examining their own role in those set of arrangements. When I begin to speak of a new elite, I’m thinking of a very old strain of political philosophy — that’s the area that I teach and that I write in.

And it used to be a dominant strain in political philosophy, which was the idea of a mixed constitution, the idea of how we mix the classes, how we mix elements of the lower classes and elements of the upper classes. And by this, they didn’t just mean separation of powers and mixing of powers like we think about it in our constitution, but genuinely the mixing of people so that some of the values of the lower classes will correct the tendencies of upper classes to disdain them.

And at the same time, some of the refinements of the upper classes will elevate the position of, and the disposition and tastes of ordinary people. And as long as we have this kind of bifurcated society, it seems to me the prospects of such a mixed constitution in that classical sense are really thwarted and impossible. So this book I’m working on, and I don’t have a title to give to you yet — we’re working on it — is proposing, or reproposing for a new time, this idea of a mixed constitution in our current context, precisely because it seems to me we have both a bad elite and a bad populace.

EZRA KLEIN: Say a little bit more on that. What does it mean to have that mixed constitution, and what do you mean by the fact that we have a bad populace?

PATRICK DENEEN: By bad populace, I mean — as our conversation has suggested, I’m the first person to criticize what’s taking place in contemporary universities. But I’m also someone who has spent a lot of time thinking and writing about what a good university would look like, what I think a really excellent education would look like, what especially a liberal education would look like. And I wrote about this a bit in the last book.

And that a liberal education, as John Adams argued, you know, hundreds of years ago, a liberal education should not be limited to merely the elites and the society, those people who benefit from a top education, but should be encouraged and available to everyone in the society. Our more populist — both political figures, as well as a general sentiment that’s been encouraged — has simply become, in many ways, dare I say, kind of anti-intellectual, or anti-professor, or anti-university, anti-higher education.

And it seems to me this is a kind of — on the one hand, politically understandable position, when you view modern universities and you see the proliferation of wokeness, and the shouting down of conservatives on campuses, and all the various things that get discussed on Twitter, and so forth, that one way to work up a crowd is just to denounce the universities and to denounce the professoriate.

But that’s, in some ways, of course, to leave things in a — not just a debased condition, but a condition that doesn’t potentially improve the entire disposition and condition of the society as a whole, in which an education, higher education, is something that should refine and elevate.

So I think there are lots of ways we could discuss how contemporary populism has been degraded precisely because — I would lay this in considerable part at the feet of today’s elite, that there’s been this kind of feedback loop in which an increasingly both disdainful and geographically separated elite has generated and deepened the corruption of the populace as a whole. And so that both, in a way, are in a condition, it seems to me, in which they are making each other worse.

Now, when I say mixed constitution, we could explore this in a lot of different ways. But I think about this especially in terms of — at least one way I think about this is, how does one begin to put people who see themselves in one of these camps or the other put them into conversation with each other, allow them to interact, to mix them, in ways in which that interaction could, and I would hope, both moderate their view and disposition toward each other, but also potentially educate each one.

I think both about, for example, the ways in which we should be thinking a lot more about how to give a place of pride and honor to the crafts, the handwork of a certain kind, both in our elite institutions, but also as a society, right. And so we think about — I mean, my wife is German. We spend time in Germany — but the pride of place that’s given to those who are undergoing a kind of training in the trades.

And that’s a serious undertaking in Germany, for example. That’s a — it has a very significant standing in the educational system. It’s not held in low regard. It’s something in which the state, the public authority, invests a considerable amount of time and energy in. And the people who work in the trades are held in some regard and esteem. And how can we introduce some of that ethos, even in our large institutions, would be something I’d like to see more of.

I teach at Notre Dame. We’re surrounded by farmlands. How many of our students know anything about what goes into farming? Why do we send our students to London and Rome and India and China as if they’re going to encounter something really different, when what’s really different lies about 15 miles away from campus?

EZRA KLEIN: I think that this suggests to me that your view here of what’s possible and how to get there is actually pretty pessimistic. So you have a quote that this made me think of — “in a good society, the goods that are common are daily reinforced by the habits and practices of ordinary people. Those habits and practices form the common culture, such as through the virtues of thrift, honesty, and good memory. However, once such a common culture is weakened or destroyed, the only hope is a renewal and reinvigoration by a responsible governing class.”

And so you really have a model here, where if you’ve got in a bad populace, if you’ve lost your common culture — and I think you believe that’s true, that people are taking too many drugs, and getting divorced too often, and watching too much porn. And it’s become a weakened culture, and you think the elites are corrupt and out of touch. Is this something, at that point, you can do through democracy?

I mean what is your relationship, then, to political change, particularly once you believe that kind of both the demos and the governing class are different kinds of, but interlinked, disasters?

PATRICK DENEEN: So the record of human history is not necessarily a hopeful record of the score. And so there is some cause, maybe considerable cause, for pessimism. That quote that you just read — once those conditions of a kind of common culture and a culture that cultivates, once those have broken down, it’s almost always the case that especially when you experience the divide that we have, which is — it’s increasingly a class divide — that the likelihood is either some form of oppression by one class or the other class.

And I think that’s — in many ways, that describes our politics today. It’s a politics of fear of being governed either by the populists or by the elites, and that’s — it’s not, I don’t think it’s an exaggeration to say that’s underlying a lot of the panic of our politics today. So it’s either a kind of impending tyranny, and or some form of a civil war, a stasis, whether it’s a kind of hot Civil War or cold Civil War.

I don’t want to simply just arrive at a pessimistic conclusion. And that’s why I try to frame this in terms of, if we don’t want our elites making the people worse, and the people in some ways making the elites worse, especially by a kind of panicked effort to dismiss or cordon off those populist concerns and demands, then the hope lies in both making each other better.

And here, I’m not sure — I don’t have any crystal ball to suggest what the possible mechanism might be. But I do think it will be probably a combination of two things. It would be a combination, number one, of the populist threat forcing elites to behave better, forcing the managerial elite to govern on behalf of the condition and concerns of everyday people, forcing them to concede, in some way, some of the benefits of their position, and a fear and a defensive posture may result in some beneficial outcomes.

But I also think that it’s not unlikely — and I guess I would place myself in this category — it’s not unlikely we will see something of a rebellion from within the elites. And this is always the case in revolutionary moments. Revolutions aren’t just the people picking up pitchforks and overthrowing the elites. It’s someone like a Lenin, who grew up as an elite, who becomes a kind of class traitor and calls out the deficiencies of his own class.

And I do think that there are growing number of voices from the managerial elite who are deeply concerned about the corruptions that we’re seeing in our own institutions, and are calling for and demanding and amplifying, I think, the charges that you’re seeing coming from the populist direction. So I think, in some ways — again, I can’t say what the mechanism will be, but I think if there is going to be some kind of improvement rather than a kind of devolution, it’s probably going to come — it would have to come from both directions.

EZRA KLEIN: I’ve had a good opportunity here to push you on your thinking here. Is there anything before we end that you think is crucial to your thought that we didn’t cover, or didn’t cover well, or that as a representative of a corrupt managerial elite, you want to push me on?

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, I guess I — and sometimes it reminds me of our earlier conversation. I think maybe we — in part, we inhabit slightly different worlds, or reads of the world, because I tend to have a very — at least a modest view about the role that policy can play. I think it has to play a role, and an important role. But I also think that unless that there is a healthy culture, and we might differ on what that would look like, but unless there’s a healthy culture, any number and amount of policy in the world is really not going to suffice.

And the conundrum that I constantly confront is the question you just asked, which is once the culture has decayed to a certain point, can anything in a sense revive something like a healthy culture? And you might disagree that — you might think that we have a pretty healthy culture, and all we need is the policy to help shore it up.

But if it’s the case that our culture seems to be in some condition of dire straits, or at least a condition of decay — will politics save us, I guess would be my question, especially because so often when I talk with you, you go instantly and directly to questions about, what is my policy on this, that, or the other? And my approach tends to be, do we have the philosophy right? Do we have the political philosophy correct?

And if we have that right, sort of policy and culture will follow. And if we have that wrong, any particular policy approach is not going to save us.

EZRA KLEIN: I think I’d say two things to that. One is that I don’t disagree that politics is downstream from culture, though I don’t love that metaphor, because I think —

PATRICK DENEEN: Neither do I. I think they’re interactive, yeah.

EZRA KLEIN: It’s interactive. It’s a dynamic system. One reason I push you on policy, and one reason I often think in terms of policy, though, is that it forces a rigor sometimes in what is actually being said or claimed that is valuable. So I’ll give an example. It’s been in the back of my head as we’ve been talking, which is — you brought up deaths of despair. I think this comes up a lot in these conversations.

If you do the real analysis, though, on deaths of despair, which is this rise in death rates from drugs, from alcohol, from suicide, from accidents, particularly among white men in middle age, you’ll see that you’re really talking about a huge, huge, huge rise in opioid deaths. I mean, that is the fundamental driver, not to say the other things aren’t real. They’re just — you wouldn’t have this conversation if you didn’t have that.

And at this point, that’s not primarily a problem just for white men. Black males are seeing higher OD deaths than white men are. And opioids are a really hard problem. They are not just a sick culture problem. They come from Purdue misleading the medical community and many people about whether or not these kinds of things were addictive. They come from chronic pain, as people live longer and in more sedentary conditions.

And then the shift that people often make to fentanyl when they can’t get the opioid prescription anymore is really tough, because fentanyl is very hard to stop, because it’s a technological advance. It’s so unbelievably small that it’s very hard to stop fentanyl from making its way places. It’s much easier than it was to grow heroin and transport it, because you can do it all in a lab. So it’s one of these problems that — it actually requires a lot of wrestling with annoyingly nonpartisan, non-philosophical issues.

And people want to turn it to the philosophy. And so you’re right that I try to push you on policy, but I do it because you’re making really profound claims. And since the first time we’ve spoken, the anger of those claims, the heat of them, has really increased. And I think that’s fine, and it’s reasonable. And there’s a lot one can look at in this world and be angry about.

But if you’re going to accuse so many people of abandoning so many others, of not caring about these problems, of letting things linger in something in between callousness and maliciousness, then I think engaging with how they’re actually trying to solve them and what it is you are proposing that will work better is important. So I don’t disagree with you. Culture is really important. It’s very hard to change. And I’m a policy and political guy, so I focus where I know.

But I also think policy forces a realism about what it is you’re actually talking about, and what it is you’re trying to do. I get nervous when people are too abstract, because I’m a good rhetorician. I’m a reasonable debater. I think rhetoric is really slippery. There’s an old Joe Biden line I like. He says, don’t tell me what your values are. Show me what your budget is, and I’ll tell you what your values are.

And that’s how I sometimes feel about these conversations. I want to know what your budget is, not because it’s the only thing that matters, but because it helps me see how different what you are doing is from what others are trying to do, and whether or not then you’re right that they’re actually not trying to do anything at all.

PATRICK DENEEN: Right, no, I appreciate that very much. And I guess I would say to Joe Biden into that, in order to be able to read the values of your budget, I have to understand what those values are. So that is my world. That’s what I teach. That’s what I read and write about. And so I often feel personally less on my own ground when I’m asked to speak specifically about policy. It’s not my area of expertise.

But I just want to be clear that I — of course, I don’t dismiss, or I wouldn’t want to diminish how ultimately important it is. But if we’re going to approach a budget or a policy, or whatever it might be — of course, if that’s an expression of values, we have to have the values right. And that’s where I begin, and that’s where I probably will end, is that I think right now, whether it’s in our budget or whether it’s in our values, we have taken a wrong turn.

And it seems to me that the mainstream of both of our political parties right now need a good deal of correction. But I we disagree on at least part of that, but seems to be a topic worth disagreeing about.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, I’ve enjoyed having the disagreement. Always, then, our final question, what are three books that have influenced you, that you would recommend to the audience?

PATRICK DENEEN: Well, I think since last time we talked, a book appeared, unfortunately, right at the beginning of the pandemic, which I wish had gotten more attention. And it touches on a lot of the themes we’ve been discussing today. It’s Michael Lind’s book, “The New Class War.” And in fact, one of the passages you read, which spoke of guild, ward, and congregation, was — actually, that’s his formulation.

And it was quoting — I think that was a review of that book. And so if this conversation interested you, I think reading that book would be really valuable. A second book that I just somewhat recently finished is a book by Tom Holland, not the Spider-Man actor, but an author in Britain, who was a student of an author about the Roman world. And he became extremely interested in the question, how did this world sort of cease, and how did the world that we know come into being?

In particular, what transformation. In particular was wrought by the rise of Christianity? And the book he wrote was called “Dominion,” and it would be a book, I think, again, maybe of interest to many of your listeners, because his question in some ways is, if we value many of the things that we regard as modern, secular, humanist values, and we recognize how many of those come out of the inheritance and legacy of Christianity, how confident can we or ought to be about the longevity of those values if we are entering into a post-Christian world?

So it’s really, I think, just a wonderful bit of history and a great storytelling. And he’s a wonderful writer. And he’s asking this question in all sort of honesty, without guile or ill will. The last book would be, to touch on a theme we’ve been talking about, which is culture. And it’s not expressly a political book, but whenever I have an opportunity to recommend any book, I’ll usually try to recommend a book by Wendell Berry.

And one of his more recent books is called “The Art of Loading Brush,” and it’s a book of essays about agrarianism, about more local forms of economy and work. But there’s one essay in that book that I found particularly of note, and it’s called “The Thought of Limits in a Prodigal Age.” And I think many of the things that I talk about, although I don’t think I used the word in our entire conversation, but many of the things I talked about here today is, what are the things, and what are the institutions, and what are the practices that teach us the limits?

We live in an age, a technological age, in which it seems like the idea of limits is what we’re most taught to try to overcome. And to encounter an argument by someone who spent his life farming, for the case for limits in a prodigal age, it seems to me something worth encountering and mulling over.

EZRA KLEIN: Patrick Deneen, thank you very much.

PATRICK DENEEN: Thanks very much, Ezra.

[MUSIC]

EZRA KLEIN: “The Ezra Klein Show” is a production of New York Times Opinion, and it is made by an amazing team of people. It is produced by Roge Karma, Annie Galvin and Jeff Geld. Original music by Isaac Jones and Jeff Geld. This episode is fact checked by Michelle Harris and Rollin Hu. Mixing and engineering by Jeff Geld. Our executive producer is Irene Noguchi. Special thanks to Shannon Busta, Kristina Samulewski and Kristin Lin.

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The New York Times

January 19, 2021 Tuesday 14:05 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 695 words

**Highlight:** Readers are optimistic about the future and offer advice for the incoming administration, such as “Be bold!”

**Body**

Readers are optimistic about the future and offer advice for the incoming administration, such as “Be bold!”

To the Editor:

On Wednesday Joseph R. Biden Jr. will be sworn in as our 46th president. I am filled with hope and at peace knowing that, whatever the next four years bring, we have as president a wise, caring, gentle and highly qualified leader to take us to a place that felt unreachable just a few months ago.

Imagine news conferences based on facts, addresses to the nation meant to promote harmony and unity, a world awaiting renewed outreach and cooperation, all leading to a better tomorrow.

I no longer fear the future. I welcome it, revel in its promises and believe in its dreams.

Doris Fenig

Boca Raton, Fla.

To the Editor:

I am 76 years old and I feel as if I have basically lost the last four years of my life “waiting on the world to change.” I went from deep anger and depression following Donald Trump’s election to amazement as I watched him do in a cruel and heartless way exactly what he said he’d do: dismantle everything Barack Obama had built. In the process he divided our country, our families and our friendships, but hopefully not forever.

I’d like to see Joe Biden rebuild our country, just as he and Barack Obama rebuilt the economy after the Republicans left it in a shambles in 2008. And then, I’d like to see us truly lean forward!

Janie Morris

Memphis

To the Editor:

Re “[*Biden Sets Up 10-Day Sprint on Big Issues*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/16/us/politics/biden-administration-executive-action-legislation.html)” (front page, Jan. 17):

What a refreshing change, from President Trump’s rogues gallery of sycophants as cabinet members to what appears to be a faculty guide of stalwart professionals in their fields.

Joe Biden’s appointees have knowledge, experience and a public service ethos toward the herculean task of repairing the tragic calamities of the Trump administration. But also, beyond just repair, they will be able to design new, improved programs and solutions for the many problems facing not just the country, but the world at large.

Rather than another four-year course in Mr. Trump’s psychopathology, the next four years will show what a government of devoted individuals can achieve — free of the “genuflection or propitiation” (“G.O.P.”) of enablers.

Richard Andresen

Sacramento

To the Editor:

Re “[*Trump’s Base Nurses Anger Over Election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/16/us/politics/biden-administration-executive-action-legislation.html)” (front page, Jan. 19):

Once Joe Biden takes office, Congress should immediately create a bipartisan Election Commission to investigate claims of election “irregularities.” This commission should include both Senators Ted Cruz and Josh Hawley. The results will allow them to save face and claim that they have listened to their constituents and seen the evidence that it was a free and fair election.

This is the only way to get millions of Republicans to acknowledge Mr. Biden’s legitimate presidency, so we can actually begin healing. They have all crawled out onto a ledge, and we need to help them find a way back in.

Jesse Allen

Santa Fe, N.M.

To the Editor:

President-elect Biden and every Democrat in Congress: This moment calls for boldness. We don’t need another Obama or Clinton. We need an F.D.R. and then some.

It would be an error in judgment to govern as centrists in the hope that doing so will appease your most vocal and violent critics. It never does and never will. Those who subscribe to QAnonsense are too far gone, and the relatively sane Republicans will call you a socialist no matter what.

Help build and inspire a diverse ***working-class*** alliance by advancing policies that will transform society. I’m talking about policies like Medicare for All, the Green New Deal and free college. Bring back the Fairness Doctrine. Enact campaign finance reform.

These are the sorts of actions that will garner you enthusiastic, sustainable support. That’s the only way to marginalize the extremists, to ensure their demise.

The pre-Trump status quo will not suffice. American exceptionalism has always been a myth, and there’s nothing that says the United States can’t become a failed state or that fascism can’t take root here. This is a trying time, but I remain hopeful. Be bold!

Garrett Snedaker

Eureka, Calif.

PHOTO:   (PHOTOGRAPH BY Carolyn Kaster/Associated Press FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 20, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Many Fear Shut-Offs Of Utilities Looming***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651J-MYC1-DXY4-X0F8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 19, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 15

**Length:** 1475 words

**Byline:** By Patrick McGeehan

**Body**

Moratoriums have expired on turning off utilities for customers who have failed to pay their bills, prompting fears that thousands could be left in the dark.

When the pandemic led to lockdowns that triggered huge job losses, people in New York City and the surrounding region accumulated a mountain of debt. For many that included utility bills. Residents of New York and New Jersey owe the staggering sum of more than $2.4 billion to utility companies.

Now those companies are using the threat of shut-offs to collect for the first time in two years, and advocates fear that struggling utility customers will have to choose between heat and electricity and other necessities like food and medicine.

At the start of the pandemic two years ago, as millions of unemployed Americans were unable to pay their bills, state-imposed moratoriums generally barred utilities from shutting off power. But most states, including New York, have lifted those restrictions in recent months. New Jersey's moratorium, one of the last in effect, expired on March 15.

In New York, advocates have pleaded with Gov. Kathy Hochul and state lawmakers to use federal pandemic aid to bail out residents who cannot pay. Without a bailout, the state faces ''the largest tidal wave of shut-offs in New York history,'' said Richard Berkley, executive director of the Public Utility Law Project, an advocacy group.

The end of government protections has put utility companies in an unpopular position. They are issuing shut-off warnings while inflation is pushing up the price of many goods, and monthly charges for heat and electricity have soared in recent months.

Making matters worse, the war in Ukraine has reduced the global supply of oil, driving the price of gasoline near all-time highs and adding volatility to the natural gas market.

The shutdown last year of the Indian Point nuclear power plant, which once provided as much as 25 percent of the power consumed by New York City, has also contributed to surging utility bills because it has made the region more reliant on natural gas. Most homes in the region are heated with gas, and many of the biggest generators of electricity in the region are fueled with it.

When customers of Consolidated Edison in New York City and its northern suburbs complained about sharp increases in their bills this winter, the company said the main cause was a spike in the price of natural gas driven by winter demand.

But skeptical elected officials demanded an investigation into Con Edison's billing practices, leading the company to take the unusual step of discounting the power it distributed in February.

For companies like Con Edison, pulling the plug on customers who fall behind in paying their bills is usually a last resort, which it typically avoids during the coldest months. But for most of the last two years, as the pandemic inflicted widespread financial hardship, overdue utility payments have soared.

Nationally, the total level of arrears to utility companies is about $22 billion, after peaking at about $32 billion in the spring of 2021, said Mark Wolfe, executive director of the National Energy Assistance Directors Association.

But that is still significantly higher than before the pandemic, when debt totaled about $12 billion. In New York and New Jersey alone, more than two million customers are in debt to companies that provide electricity, heat, water and broadband.

Con Edison says it has held off on disconnecting residential customers and small businesses. But on Wednesday, New Jersey's largest power distributor, PSE&G, started sending representatives to shut off electricity of customers who had not responded to multiple warnings and whose bills were more than 90 days past due, a company spokeswoman said.

Advocates worry that many vulnerable customers, especially the poor and older people, will be left in the dark or saddled with obligations they can never repay. Many who owe large amounts are ***working-class*** people like Marisol Rivera, who fell far behind after being out of work for most of the last two years.

Ms. Rivera, a single mother of two who lives in Brooklyn, owes Con Edison more than $3,300.

Even though utilities in New York state are no longer prohibited from disconnecting delinquent customers, ''the last thing that we want to do is to shut anybody off,'' said Jamie McShane, a spokesman for the company.

Instead, they try to work out repayment plans over a period of months or even years. Or, as in Ms. Rivera's case, longer than that.

After finding work as a receptionist in November, Ms. Rivera, 35, got help from the Public Utility Law Project in arranging an unusual payoff term. She made a down payment of $150 and agreed to pay monthly installments of $10 for the next 27 years.

''That will take a lot of weight off me,'' she said, though she expressed uncertainty about how she would stay current on her utilities, given that she is also behind on the $1,800 monthly rent on the ''little one-bedroom'' she shares with her 13-year-old daughter and 9-year-old son.

''To live in New York, you have to be making a big amount of money to survive,'' Ms. Rivera said. ''I'm constantly trying to fight and to dig out of a hole that I'm in.''

Jackie Huba, who manages the careers of drag artists, fell behind on her power bill for the first time this winter. Ms. Huba, who moved to Harlem from Texas last summer, was stunned when Con Edison sent her a monthly bill for $891 in January, double what she had paid just two months before. It includes electric heat.

''I knew New York was expensive, but I didn't expect any kinds of bills like this,'' she said. ''This is not a bill that I can afford to pay.''

Ms. Huba said she paid $500 toward the $1,400 she owed Con Edison in hopes of averting a shutoff notice.

In the cold spell that followed a mild December, the cost of electricity in the New York City region jumped 28 percent in January, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. The increase in energy costs in the region paralleled the rate of inflation for energy nationwide, the bureau's data show.

Electricity costs did decrease in February, the bureau reported, and one factor may have been Con Edison's decision to reduce what it charges for supplying power, by 8.8 cents per kilowatt-hour, following the outcry over high bills. The company also pledged to change its billing practices to avoid surprising customers again.

The unpaid bills have piled up in New Jersey, too. About 1 million customers are behind on their payments, owing about $700 million, according to the state's Board of Public Utilities. On March 15, state officials warned customers of potential shut-offs.

''There are a significant number of residents who are in danger of having their services cut off after today, and that is why we're continuing to ask utility companies to work with people as they apply for assistance -- but they must apply for help,'' said Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver.

New Jersey has used $250 million in federal pandemic relief to expand programs to help people pay down, or even eliminate, their utility debts.

One beneficiary is Mieko Inghilleri, a public school teacher who lives in a drafty rental house in Lawrenceville, north of Trenton. Ms. Inghilleri, 33, said she could not keep up with the hefty bills she received this winter from PSE&G, her electricity provider.

She and her fiancé kept three space heaters going to supplement the heat supplied by their oil-burning furnace. The electric bill alone for January was nearly $600, she said. On top of that, the price of the oil, supplied by a different company, has increased with each delivery.

As winter dragged on, she fell further behind, owing PSE&G about $2,800. She feared the end of the moratorium and the choices she would face to avert having her power cut off.

''There would have been no way that I can get paid up by then,'' Ms. Inghilleri said. ''I'm a teacher, so I make an OK salary. But I'm not rich.''

After hearing about the state's assistance programs, she reached out to the Affordable Housing Alliance in Monmouth County, which counsels New Jersey residents on how to seek help in paying rent and utility bills.

Kathleen Kerr, the alliance's director for utility assistance, said she was ''waiting for the bombardment'' of calls from people who had gotten shut-off notices. Many people, she said, wait to ask for help until they are on the brink.

Ms. Inghilleri said she had never fallen so far behind on any bills that she had to seek assistance. But Ms. Kerr had good news, telling her that she qualified for the state's Fresh Start program. All she has to do is pay her current bill on time every month for a year, and her debt to PSE&G will be forgiven.

''That would be extremely helpful and take a lot of stress off me,'' Ms. Inghilleri said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/19/nyregion/ny-utility-bill-moratorium.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/19/nyregion/ny-utility-bill-moratorium.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: In recent months, Jackie Huba, left, who lives in Harlem, and Mieko Inghilleri, who lives in Lawrenceville, N.J., got electricity bills that were much higher than normal. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATALIE KEYSSAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

MICHELLE GUSTAFSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Utility Bills Piled Up During the Pandemic. Will Shut-offs Follow?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:651J-N591-JBG3-644C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 19, 2022 Saturday 11:12 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1517 words

**Byline:** Patrick McGeehan

**Highlight:** Moratoriums have expired on turning off utilities for customers who have failed to pay their bills, prompting fears that thousands could be left in the dark.

**Body**

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Now those companies are using the threat of shut-offs to collect for the first time in two years, and advocates fear that struggling utility customers will have to choose between heat and electricity and other necessities like food and medicine.

At the start of the pandemic two years ago, as millions of unemployed Americans were unable to pay their bills, state-imposed moratoriums generally barred utilities from shutting off power. But most states, including New York, have lifted those restrictions in recent months. New Jersey’s moratorium, one of the last in effect, expired on March 15.

In New York, advocates have pleaded with Gov. Kathy Hochul and state lawmakers to use federal pandemic aid to bail out residents who cannot pay. Without a bailout, the state faces “the largest tidal wave of shut-offs in New York history,” said Richard Berkley, executive director of the Public Utility Law Project, an advocacy group.

The end of government protections has put utility companies in an unpopular position. They are issuing shut-off warnings while inflation is pushing up the price of many goods, and monthly charges for heat and electricity have soared in recent months.

Making matters worse, the war in Ukraine has reduced the global supply of oil, driving the price of gasoline near all-time highs and adding volatility to the natural gas market.

The shutdown last year of the Indian Point nuclear power plant, which once [*provided as much as 25 percent of the power*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/12/nyregion/indian-point-power-plant-closing.html)consumed by New York City, has also contributed to surging utility bills because it has made the region more reliant on natural gas. Most homes in the region are heated with gas, and many of the biggest generators of electricity in the region are fueled with it.

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Nationally, the [*total level of arrears*](https://neada.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/arrearagesjan2022.pdf)to utility companies is about $22 billion, after peaking at about $32 billion in the spring of 2021, said Mark Wolfe, executive director of the National Energy Assistance Directors Association.

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Electricity costs did decrease in February, the bureau reported, and one factor may have been Con Edison’s decision to reduce what it charges for supplying power, by 8.8 cents per kilowatt-hour, following the outcry over high bills. The company also said it would try to smooth out the effects on customers of its efforts to hedge against volatility in the price of natural gas.

The unpaid bills have piled up in New Jersey, too. About 1 million customers are behind on their payments, owing about $700 million, according to the state’s Board of Public Utilities. On March 15, state officials warned customers of potential shut-offs.

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PHOTOS: In recent months, Jackie Huba, left, who lives in Harlem, and Mieko Inghilleri, who lives in Lawrenceville, N.J., got electricity bills that were much higher than normal. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATALIE KEYSSAR FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; MICHELLE GUSTAFSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 20, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Mexico’s Supreme Court Votes to Decriminalize Abortion***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63JG-B3F1-DXY4-X0YW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 7, 2021 Tuesday 10:28 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1097 words

**Byline:** Natalie Kitroeff and Oscar Lopez

**Highlight:** The ruling, which sets a precedent for the legalization of abortion nationwide, follows years of efforts by a growing women’s movement in Mexico.

**Body**

The ruling, which sets a precedent for the legalization of abortion nationwide, follows years of efforts by a growing women’s movement in Mexico.

MEXICO CITY — [*Criminalizing abortion is unconstitutional, Mexico’s Supreme Court*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/13/world/americas/mexico-abortion-objectors.html) ruled on Tuesday, setting a precedent that could lead to legalization of the procedure across this conservative Catholic country of about 130 million people.

The unanimous ruling from the nation’s top court follows years of efforts by a growing women’s movement in Mexico that has repeatedly taken to the streets of major cities to demand greater rights and protections.

The decision, which opens the door for Mexico to become the most populous Latin American country to allow abortion, was met with elation by feminist activists and dismay by conservative politicians and the powerful Catholic Church.

“Today is a historic day for the rights of all Mexican women,” Chief Justice Arturo Zaldívar said after the judges’ votes were cast. “It is a watershed in the history of the rights of all women, especially the most vulnerable.”

The decision does not automatically make abortion legal across Mexico, experts said, but it does set a binding precedent for judges across the country. [*Abortion rights*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/09/world/abortion-rights-us.html) advocates said they planned to use the ruling to challenge laws in the vast majority of Mexican states that mandate jail time or other criminal penalties for women who have the procedure.

For now, analysts said, women arrested for having an abortion can sue state authorities to have the charges dropped. Activists also plan to push state authorities to free women now serving prison terms for having had abortions.

The Mexican Supreme Court’s decision is likely to reverberate across Latin America, where victories by women’s rights movements in one country often catalyze efforts in others. The [*legalization of abortion in Argentina*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/world/americas/argentina-legalizes-abortion.html) last year was celebrated in other nations, and the green handkerchiefs brandished by activists there have become widespread at women’s protests across the region, including in Mexico.

Leaders of the Catholic Church, whose regional influence has been waning but still carries considerable weight, swiftly condemned the ruling.

“Those of us who are convinced of the value of life do not have a need for a homicidal law like the one they are approving,”[*read a tweet*](https://twitter.com/IglesiaMexico/status/1435351096155938817) from the Episcopal Conference of Mexico, an organization of Catholic bishops.

Tuesday’s ruling follows efforts by women’s groups that began well over a decade ago, with the legalization of abortion in Mexico City in 2007. Groups then successfully pushed for the procedure to be decriminalized in the states of Oaxaca, Hidalgo and Veracruz.

Advocates said they hoped their victory on Tuesday would buoy American women challenging moves by Texas and other states to place ever-tighter restrictions on the procedure.

“If there is a message, it is to look at the leadership of Mexico here: This is possible, it is happening,” said Giselle Carino, the chief executive of the International Planned Parenthood Federation’s Western Hemisphere region. “When you have adverse conditions, like in Texas, you need to double down on your efforts.”

There was no immediate comment from President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who has faced sharp criticism in the past for his response to the women’s movement, which he has [*dismissed as an effort to undermine his political project*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/31/world/americas/violence-women-mexico-president.html).

Mr. López Obrador, a devout Christian, has remained noncommittal on abortion, careful not to inflame his base of ***working class***, socially conservative voters. When asked at his morning news conference on Tuesday about the Supreme Court’s deliberations, Mr. López Obrador refused to offer his view on the issue, which he called “controversial” and “polemic.”

“We don’t want to encourage any confrontation,” Mr. López Obrador said. “If it’s already at the Supreme Court, then let it be resolved there.”

In its ruling, the Supreme Court had considered a challenge to the law in the northern state of Coahuila, which had set prison penalties of up to three years for having an abortion. The justices struck down the state law, finding broadly that any criminal penalization of abortion violated Mexico’s Constitution.

“It’s an enormous step toward legalization in the entire country,” said Rebeca Ramos, the executive director of GIRE, a reproductive rights group. “We are absolutely ready to present legal challenges to the denial of safe and legal abortion” across the country.

Analysts said they expected to see a wave of such efforts nationwide. The Supreme Court justices “are setting the tone for all local criminal codes to be reformed,” said Paulina Creuheras González, head of analysis and political risk at Integralia, a Mexico City consulting firm.

Women across Mexico have in recent years protested en masse across the country, demanding not only the right to have an abortion but also an end to the grave and pervasive [*violence they face,*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/19/world/americas/mexico-violence-women.html) which has become a national crisis.

Last year, an average of 10 women were killed in Mexico every day, according to government figures. More than 2,000 have been murdered in the first seven months of 2021 alone.

In March, [*hundreds of women stormed the country’s National Palace*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/world/americas/mexico-women-strike-protest.html) in Mexico City, attacking the rampart around the president’s residence with bats, blowtorches and hammers, demanding an end to gender-based violence.

The protest followed a massive demonstration last year that brought tens of thousands of women to the streets, many of them wearing [*the green handkerchiefs*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/30/world/americas/argentina-legalizes-abortion.html) first seen in Argentina. The following day, [*women in Mexico stayed home*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/09/world/americas/mexico-women-strike-protest.html) from work in a national strike to demand government action.

Religious leaders in the country, which has one of the largest Catholic populations in the world, have been steadfast in their condemnation of abortion.

“We cannot remain indifferent, silent, fearful when life is in such danger,” said Bishop Alfonso Miranda Guardiola, the secretary general of the Mexican Episcopal Conference, in a sermon on Tuesday.

The chief justice of the Supreme Court, Judge Zaldívar, made clear that he saw Tuesday’s ruling as the first step toward a more fundamental transformation in Mexican society.

“Now begins a new path of freedom, of clarity, of dignity and respect for all pregnant people, but above all, for women,” he said. “Today is one more step in the historic fight for their equality, for their dignity and for the full exercise of their rights.”

PHOTO: A protest in Mexico City in February 2020 was one of many staged by women’s groups calling for legal and safe abortion. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EDGARD GARRIDO/REUTERS) (A7)

**Load-Date:** September 13, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Review: Going Home to Iowa With the Queen of Meth***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62M7-CN21-DXY4-X3W1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 7, 2021 Friday 09:10 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 741 words

**Byline:** Mike Hale

**Highlight:** The story of Lori Arnold, drug queenpin and sister to Tom Arnold, is a complicated lesson in Midwestern values.

**Body**

The story of Lori Arnold, drug queenpin and sister to Tom Arnold, is a complicated lesson in Midwestern values.

I saw myself on television this week, in the modern sense of seeing someone with whom I identified. It was not a matter of color or gender, neither of which matched. But we were both from Iowa, both born in 1960, both got A’s and B’s, both had a parent with a problematic relationship to a local watering hole (Elks Club for her, V.F.W. for me).

Oh, and you can date both of us by the way we refer to speed or methamphetamine as “crank.”

The stories of small-town Iowans of my age are not plentiful on TV, and I watched this one with rapt attention, even though our lives diverged significantly after childhood. I left the state, went to college and got a job at a newspaper. She stayed, opened a biker bar and started her own business cooking and selling meth. When I was making $800 a week, she was sometimes grossing $800,000. That went a long way in Iowa in the early 1990s.

This soul sister of mine is Lori Arnold, the subject of “Queen of Meth,” a three-part profile that premiered Friday on the [*streaming service Discovery+*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/business/media/cable-tv-streaming-discovery.html). True-crime documentaries arrive by the pallet-load these days — Arnold could stack them in her post-criminal job as a forklift operator — and I took the time to watch this one purely for the Iowa connection.

I might have enjoyed [*“Queen of Meth”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/business/media/cable-tv-streaming-discovery.html) even if it were set in Ohio or Idaho, though. A modest production, it relies on the no-nonsense narration of Arnold, who turns out to be a fine companion for three hours and an engaging and lucid guide to the hows and whys of methamphetamine in the Midwest. She has a matter-of-fact charisma and a ready laugh, and you can see how those qualities would have made it easy for her to sell drugs in the depressed, ***working-class*** town of Ottumwa, Iowa.

“Queen of Meth” is a story of Arnold’s rise, fall and qualified redemption, structured around a trip back to Ottumwa, which she moved away from after her second stint in prison. (Arnold served nine years on drug and gun charges, started dealing again and served another six years.)

Visually it tends toward the melancholy, as Arnold revisits her now-shuttered bar and the farm she once owned where she and her husband, who later died in federal prison, built their own meth lab, like upper Midwestern Walter Whites. The filmmakers like to pose Arnold and other interview subjects in front of tractors or in long shot against drab warehouses or faded downtowns.

But the tone is rarely funereal, thanks to the resolute levelheadedness of Arnold and to the liveliness of the Greek chorus of friends and neighbors — most of whom dealt for Arnold, or bought from her, or both — who attest to her generosity and to how much fun she was to be around.

“Queen of Meth” is also the story of what a catastrophe meth has been for the Midwest and of the damage it did to many of those friends of Arnold’s, and to their children. The show doesn’t play that down, though a significant portion of Ottumwa may feel that it’s a more sympathetic showcase than she deserves.

Gathered in lawn chairs around a fire pit, Arnold and her former associates talk about the old days, and about the harm done to lives and communities, though they seem less angry than bemused, like survivors of a hurricane.

The person who expresses the most open anger is [*Arnold’s brother Tom*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/business/media/cable-tv-streaming-discovery.html), the actor and former husband of Roseanne Barr, who pushes her to acknowledge what he sees as their own mother’s damaging neglect of them. (This is the place to mention that without this celebrity connection, Lori Arnold’s drug-dealing would not have been news outside of Wapello County.)

In scenes with the son who was forced to grow up without her, Lori Arnold is clearly emotional, but grief and guilt don’t come naturally to her. She’s cleareyed about her choices, but her approach to introspection is as businesslike as her approach to meth. “I’m more embarrassed about my past than I used to be,” she allows.

I would not want to have lived Arnold’s life, or have had the effect she did on others’ lives, but the Iowan in me can’t help identifying with, and admiring, her get-on-with-it approach. I’d like to think that if the feds had broken down my door and hauled me to jail, I would have used my one phone call to order a pizza, too.

PHOTO: In “Queen of Meth,” Lori Arnold and her friends reflect on her time as a high-volume drug dealer. (PHOTOGRAPH BY DISCOVERY+)

**Load-Date:** May 11, 2021

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[***Seven Years of Trump Has the Right Wing Taking the Long View; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66GR-CYP1-DXY4-X428-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 28, 2022 Wednesday 05:21 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3066 words

**Byline:** Thomas B. Edsall

**Highlight:** All is not well with democracy in America.

**Body**

Could there soon be an American counterpart to Viktor Orban, the Hungarian prime minister, a right-wing populist who in 2018 [*declared*](https://miniszterelnok.hu/prime-minister-viktor-orbans-speech-at-the-29th-balvanyos-summer-open-university-and-student-camp/), “We must demonstrate that there is an alternative to liberal democracy: It is called Christian democracy. And we must show that the liberal elite can be replaced with a Christian democratic elite”?

Liberal democracy, [*Orban*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/19/magazine/viktor-orban-rod-dreher.html) continued,

is liberal, while Christian democracy is, by definition, not liberal: it is, if you like, illiberal. And we can specifically say this in connection with a few important issues — say, three great issues. Liberal democracy is in favor of multiculturalism, while Christian democracy gives priority to Christian culture; this is an illiberal concept. Liberal democracy is pro-immigration, while Christian democracy is anti-immigration; this is again a genuinely illiberal concept. And liberal democracy sides with adaptable family models, while Christian democracy rests on the foundations of the Christian family model; once more, this is an illiberal concept.

Or could there soon be an American counterpart to [*Giorgia Meloni*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/26/opinion/italy-giorgia-meloni-election.html), another right-wing populist and admirer of Orban, now on course to become the next [*prime minister*](https://twitter.com/ryangirdusky/status/1574150785352585222) of Italy?

Meloni’s platform?

Yes to natural families, no to the L.G.B.T. lobby. Yes to sexual identity, no to gender ideology. Yes to the culture of life, no to the abyss of death. No to the violence of Islam, yes to safer borders. No to mass immigration, yes to work for our people.

Donald Trump’s entrenched refusal to accept the outcome of the 2020 election and his deepening embrace of conspiracy theory, particularly its QAnon strain; the widespread belief among Republican voters that the election was stolen; and, as The Times reported on Sept. 18, the fact that “six Trump-backed Republican nominees for governor and the Senate in midterm battlegrounds would not commit to accepting this year’s election results, with another six Republicans ignoring or declining to answer a question about embracing the November outcome” — all suggest, to say the least, that all is not well with democracy in America.

There are many other signals pointing to the vulnerability of the liberal state.

A 2020 study, “[*Global Satisfaction With Democracy*](https://www.cam.ac.uk/system/files/report2020_003.pdf)” by the Bennett Institute for Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, found that dissatisfaction with democracy has grown rapidly in developed nations since the recession of 2008, and that one of the sharpest increases in discontent has been in the United States:

Now, for the first time on record, polls show a majority of Americans dissatisfied with their system of government — a system of which they were once famously proud. Such levels of democratic dissatisfaction would not be unusual elsewhere. But for the United States, it marks an “end of exceptionalism” — a profound shift in America’s view of itself, and therefore, of its place in the world.

It is a reflection of just how remarkable this shift in sentiment has been that a presidential candidate — Donald J. Trump — could arrive at the White House after a presidential campaign that denounced American political institutions as corrupt, and promised to step back from promoting democracy abroad in favor of putting “America First,” treating all countries transactionally based on a spirit of realism, regardless of their adherence to or deviation from democratic norms.

Along similar lines, [*Joshua Tait*](https://www.thebulwark.com/author/joshua-tait/) — a contributor to the volume “Key Thinkers of the Radical Right: Behind the New Threat to Liberal Democracy” — argued in a Q. and A. posted at George Washington University’s [*Illiberalism Studies Program*](https://www.illiberalism.org/) that “we face potentially massive disruptions over the coming decades as we feel the impacts of climate change, aging populations, and automation.”

Tait went on:

The right, both in the United States and elsewhere, has the sort of rhetorical and intellectual tools to craft a compelling argument to certain segments of the population in the face of insecurity and transformation. The combination of disruption, transformation and pain creates the conditions where right-wing, often illiberal discourses of heroism, golden age and the threatening Other creates real meaning for some, even as it draws boundaries around communities.

In an email response to my follow-up inquiry, Tait wrote:

The 2016 election, Trumpism in the United States, Orban, Law &amp; Justice in Poland, and to a lesser extent Brexit in the United Kingdom have validated the intellectual right in the America that long held some or all illiberal positions. Moreover, Trump in particular obliterated right-wing respectability politics and revealed the conservative and Republican establishments had no capacity to discipline views that had previously been beyond the pale — the result of changes in the way the right-wing media ecosystem worked, and the nature of party primaries.

The end of the Cold War, Tait contended, prompted the right to shift from an international focus to domestic issues:

Without an external ideological foe in global communism, the right faced up to its domestic and in many ways real enemy, progressive liberalism. The right imported its existential and apocalyptic view domestically. The Culture Wars, antipathy toward multiculturalism and so on are part of this, and the great demographic sort (the coming minority status of white Americans) has intensified it dramatically.

Many leaders of the social and cultural right in this country are treating Trump’s presidency and his continuing hold on a majority of Republican voters as an opportunity to further mobilize conservatives.

The [*National Conservatism*](https://nationalconservatism.org/) project, created in 2019 by the [*Edmund Burke Foundation*](https://burke.foundation/), has taken up this challenge, joining together an array of scholars and writers associated with such institutions, magazines and think tanks as the [*Claremont Institute*](https://www.claremont.org/), [*Hillsdale College*](https://www.hillsdale.edu/), the [*Hoover Institution*](https://www.hoover.org/), the [*Federalist*](https://thefederalist.com/), [*First Things*](https://www.firstthings.com/), the [*Manhattan Institute*](https://www.manhattan-institute.org/), the [*Ethics and Public Policy Center*](https://eppc.org/), and [*National Review*](https://www.nationalreview.com/).

On June 22, 75 supporters of the National Conservatism project issued a 10-part [*statement of principles*](https://nationalconservatism.org/national-conservatism-a-statement-of-principles/). The signatories include [*Rod Dreher*](https://www.theamericanconservative.com/author/rod-dreher/), senior editor of The American Conservative; [*Jim DeMint*](https://www.cpi.org/staff/jim-demint/), a former senator from South Carolina and a former president of the Heritage Foundation; [*Mark Meadows*](https://www.cpi.org/staff/mark-meadows/), a former chief of staff to President Trump; [*Christopher Rufo*](https://www.manhattan-institute.org/expert/christopher-f-rufo) of the Manhattan Institute and the venture capitalist [*Peter Thiel*](https://foundersfund.com/team/peter-thiel/).

The principles include a strong commitment to the infusion of religion into the operation of government: “No nation can long endure without humility and gratitude before God and fear of his judgment that are found in authentic religious tradition.” Thus the “Bible should be read as the first among the sources of a shared Western civilization in schools and universities, and as the rightful inheritance of believers and nonbelievers alike.”

Perhaps most strikingly, the principles declare that:

Where a Christian majority exists, public life should be rooted in Christianity and its moral vision, which should be honored by the state and other institutions both public and private. At the same time, Jews and other religious minorities are to be protected in the observance of their own traditions, in the free governance of their communal institutions, and in all matters pertaining to the rearing and education of their children. Adult individuals should be protected from religious or ideological coercion in their private lives and in their homes.

The principles argue for a restoration of traditional family values combined with a rejection of the sexual revolution and of feminist calls for self-actualization in defiance of family obligation:

We believe the traditional family is the source of society’s virtues and deserves greater support from public policy. The traditional family, built around a lifelong bond between a man and a woman, and on a lifelong bond between parents and children, is the foundation of all other achievements of our civilization.

Their authors warn that

The disintegration of the family, including a marked decline in marriage and childbirth, gravely threatens the well-being and sustainability of democratic nations. Among the causes are an unconstrained individualism that regards children as a burden, while encouraging ever more radical forms of sexual license and experimentation as an alternative to the responsibilities of family and congregational life. Economic and cultural conditions that foster stable family and congregational life and child-raising are priorities of the highest order.

I asked [*Yoram Hazony*](https://www.yoramhazony.org/), the chairman of the Edmund Burke Foundation, to expand on this phrase in the statement in the principles: “Where a Christian majority exists, public life should be rooted in Christianity and its moral vision.”

Hazony replied by email that the statement is intended

to permit a public life rooted in Christianity and its moral vision in those parts of the United States in which a majority of voters support such a public culture. This is in keeping with our endorsement of the federalist principle in Clause 3. There are many states in the United States where no such majority exists, and the Statement of Principles does not envision using the national government to impose such a public life on those states. The point is to return “church and state” issues to the states to be resolved through the democratic process.

In her March 2022 paper, “[*Illiberalism: a conceptual introduction*](https://www.illiberalism.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Laruelle-Illiberalism-a-conceptual-introduction.pdf),” [*Marlene Laruelle*](https://elliott.gwu.edu/marlene-laruelle), a professor of international affairs and the director of the Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at George Washington University, provides a four-part definition of the term:

Illiberalism is a new ideological universe that, even if doctrinally fluid and context-based, is to some degree coherent; it represents a backlash against today’s liberalism in all its varied scripts — political, economic, cultural, geopolitical, civilizational — often in the name of democratic principles; it proposes solutions that are majoritarian, nation-centric or sovereigntist, favoring traditional hierarchies and cultural homogeneity; and it calls for a shift from politics to culture and is post-post-modern in its claims of rootedness in an age of globalization.

Laruelle argues that there are significant differences between illiberalism and conservatism as it has been traditionally understood:

The key element that dissociates illiberalism from conservatism is its relationship to political liberalism. Classical conservatives — such as the Christian Democrats in Europe or the Republican Party in the U.S. before Donald Trump — are/were fervent supporters of political rights and constitutionalism, while illiberalism challenges them. For classical conservatives, the political order is a reflection of the natural and family order, and therefore commands some submission to it. For illiberals, today’s political order is the enemy of the natural order and should be fought against.

In a 2021 Wall Street Journal op-ed, “[*Why America Needs National Conservatism*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/national-conservatism-socialist-progressives-woke-crt-patriotism-social-media-border-11636738833),” [*Christopher DeMuth*](https://burke.foundation/people/christopher-demuth/), president from 1986 through 2008 of the mainstream Republican American Enterprise Institute and now chairman of the National Conservative Conference, reinforces Laruelle’s point: “When the American left was liberal and reformist, conservatives played our customary role as moderators of change. We too breathed the air of liberalism, and there are always things that could stand a little reforming.” But, DeMuth continued, “today’s woke progressivism isn’t reformist. It seeks not to build on the past but to promote instability, to turn the world upside-down.”

The doctrines of progressivism have resulted, DeMuth argues, in

mayhem and misery at an open national border. Riot and murder in lawless city neighborhoods. Political indoctrination of schoolchildren. Government by executive ukase. Shortages throughout the world’s richest economy. Suppression of religion and private association. Regulation of everyday language — complete with contrived redefinitions of familiar words and ritual recantations for offenders.

How deep is the reservoir of support that national conservatism can tap into? The striking pattern in polling data shows that over the years from 2017 to the present, Trump, despite all his liabilities, has retained a consistent favorability rating, ranging from 41 to 46 percent of the electorate, a base that appears virtually immovable.

[*Arlie Hochschild*](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/professor-emeritus/arlie-r-hochschild), a professor of sociology at Berkeley and the author of “[*Strangers in Their Own Land*](https://thenewpress.com/books/strangers-their-own-land): Anger and Mourning on the American Right,” has been interviewing voters in Eastern Kentucky’s Appalachia since 2018, exploring the reasons behind this unwavering loyalty.

I asked her about the prospects of illiberalism in this country and she replied by email: “We should keep a close eye on the sense of grievance stored up almost as a springboard within the word ‘stolen.’ ” The background to this, Hochschild argued,

is that blue-collar, rural/small town — especially white and male — have since the l970s been the “losers” of globalization, and the two parties now represent two economies. To this demographic, economic loss is compounded with a loss of fallback sources of honor — gender, sexuality, race — for white heterosexual males these, too, seem under attack. This is the “deep story” of “Stop the Steal,” and they see reality through that story.

The story does not end there. Hochschild continued:

The right believes that it is the left, not the right, that is moving toward fascism. Inside the right wing mind today freedom is threatened “by the left.” Political correctness a form of “thought control.” The left controls the media. The F.B.I. is scanning Facebook to hunt down patriots in Washington. So, ironically, they see themselves as brave upholders of freedom, democracy, civil liberties. They aren’t saying we want strong totalitarian control so we get to impose our values on others. They see themselves as the victims of this control and Trump as their liberator from that control.

Still, national conservatism faces significant hurdles. For example, Hochschild pointed out, this country recently saw a dramatic change in the Kansas electorate: “In the days after the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision leaked, Kansans turned out in record numbers in the primary and delivered a victory for abortion rights, a win fueled by Democrats out registering Republicans by 9 points since the Dobbs decision was announced, with a staggering 70 percent of all new registrants being women.”

How dangerous, then, is America’s current right populist movement?

Tait, the [*historian of conservatism*](https://history.unc.edu/recent-phd/joshua-tait/), is cautious in addressing this question, noting that national conservatism seems to “represent something new in that it seems to explicitly depart from liberalism instead of reproducing it in a compromised, conservative way.” He described the Edmund Burke Foundation’s Statement of Principles as

an effort at a mature, sanitized post-Trumpism. But a great many of the guardrails of constitutional liberalism and fusionist conservatism have been undermined and we may see a politics less constrained by liberal constitutional norms and rules. Likewise, the actors prominent in this space are less constrained by right-wing respectability politics, including Ron DeSantis and Josh Hawley.

[*Damon Linker*](https://substack.com/profile/12665540-damon-linker?utm_source=substack&amp;utm_medium=email), a senior fellow at the Niskanen Center, sees a strong parallel between trends in the United States and the illiberal developments in Europe. Referring to the recent election in Italy, Linker posted “[*What just happened in Italy*](https://damonlinker.substack.com/p/what-just-happened-in-italy)?” on his Sept. 26 substack, Eyes on the Right, arguing that

We’re left with a picture of a country in which the center-left is supported mainly by the educated, secular, and professional classes, while the right appeals to a cross-section of the rest of the country — the ***working class*** as well as the middle and upper-middle classes, along with the religiously pious and the large numbers of Italians who treat religion as a symbol or identity-marker without actually believing in or practicing it.

If that sounds familiar, Linker continued,

that’s because similar things have been happening in many places over the past decade. The precise political results of these shifts have varied from country to country as they’ve interacted with different electoral systems, but the underlying trends in public opinion can be seen to a greater or lesser extent in France, Great Britain, the United States, and other countries. In each case, the center-left has gone into decline with the center-right and anti-liberal populist right rising to take its place. Until the center-left figures out a way to win back the working- and middle-class, as well as the nominally religious, it will continue to lose precious political ground to the populist and nationalist right.

[*William Galston*](https://www.brookings.edu/experts/william-a-galston/), a senior fellow at Brookings, points out in an essay, “[*What Is National Conservatism? The movement could be the future of the American right,*](https://www.persuasion.community/p/what-is-national-conservatism)” that “Two of illiberalism’s most important intellectuals, political theorists Yoram Hazony and [*Patrick Deneen*](https://politicalscience.nd.edu/people/patrick-j-deneen/), have mounted a frontal attack on the entire individualist, rights-based liberal political tradition that they trace back to John Locke.” In Eastern Europe, this critique resonates, Galston continued, but “it does create a problem for the United States where, historians [*inspired by*](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1951399) Louis Hartz have argued, political liberalism is our tradition.”

National conservatives, Galston argued,

do not distinguish between the liberal political tradition and the excesses of today’s liberal culture. They see the focus on individual rights — and on the conceptions of equality and liberty that flow from them — as corroding traditional beliefs and practices. They are convinced that they must sacrifice the liberal baby to get rid of the progressive bathwater, and they are all too eager to do so. Embracing unfettered majoritarianism in the pursuit of virtue is no virtue. It is hard to overstate the danger to pluralism and liberty that lies at the end of this road.

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PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Doug Mills/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 28, 2022

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[***The Wanderer***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61SS-4V41-JBG3-62B8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 17, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 689 words

**Byline:** By Fahima Haque

**Body**

AFTERSHOCKSBy Nadia Owusu

Where are you from? If someone were to ask, you might cite your current ZIP code or share where you were raised. You might mention where your ancestors lived. You might explain whether you grew up rooted to one cul-de-sac, one city block, one country.

But for Nadia Owusu, the question is not so simple. The daughter of a Ghanaian father who worked for a United Nations agency and an Armenian-American mother, she has lived a nomadic life -- she was born in Tanzania, then, as a child, lived in Uganda, Ethiopia, Italy and England. Later, when she was 18, she moved to New York for college and stayed there for her entire adult life. ''Confused?'' she asks. ''Me too. I never know how to answer the question of my origin.''

Owusu's debut memoir, ''Aftershocks,'' is her attempt to explain.

In ''Aftershocks,'' Owusu reflects on her childhood and her 20s, feeling untethered from the world because of her father's diplomatic background and from her family, which is complicated by divorce and death. The narrative is straightforward but Owusu uses formats like a resettlement intake form and symbols like a recycled blue chair found on the streets of New York City to tell her story. The dominant motif, however, is an earthquake. Owusu opens the book with a chapter titled ''First Earthquake'' and chapters are grouped under sections with labels that include ''Foreshocks,'' ''Faults,'' ''Aftershocks'' and more.

[ This memoir was one of our most anticipated books of January. See the full list. ]

Throughout the book, Owusu writes poignantly about belonging and assimilation, including wishing her aunties taught her Twi, a Ghanaian dialect that is her father's native tongue, and code-switching by dropping her posh accent when playing with children in a ***working-class*** neighborhood in London. But the connective tissue of the book is the near-constant guilt she experiences as she grapples with identity and her willingness to erase the most vibrant parts of herself in an attempt to belong.

In one instance, Owusu details how she betrayed the only other Black girl at the Catholic boarding school she attended, making fun of the girl's hair to the white students. ''In reality, Agatha smelled like my family,'' she confesses. In another, Owusu recalls feeling conflicted when her uncle, a cabdriver, drops her off at college. '''I'm going to college too,' he said. 'Next year. The cab is only temporary.' I was embarrassed that he felt the need to tell me that, that he needed me to know he was more than the immigrant man behind the wheel of a yellow cab.''

Owusu is unflinching in examining herself, which is commendable, but her self-reflection can veer toward the melodramatic and her repeated ruminations don't yield further clarity. ''The boy's bird body haunts me,'' she says when she sees a child beggar collapse in Ethiopia. ''He hovers over me in judgment when I feel sorry for myself, but he cannot stop me from feeling sorry for myself.''

Owusu also writes about the relationships in her life. She tells us about a man who she thought was her great love in her 20s, and of the foul men who assaulted her when she was a child, and of the many hapless men she has slept with. But Owusu's book is most alive when she writes about her parents.

It's clear that Owusu believes most in her father, whom she so lovingly called ''Baba-Mama.'' Her father died when Owusu was a teenager, and his death remains a shadow over everything she does. She was initially told he died of cancer, but when Owusu was 28, her stepmother unexpectedly told her, without proof, that he had died of AIDS. It's an assertion that makes her question everything she thought she knew.

In the end, Owusu ultimately answers what home is. Her definition is pure and restorative to read. ''I am made of the earth, flesh, ocean, blood and bone of all the places I tried to belong to and all the people I long for. I am pieces. I am whole. I am home.''Fahima Haque is the audiences editor for The Times's National desk and works on the weekly Race/Related newsletter.AFTERSHOCKSBy Nadia Owusu299 pp. Simon & Schuster. $26.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/15/books/review/aftershocks-nadia-owusu.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/15/books/review/aftershocks-nadia-owusu.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Nadia Owusu PHOTOGRAPH BY BEOWULF SHEEHAN)

**Load-Date:** January 17, 2021

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[***Red Hats and Black Squares***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66X2-HY41-DXY4-X0J0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 20, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 8; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 3450 words

**Byline:** By Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah

**Body**

The first time I saw the hat was out West four years ago. On a reporting trip to a small fruit-growing agricultural town divided between white Republicans and Mexican and Central American migrant workers, I was invited to attend a raffle luncheon. Within minutes of my arrival, a jovial, big-bellied white man walked into the lobby of the community center that was hosting the event, wearing the hat. I was a Black woman alone. I had felt entirely comfortable there, however, until I saw the hat.

The man wearing it paused in front of three teenage Chicano boys and me, greeting his friends and neighbors. The scene seemed appalling. And I wanted a record of it. Click, my phone went, as I snapped a picture.

I had forgotten to silence the shutter. The man spun around. Humiliated and caught, I pretended to take a selfie. The teen boys were, as teen boys often are, absorbed in a hand-held video game, uninterested in the man, the raffle and my disgust. They slumped together on the bench, lost in their virtual second life. ''Did you want to take a picture together or something? With me?'' the man asked. He was chuckling.

I told myself, sometime in 2016, if I ever found myself in an exchange like this, I would say something pointed. Instead, we bared our teeth at each other for a few counts while I tried to draw up sharp words to say. Nothing came. ''No, no,'' I said, ''I took a picture so I could remember this.''

This was not a lie.

We stood there, still smiling, like two people trying to agree on a common language. Until finally I told him I wanted more of the dump cake they were serving and walked away. This was a lie. Throughout it all, the three boys never looked up. That was the first time I saw the hat, and I felt like a fool standing there rattled by it. And I still do whenever I look through my pictures of that trip and see that man and his red Make America Great Again hat.

The third time that I saw a MAGA hat, I finally understood its power. This time, no one was wearing it; it was sprawled out with ludicrously designed bootleg Keep America Great apparel that reminded me of the New Kids on the Block clothing I once begged my mother to purchase. That type of clothing doesn't have a long life, my mother told me then. She was right. At the time, emblazoning a bunch of teeny-bopper singers' faces on my chest seemed like an easy way to put forth my personality. No different from the ''God, Guns & Trump'' shirts and hats I saw at this roadside caravan in West Virginia, just days before the 2020 presidential election.

My husband and I had pulled over not because the gear beckoned us but because the sight of a hyperactive Black man hawking MAGA hats caught my eye. We were less than a mile away from Harpers Ferry, where John Brown, a white man, had conducted his noble abolitionist raid, and here was a Black man selling red hats and Confederate flags to burly, going-through-bad-times white people without any irony.

''Brother, what the eff are you doing?'' I asked him, laughing. He smiled. A gold tooth flashed. Biography came. He was from up North. ''Wasn't about no Trump. Be serious,'' he told me. He also did Freaknik, Daytona, Sturgis. Merchandise is merchandise. If he had things to sell, he would sell them.

''But Trump?'' I said, shaking my head.

He shrugged. A good salesman, he was a quick study of me. His mood changed to no more jokes, just frustration. ''Do me a favor? Please don't run off my business. It's a hustle, my hustle.''

I agreed. We laughed together once more, and we drove off, with him waving goodbye to us in our rearview mirror. Two days later, we drove back that way and passed the stand. The brother was still there, this time with a huge handwritten sign that said, ''5 dollars. Everything must go.'' Including the hats.

Another memory: Once, on the border of two countries in Africa, getting out to stretch my legs, I saw something that I still consider whenever I think of the power of a MAGA hat and the psychic hold that Donald Trump has over his acolytes and his opponents. On the edge of a market was a small table at which what seemed to be talismanic pouches and remedies were being sold. I asked my friend what they were used for, and he told me to stay away. An avowed Christian, he sniffed the air with resentment and explained that they were occult things to protect against bad spirits. ''You have no need for this.''

I agreed with him. But when he wasn't looking, I headed over to the table and studied the sachets and the small crowd of people who, in their stockpiling -- their avid apparent belief in their purchases to recover them, empower them or do right what life had done them wrong -- would later remind me of the West Virginians standing in a line, desperate to buy their MAGA looks, clothes intended to project permanence and strength, days before their MAGA world came tumbling down.

Hegel, Marx and Freud would most likely object to what I'm about to suggest, but the only word that comes to mind whenever I'm asked to consider the hat, and the third presidential campaign of Mr. Trump, is ''fetish.'' Hegel, in the 1820s, put forth an easily refuted lie: that ''Africans'' worship ''the first thing that comes in their way,'' be it ''an animal, a tree, a stone or a wooden figure.'' ''If rain is suspended,'' he wrote, ''if there is a failure in the crops, they bind and beat or destroy the Fetich and so get rid of it, making another immediately, and thus holding it in their own power.'' A fetish object, as identified by these biased Europeans who struggled to define cosmologies they could not understand, was an African object imbued with spiritual belief. But as J. Lorand Matory, a distinguished professor of cultural anthropology at Duke University, recognized in his brilliant upending of the concept of fetish, ''The Fetish Revisited,'' their claim that this irrational relationship with ''false'' gods was specific to Africans actually exposed the limitations of these European thinkers. ''Fetish'' is a polarizing term, its value often animated by rival societies and personal expectations. And the West has also long had its own kind of, as Mr. Matory put it, ''equally useful but human-made reifications.''

The 45th president, for those who abhor him and those who adore him, is not just a well-utilized object. He is a fetish object. If possessed of any form of brilliance, he is a brilliant synthesizer of low American moments; his presence replays the racial suspiciousness of the 1980s and of ''Birth of a Nation'' all at once. He is a brilliant manifestation of what a poor, angry man hopes a rich, angry man will be like; he brilliantly demonstrates what an embittered loser hopes winning will feel like -- vengeful and delicious. A fetish figure is illogical to those on the outside, but it makes perfect sense to those who venerate it.

The menaces and right-wing fires that Mr. Trump unleashed are now beyond his control and, worse, are all but ready to consume him for being a tactless distraction. He outrages traditional conservatives because his behavior blitzkriegs conventions and conceals nothing. His refusal to act like a reasonable person and play by the rules pulls back the curtains on the greased poles upholding so many American structures that prevent and deter equity and progress. He is brash and indiscreet. He is unnecessary trouble. If you consider him as a symbolic object, you understand that an object often outlives its usefulness and routinely gets discarded when more potent, new idols appear.

Whatever remains of Mr. Trump's close-to-supernatural hold on America relies on two things: his base's need for him to articulate what would get most people fired and the incoherence and insincerity of the many liberals who discussed him with so much compulsion, they almost spun like dervishes. Once he appeared, they avoided having to truly commit themselves to the progressive movement, and they did not produce any real strategies to combat the xenophobic racism he bellowed; instead victory, for many liberals, in particular the wealthy ones, became all about defeating the man, not the underpinnings of what had propelled him to power or the foundational myths that created him. They put up Breonna Taylor's image in their windows and did little else. Whole histories of subversions and violent radical protest were co-opted into trite abbreviations like ''D.E.I.'' People donated to circumvent self-interrogation. He gave them camouflage. It was and is a dangerous loop. For me, the weightlessness of the liberal response to the surge of right-wing thought in America is as concerning as the return of the former president.

That MAGA's greatest demographic enemy when it came to the polls was Black women is proof of the long arm of Black history. Who else was ready to take him off his vulture's perch? His racial chauvinism was remarkable only in the sense that it was a deft regurgitation of the bones of his predecessors.

My grandmother died many years ago. But I think of her often, especially whenever I think of Mr. Trump. My grandmother and me? It's not that we had an easy relationship -- we did not -- but now, in the era of Trump, she exists for me as a parable or an oracle, an unburied Southern ghost, smoking, gray haired, sipping her Sanka, eye cocked at my ways and confident that I was not the one. She was complicated, and so she was a profound introduction to a country I still do not understand but belong to and cannot quit. I have no idea what my grandmother thought of the Trumps in any deep way. But through her, I was introduced to a glossary that lasts, of the most American of names, ideals, signs and symbols. And among the most persevering of them is Donald Trump's.

For the 15 years that she lived in our house, my grandmother was a Winston-smoking primer for an America that I believed was long gone, a time catacombed inside her taste for Mary Jane candies, afternoons spent shellacking down her shoulder-length hair with bergamot hair grease. She spent her almost indistinguishable days in front of her television watching her shows: ''In the Heat of the Night,'' ''Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous'' with Robin Leach and ''The Young and the Restless.'' What was going on outside was their business. In her room, we lived in the American South, as she recalled it.

I keep saying that my grandmother was Southern, but she was not just Southern. She was Louisianian, and therefore her morality was hot and judgmental but also fervid, touched with the kind of heat of someone who had seen the extremes and lusciousness of life, swamps, boudin blanc, rosaries, floods and sensuality. She spoke of uplift, excess, decay and wrought-iron French architecture, Louisiana whiffs of Haiti and West Africa. She read the Bible daily and smoked until the birth of my younger sister, someone who gave her a reason to live. She moved North to care for us but was so wary of her new surroundings that she rarely socialized or left her room. She was Black by choice and Black and Asian by biology, and she preferred dark skin, in particular pitch-colored men above all, as if to assert that the racial designation bestowed upon her by Jim Crow could be bested by her sincere love of a deep-down brown-skinned handsome man. She married many times. Her mother went to college, but my grandmother suffered the vast humiliation of not doing well in anything except home economics at the school where her mother taught. So my grandmother was determined to make sure that her three girls would return to her mother's legacy and that do-for-self form of formal Black self-education.

My grandmother didn't work yet managed money so well that not only did they all get graduate degrees, but they did so with few loans. My grandmother was unyielding toward me, often telling me if I ran too fast, I would fall. I had no idea what this threat or admonition -- or was it fear? -- meant until I was much older and she was dead.

Because my grandmother loved her television, I have known of Donald Trump my entire life. He was the rich man of my childhood. He is now the rich man of my adulthood. I remember sitting in my grandmother's room watching some terrible chiffon of a television movie that showed a fictionalized version of the Trumps' marriage. There was Ivana Trump, ostensibly skiing across the Czech border on an endless slope toward freedom. And there were the two of us, grandmother and child, finding the rare mutual core to cheer together for something -- a woman's flight away from her limitations, propelled by her wits, as best could be represented by two pieces of fiberglass in forward motion taking her closer and closer to the kind of life my grandmother, as a Black woman, could only imagine: Greenwich, Conn., gold veneer, a rich slag of a husband and the bright lights of New York City.

When I was young, maybe too young, she was also the first person to tell me about another fetish, the Ku Klux Klan. She didn't fear it, but she knew all about it.

This is where we must hold these convergences in the same American line: That my grandmother introduced me to the Ku Klux Klan and the phenomenal wealth of Mr. Trump can make sense only in the context of her room, where not only the South rose again but it also stampeded into her a sense of things the way that racism does for all Black people, uninvited, braying and ready to ride over you senseless.

I wonder what my grandmother would have thought of Mr. Trump's evolution into public, overt racism, if the overripening of his capitalism into fetid hatred would have surprised her. Or if she would have accepted it as the confirmation of her remove from people she did not trust, her extraperceptive sense that everything was possible within them and that a dislike of Black people and Black self-determination should always be expected, if not anticipated. But as much as she distrusted everyone, my Black Southern grandmother held the good liberals around us at a certain distance, as if she could tell they were not rugged warriors. No, our friends in our Northern city of Philadelphia were the kinds of people wholly unprepared to battle with the nastiness she had seen and witnessed. They made the fight sound good, but their knuckles and wills were untested. This strange woman in our house! I spent much of my childhood thinking that my socially calloused grandmother was wrong on that account. Until she was right.

These days, so many of us speak the language of emergency, but where is the language of integrity, sincerity and dedication?

Gone is the ability to bear down, to think beyond ourselves, even in the most basic ways. Instead, we have been left to navigate a disabling pandemic on our own, with the most vulnerable left to their own resources.

We are becoming a country anesthetized to people saying, ''I am afraid for my life.'' The war on one another demands that we not stop to ask, ''Why are you afraid?'' but rather that we bear our right to be callous and to keep on.

Mr. Trump gave people something to coalesce around as a communion of disdain, but it signified nothing at the end of the day. The vaporization of investment appeared everywhere. For centuries, Quakers, known as the Friends, led the fight for abolition, sat out the Vietnam War and fought tirelessly for civil rights in America. But two years ago, Brooklyn Friends School attempted to decertify its teachers' union, using a Trump-backed ruling designed to prevent certain employees from unionizing.

In 2017, The New Yorker published a fantastic cartoon cover of Mr. Trump blowing air into a boat's sail that resembled an eerie K.K.K. hood. This strong public stance against white supremacy was later gravely undermined by the intrepid work of the magazine's archivist Erin Overbey, who disclosed a number of statistics about diversity at the publication. (She was later fired.) The same magazine that had implied that Mr. Trump was a bigot was discovered to have published in 30 years of its weekly publication fewer than five profiles by Black women.

In 2020, David Zapolsky, Amazon's general counsel, reportedly described Christian Smalls -- a Black Amazon worker who had led a significant walkout at one of its warehouses -- as being ''not smart or articulate.'' Two months later, in the heat of that June we will never forget, without offering any kind of apology to Mr. Smalls, a Black labor leader standing up to a billionaire, Mr. Zapolsky wrote a memo detailing his commitment to Black life.

Those harnessing this brand of power would actually like us to imagine that our strength is a fluke. Or would have us think that the precariousness and alienation that Black people experience is merely a kind of speculative fiction unless filmed or photographed. When in reality we simply have to ask ourselves why we keep imagining that those with no blisters on their fingers, no courage or clarity of spirit should be at all qualified to take on Mr. Trump or the right.

In a bifurcated political system such as America's, us against them is often taken to the utmost extremes. The faded stain of civil war is always present. But Mr. Trump, because he broadcast so loudly a kind of uncommon indecency, if not ignorance, provided those who opposed him with a four-year screed that propelled us all into an airless nightmare whether we want to admit it or not. Found in Mr. Trump's inability to shut up was a kind of fuel for a furious energy that had been missing in liberal circles for decades. People knitted pussy hats. They put images of slaughtered Black people in their windows. They purchased rhinestone-lettered bracelets that spelled ''Obama.'' They took to the streets fortified to declare mutiny against Mr. Trump's America. It was an energetic performance. But ultimately, it was just that: a performance. Mr. Trump, the president, was treated by so many like a boogeyman, the person bellowing at the perimeters of our towns who impatiently demanded more while those bemoaning him continued to feed and negotiate with him in order to preserve their own lives.

But liberals cannot continue to depend upon Black urban centers, the ***working class*** and the young to save this fragile democracy without any authentic commitment to improving our futures in tangible ways. They have to view the defense of our lives not as a culture war but as a progression of values to bring forth leaders who can see America in its totality. There must be lasting recognition of the young voters and the communities laboring nonstop to send Mr. Trump and his hate to the dustbin of history. The work will not be light. But it cannot splinter us. We see now that there is a way out of this shattering, out of this American fetishism and fatalism and into recovery.

The first time I headed South on my own, with no obligation to see aunts and cousins, I headed straight to Oxford, Miss. Where the heat makes you feel vertiginous. Crowded with Ole Miss college students, Oxford rests on red clay and fallen magnolia flower petals, swarmed by echoes, shadows, history and grief. I felt the anguish of the past there, the fragility of the present. And in a motel just off the main square, I found reinforcement from the words of a writer who mostly wrote about women like my beautiful grandmother only as maids, but he still retained a kind of unsettling sight, a way of seeing how ill we are and why. He was a brilliant American because he knew he was flawed. He knew that none of us are perfect, that we all have inherited a sickness and ache from residing in this place and we must contend with it by facing it with a sense of honesty that actually dismantles, disintegrates and reveals. And so in ''Absalom, Absalom!'' there is a passage that all ''good'' American liberals should read whenever they find themselves fearful about the return of Mr. Trump:

''His very body was an empty hall echoing with sonorous defeated names; he was not a being, an entity,'' William Faulkner wrote. ''He was a barracks filled with stubborn back looking ghosts still recovering, even 43 years afterward, from the fever which had cured the disease, waking from the fever without even knowing that it had been the fever itself which they had fought against and not the sickness.''

Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah is an essayist. In 2018, she won a Pulitzer Prize for feature writing.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/18/opinion/trump-maga-fetish.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/11/18/opinion/trump-maga-fetish.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (SR8-SR9) This article appeared in print on page SR8, SR9.

**Load-Date:** November 20, 2022

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[***What Is a Home? In ‘Aftershocks,’ the Answer Is Not So Clear; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:61S9-M981-DXY4-X1KN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 15, 2021 Friday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 689 words

**Byline:** Fahima Haque

**Highlight:** In her memoir, Nadia Owusu contemplates what it means to find home.

**Body**

AFTERSHOCKS

By Nadia Owusu

Where are you from? If someone were to ask, you might cite your current ZIP code or share where you were raised. You might mention where your ancestors lived. You might explain whether you grew up rooted to one cul-de-sac, one city block, one country.

But for Nadia Owusu, the question is not so simple. The daughter of a Ghanaian father who worked for a United Nations agency and an Armenian-American mother, she has lived a nomadic life — she was born in Tanzania, then, as a child, lived in Uganda, Ethiopia, Italy and England. Later, when she was 18, she moved to New York for college and stayed there for her entire adult life. “Confused?” she asks. “Me too. I never know how to answer the question of my origin.”

Owusu’s debut memoir, “Aftershocks,” is her attempt to explain.

In “Aftershocks,” Owusu reflects on her childhood and her 20s, feeling untethered from the world because of her father’s diplomatic background and from her family, which is complicated by divorce and death. The narrative is straightforward but Owusu uses formats like a resettlement intake form and symbols like a recycled blue chair found on the streets of New York City to tell her story. The dominant motif, however, is an earthquake. Owusu opens the book with a chapter titled “First Earthquake” and chapters are grouped under sections with labels that include “Foreshocks,” “Faults,” “Aftershocks” and more.

[ This memoir was one of our most anticipated books of January. [*See the full list*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/23/books/january-2021-books.html). ]

Throughout the book, Owusu writes poignantly about belonging and assimilation, including wishing her aunties taught her Twi, a Ghanaian dialect that is her father’s native tongue, and code-switching by dropping her posh accent when playing with children in a ***working-class*** neighborhood in London. But the connective tissue of the book is the near-constant guilt she experiences as she grapples with identity and her willingness to erase the most vibrant parts of herself in an attempt to belong.

In one instance, Owusu details how she betrayed the only other Black girl at the Catholic boarding school she attended, making fun of the girl’s hair to the white students. “In reality, Agatha smelled like my family,” she confesses. In another, Owusu recalls feeling conflicted when her uncle, a cabdriver, drops her off at college. “‘I’m going to college too,’ he said. ‘Next year. The cab is only temporary.’ I was embarrassed that he felt the need to tell me that, that he needed me to know he was more than the immigrant man behind the wheel of a yellow cab.”

Owusu is unflinching in examining herself, which is commendable, but her self-reflection can veer toward the melodramatic and her repeated ruminations don’t yield further clarity. “The boy’s bird body haunts me,” she says when she sees a child beggar collapse in Ethiopia. “He hovers over me in judgment when I feel sorry for myself, but he cannot stop me from feeling sorry for myself.”

Owusu also writes about the relationships in her life. She tells us about a man who she thought was her great love in her 20s, and of the foul men who assaulted her when she was a child, and of the many hapless men she has slept with. But Owusu’s book is most alive when she writes about her parents.

It’s clear that Owusu believes most in her father, whom she so lovingly called “Baba-Mama.” Her father died when Owusu was a teenager, and his death remains a shadow over everything she does. She was initially told he died of cancer, but when Owusu was 28, her stepmother unexpectedly told her, without proof, that he had died of AIDS. It’s an assertion that makes her question everything she thought she knew.

In the end, Owusu ultimately answers what home is. Her definition is pure and restorative to read. “I am made of the earth, flesh, ocean, blood and bone of all the places I tried to belong to and all the people I long for. I am pieces. I am whole. I am home.”

Fahima Haque is the audiences editor for The Times’s National desk and works on the weekly Race/Related newsletter. AFTERSHOCKS By Nadia Owusu 299 pp. Simon & Schuster. $26.

PHOTO: Nadia Owusu PHOTOGRAPH BY BEOWULF SHEEHAN)

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2021

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[***Joe Biden Makes His Pitch to America***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60N5-CMD1-JBG3-6315-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 22, 2020 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 20; LETTERS

**Length:** 585 words

**Body**

Readers were uplifted by the candidate's speech and offer praise for the virtual proceedings.

To the Editor:

Re ''Biden Vows to Guide U.S. Out of 'Darkness''' (front page, Aug. 21):

Joe Biden gave one of the most powerfully delivered speeches I have witnessed in my lifetime. I could feel my blood pressure lower and my anxiety level begin to dissipate as he spoke. All I kept saying to myself was ''Yes!'' at each of his strong points. I experience the exact opposite feeling when I watch the current president speak.

Truth over lies; science over wishful thinking; love over hate. That's the America I want to live in. I wish Election Day were tomorrow.

Len DiSesaDoylestown, Pa.

To the Editor:

For the first time in almost four years, I have a genuine sense of hope in the United States after watching the Democratic convention. I have watched the way the United States has been diminished in international and domestic affairs. Finally there is a prospective leader offering himself for election who speaks from the heart and acts from experience.

The world is waiting for American moral and economic leadership -- to become a beacon for those around the globe who long for a better world.

Stephen PlunkettLittlebourne, England

To the Editor:

An open letter to everyone who had a part in making the Democratic convention such a success:

Thank you for your stupendous work! You presented a creative, informative, thought-provoking and inspiring production. Especially touching were the children singing our national anthem, the roll-call vote and young Brayden Harrington, who had the courage to go on national TV despite his stutter.

Susanna EhrmannNorthbrook, Ill.

To the Editor:

Having just watched Joe Biden speak, wrapping up the Democratic convention, and putting aside all the obvious reasons he deserves to be president, I was struck by this: the crowd gathered in the parking lot of a shopping center, the modest fireworks display, the people honking the horns of their cars, creating an atmosphere of a ''real'' America -- an America many of us grew up with and remember with nostalgia and warmth.

To me it was infinitely more effective and affecting than an arena filled with tens of thousands of people and balloons dropping.

Might this be the future of political conventions?

MacKenzie AllenSanta Fe, N.M.

To the Editor:

As an unrepentant child of the Sixties, I am a social progressive who welcomes all the signs of inclusion the Democrats have shown us thus far in the diversity of its spokespeople, from celebrities to ''ordinary people,'' from rising political stars of every color and ethnicity to the Old Guard urging us on, and from Democratic activists to courageous Republicans.

However, there is one group that has not been equally represented, and I fear that we Democrats are about to repeat the mistakes of 2016 by slighting that group: ***working-class*** and middle-class white men. They were once dependable Democrats but more recently might feel overlooked and underappreciated, rendering them vulnerable to wooing by our current president, or susceptible to not voting at all.

If we are to have any hope of defeating Donald Trump, we need their votes and we need their inclusion in our vision of a united America. We should include them, their faces and their voices, in our messaging. They are, by and large, the same good and decent people, with the same fears and frustrations, as the rest of those we are currently showcasing.

Laurie J. MacdonaldYork, Maine

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/letters/joe-biden-democratic-convention.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/21/opinion/letters/joe-biden-democratic-convention.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. accepted the Democratic Party nomination for president on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 22, 2020

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[***Joe Biden Makes His Pitch to America; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60N1-4TS1-JBG3-62G8-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 21, 2020 Friday 00:21 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 603 words

**Highlight:** Readers were uplifted by the candidate’s speech and offer praise for the virtual proceedings.

**Body**

Readers were uplifted by the candidate’s speech and offer praise for the virtual proceedings.

To the Editor:

Re “[*Biden Vows to Guide U.S. Out of ‘Darkness’*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/20/us/politics/Joe-Biden-accepts-democratic-nomination.html)” (front page, Aug. 21):

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Laurie J. Macdonald

York, Maine

PHOTO: Joseph R. Biden Jr. accepted the Democratic Party nomination for president on Thursday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Erin Schaff/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 22, 2020

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[***One Queens Building, and Their Third Place There***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64CX-4GF1-DXY4-X1HF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 26, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 5; RENTERS

**Length:** 1276 words

**Byline:** By D.W. Gibson

**Body**

When they needed more space, and then enough room to work at home, they graduated to ever-larger apartments in the same Astoria building. But what comes next?

Isaac Goldberg was working on the 2014 re-election campaign of Representative Steve Israel, Democrat of Huntington, N.Y., when he decided to have a party in his Astoria, Queens, apartment. He sent out a mass invite to everyone working on campaigns for Democrats on Long Island.

Anna Doré didn't know Mr. Goldberg, but she was helping out with another campaign, heard about the party and decided to go. Ms. Doré, who works in public relations, has spent only five months of the last seven years working in politics. But that short window of time just happened to coincide with Mr. Goldberg's party. ''It was very much kismet,'' she said.

It was also 90 degrees when she arrived, and most of the partygoers were circled around the air-conditioning unit, nursing Jell-O shots to keep cool. Campaign posters, an American flag and a 1996 Yankees championship poster adorned the walls. ''The décor was definitely in need of some love and affection,'' Ms. Doré said.

Surrounded by a mix of memorabilia, election talk and spiked refreshment, she and Mr. Goldberg found each other. One spark led to another and, seven years later, they are married and living in the same building where they met.

''We joke that Anna came to a party at my apartment and hasn't left since,'' Mr. Goldberg said. The joke is only partially true: While the couple has stayed in the building, they are living in their third apartment there -- all on the same floor.

It was just a few months into their relationship when Ms. Doré moved in with Mr. Goldberg. She had been living on the Upper East Side, but fate forced her hand when a 4 a.m. fire broke out in her building. ''Isaac raced over and came to the rescue,'' she said, ''even though we were just newly dating.''

She stayed with him that night, and the next day her building was condemned. Sharing the one-bedroom with Mr. Goldberg quickly evolved from a short-term fix to a long-term commitment.

''I didn't want to be burned into living together,'' Ms. Doré said. ''But it worked out.''

Eventually, she did lament that the circumstances of the fire robbed them of a moment when they could, more deliberately, arrive at the decision to move in together. The night after she mentioned that to him, she came home from work to find that Mr. Goldberg had a dozen roses waiting for her. ''There was a note with them,'' she said. ''He wrote, 'I've lived alone and I've lived with you, and I never want to live alone again. Will you move in with me?' To which I said, 'Well done.'''

They were happy together, but it was a small one-bedroom -- and there was still that Yankees poster. Then they got word that their neighbors across the hall were moving out of a two-bedroom apartment.

''I think by the time they found a place,'' Mr. Goldberg said, ''we basically had our couches in their apartment.''

The bigger place had a eat-in kitchen and an extra bedroom to turn into a home office for Mr. Goldberg, who still works as a political consultant -- and the move required little work. ''The doorways line up perfectly,'' Ms. Doré said. ''So you could just push our stuff directly across the hallway.''

In 2019, after the couple married at the Queens Museum, they envisioned themselves remaining in the second apartment for years to come. But then, Covid.

With both of them working from home, Ms. Doré set up a makeshift office in the bedroom. ''I was sharing a wall with Isaac in his office,'' she said. ''As a political consultant, Isaac tends to talk on the phone all day.''

Investing in noise-canceling headphones helped ''preserve our sanity,'' she said, but it soon became clear that they needed a more permanent fix.

They thought the day had finally come when they would move into another building. Over a couple of months, they looked at 10 apartments in 10 buildings, sticking to Astoria for their search.

They are, by Mr. Goldberg's admission, ''Astoria obsessed.'' For more than two years, Ms. Doré ran a locally focused Instagram account, WeHeartAstoria.

''I started to love the neighborhood through that lens,'' she said. ''We knew we didn't want to leave.''

For his part, Mr. Goldberg is attracted to Astoria's livability and ***working-class*** feel: ''There's the joke that the two hardest things to find in Astoria are doormen and dishwashers.''

$2,600 | Astoria, Queens

Anna Doré, 30; Isaac Goldberg, 33

Occupation: Ms. Doré is senior director of communications at Rothy's, a fashion company; Mr. Goldberg is a Democratic campaign consultant at BerlinRosen.

On Doing What You Love: Mr. Goldberg started his career in politics as an intern for the 2008 Obama campaign: ''I've always loved politics,'' he said, ''and I've always felt blessed that my hobby and profession overlap.'' Ms. Doré enjoys working in public relations, she said, because ''it's storytelling, at its core.''

The Proposal: Mr. Goldberg proposed to Ms. Doré at Elias Corner for Fish, a favorite neighborhood restaurant. ''It's classic no-frills,'' he said. ''They don't even have menus. The waiter comes over and tells you which fish they have in the case. I proposed in the middle of the restaurant, and everyone clapped.''

During their apartment search, they ran into a neighbor from their building at a bodega. ''We saw Mike,'' Ms. Doré said, ''and he told us, 'Heads up, we're moving to Long Island.'''

They were invited to have a look at the apartment and didn't waste any time stopping by. ''That night, we knocked on the door while the kids were eating dinner,'' Ms. Doré said, laughing. ''And we're, like, 'Yeah, we live here now.'''

It was another two-bedroom apartment, but about 200 square feet larger, with a dining room and a foyer. ''We were thinking to ourselves, 'Are we really going to be in a third apartment in the same building?''' Ms. Doré said. ''The answer turned out to be a very clear 'yes.'''

Both moves have been possible not only because of good relationships with their neighbors, but also because of the landlord's accessibility and the informal atmosphere in the building: Letters regarding modest rent increases carry an apologetic tone, and announcements to tenants are posted in the hallways, handwritten by the super.

''It makes it possible to approach them and say, 'Hey, look, we've been model tenants, minus a few raucous parties -- can we move down the hall?''' Ms. Doré said.

By now, they have been in the third apartment for a year. With more space to decorate together, Mr. Goldberg has managed to retain a few mementos in his office. ''It's critical,'' he said, ''that the 1996 Yankees championship poster is still displayed prominently.''

Ms. Doré has her own work space now, in the living room. ''I'm not in the bedroom anymore,'' she said, ''which is great for my sanity. And my Zoom background.''

She said her mother noted -- as did Mr. Goldberg's mother -- that the apartment might be big enough for children. ''I think both moms are cautiously optimistic in that department,'' she said. ''No plans yet, but it could happen in this apartment.''

That is, unless the neighbor across the hall moves out.

''He's been here since the '70s,'' Ms. Doré said. ''He's an old rocker who teaches guitar lessons and is perpetually threatening to run off to Florida. He has this insane three-bedroom we've been eyeing for years.''

She paused briefly, then added: ''I guess you could say we don't know how the story ends.''

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/20/realestate/renters-astoria-queens.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/20/realestate/renters-astoria-queens.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Anna Doré and Isaac Goldberg have lived in three of the eight apartments on the fifth floor of their building. Above, the couple's current apartment includes a spacious kitchen. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 26, 2021

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[***100 Years Later, They're Still Waiting for the Train***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PV-X621-JBG3-6549-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 6, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MB; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1353 words

**Byline:** By Ana Ley

**Body**

Residents have been waiting almost a century for new stations. Some aren't sure they'll be built.

Politicians have long promised to bring East Harlem a new subway line that would give this historically neglected community better transit access to the rest of New York and shift passengers away from some of the country's most crowded train lines.

The idea appears to have gained renewed momentum, with Gov. Kathy Hochul vowing to finish the project within a decade and transportation officials saying the $1 trillion federal infrastructure bill passed last year can help cover half the estimated $6.3 billion cost of what would be one of the world's most expensive transit projects.

Funds from the bill could help finance a more than $3 billion grant request from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates the subway, that the Federal Transit Administration is moving closer to approving. Transit officials hope to break ground by the end of the year.

''Things never looked better for getting the Second Avenue subway to East Harlem,'' said Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, a Democrat and the majority leader.

Still, given the long-awaited project's many starts and stops, the latest announcements have been met with skepticism in a heavily ***working-class*** neighborhood where 71 percent of residents use public transit to get to work, compared with a citywide average of 56 percent, according to Census Bureau data.

''I think that it's sad that it's taken this long,'' said Princess Jenkins, who owns The Brownstone, a clothing store on East 125th Street a short walk from the subway line's proposed path. ''We want people to be able to access this community.''

The Second Avenue subway line was envisioned to stretch north along the Upper East Side of Manhattan to East Harlem, and south to Lower Manhattan. So far only one part of the plan, along the Upper East Side, has been completed. Here is a look at where the project stands.

Why do supporters want this subway line?

While much of Manhattan is well served by the subway, some neighborhoods along the East River, like East Harlem, can be a long walk from the nearest station.

The extension would add three new subway stops along the Q line between 96th Street and 125th Street, and is expected to serve about 123,000 daily riders, according to the transit agency.

Mitchell Moss, a professor of urban planning at New York University, said the new section would be noteworthy as the ''first major project that isn't serving Manhattan's elite.''

Beside making the subway more accessible, community leaders believe the new line could bring more foot traffic to some of the area's small businesses and boost the local economy.

''I think you have a lot of people that are pining for the neighborhood to be thriving and vibrant and full of positive energy,'' said Carey King, the director of Uptown Grand Central, a nonprofit.

In 2019, the median household income in East Harlem was $32,960, less than half the citywide median household income of $70,590, according to an analysis of Census Bureau data by N.Y.U. researchers. About 43 percent of East Harlem's population of roughly 111,000 identify as Hispanic and 36 percent as Black.

''It could make a really big difference,'' said Representative Adriano D. Espaillat, whose district includes East Harlem.

Why has it taken so long?

A proposal to build the Second Avenue subway was introduced in 1929. The Great Depression caused the first delay and over the years officials kept diverting funds for competing interests.

''If the state ever needed money, they would just take it from the Second Avenue subway,'' said Representative Carolyn Maloney, a Democrat, whose district is adjacent to East Harlem and includes the Upper East Side, where the first phase of the project was built.

For decades, price hikes, political jockeying and international crises have gotten in the way. In the 1940s, World War II sapped resources and manpower. The Korean War triggered a spike in material costs. In one push in the 1970s, several groundbreakings were held, but work stopped when the city nearly went bankrupt. The most recent incarnation was started in the 1990s.

The first phase of the subway project took about 10 years to build and opened on Jan. 1, 2017, connecting a Lexington Avenue station to Second Avenue and adding new stations at 72nd, 86th and 96th Streets. Before the pandemic, about 200,000 people rode it daily. Ridership has crept up to about 58 percent of that level.

M.T.A. officials say it has eased crowding along the Lexington Avenue line -- which had been the nation's most overcrowded subway line -- reducing ridership during peak morning periods by roughly 40 percent, from 18,400 riders to 10,800.

The extension would create new stations at 106th, 116th and 125th Streets.

Two final phases of the subway line would extend it south to Lower Manhattan, though, for the moment, they are largely just diagrams on a plan.

How much will it cost?

A New York Times investigation showed that at $2.5 billion per mile, construction for the first section of the Second Avenue subway cost more than almost every other recent transit project in the world.

In total that section cost more than $4.4 billion. Pushing the line north is projected to cost nearly $6.3 billion, and major infrastructure projects almost always end up costing more than initially estimated.

The review by The Times -- which included interviews with more than 50 contractors and nearly 100 current and former M.T.A. employees -- found that transit projects in New York cost more than in other cities because trade unions, construction companies and consulting firms all take larger profits here than elsewhere.

The M.T.A. would pay half the cost with the expectation that the federal government would cover the rest.

What are the challenges?

A big one, not surprisingly, is money.

During a tour of the proposed construction site late last year, Ms. Hochul said she wanted to break ground by the end of this year and complete the project within six to eight years.

But the M.T.A.'s struggle to lure back riders and the likelihood that hybrid work schedules will endure even after the pandemic has left the agency in a precarious financial state -- in November, it forecast a $1.4 billion deficit in 2025. There are no guarantees that money for the new section of line won't be diverted again.

Some local leaders and residents also worry that the Second Avenue subway could lead to new development in the neighborhood that pushes out longtime residents and small businesses.

By the end of the first phase of the project, stretches of the Upper East Side had changed. Many mom-and-pop shops had closed, replaced by chain stores and luxury high-rises in an area that has a mix of well-off and middle-income residents. The median residential rent in buildings surrounding Second Avenue rose by 27 percent from 2011 to 2016, according to Street Easy.

And the construction also caused significant disruptions, with neighbors and local businesses complaining of noise and obstructions that it made it hard to get to stores.

Jimmy Levantis, the manager of Nick's Restaurant & Pizzeria, which is near the 96th Street station, said the decade of construction was ''like a hell.'' Customers couldn't walk or drive to his restaurant.

''They came, destroyed everything,'' he said. Still, once the new section opened, it did increase business, at least until the pandemic hit.

City Councilwoman Diana Ayala, whose district includes East Harlem, worries about ''the unintended consequence of this added infrastructure'' and added that a focus should be on ''protecting small businesses and taking a look at the potential displacement of residents.''

She worries for people like Hector Quiroz, whose restaurant Lechonera La Isla has spent decades serving pernil and pig's feet, and is steps away from what would be the new 125th Street station.

Mr. Quiroz, who owns the restaurant along with his wife, said he had no plans to leave.

''Not even a crane could take me away,'' Mr. Quiroz said in Spanish.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/nyregion/second-avenue-subway-harlem.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/31/nyregion/second-avenue-subway-harlem.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, transit workers along a stretch of the Second Avenue subway line. The next phase of the project will push the line into East Harlem. Above left is a view of construction in East Harlem in 1977. Above right, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo celebrated the opening of the first phase of the Second Avenue subway five years ago. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS

BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

DON HOGAN CHARLES/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 6, 2022

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[***The Mystic of Mar-a-Lago; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:66WM-2Y91-JBG3-60X6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 18, 2022 Friday 23:15 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 3444 words

**Byline:** Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah

**Highlight:** Donald Trump gave people something to coalesce around as a communion of disdain, but it signified nothing at the end of the day.

**Body**

The first time I saw the hat was out West four years ago. On a reporting trip to a small fruit-growing agricultural town divided between white Republicans and Mexican and Central American migrant workers, I was invited to attend a raffle luncheon. Within minutes of my arrival, a jovial, big-bellied white man walked into the lobby of the community center that was hosting the event, wearing the hat. I was a Black woman alone. I had felt entirely comfortable there, however, until I saw the hat.

The man wearing it paused in front of three teenage Chicano boys and me, greeting his friends and neighbors. The scene seemed appalling. And I wanted a record of it. Click, my phone went, as I snapped a picture.

I had forgotten to silence the shutter. The man spun around. Humiliated and caught, I pretended to take a selfie. The teen boys were, as teen boys often are, absorbed in a hand-held video game, uninterested in the man, the raffle and my disgust. They slumped together on the bench, lost in their virtual second life. “Did you want to take a picture together or something? With me?” the man asked. He was chuckling.

I told myself, sometime in 2016, if I ever found myself in an exchange like this, I would say something pointed. Instead, we bared our teeth at each other for a few counts while I tried to draw up sharp words to say. Nothing came. “No, no,” I said, “I took a picture so I could remember this.”

This was not a lie.

We stood there, still smiling, like two people trying to agree on a common language. Until finally I told him I wanted more of the dump cake they were serving and walked away. This was a lie. Throughout it all, the three boys never looked up. That was the first time I saw the hat, and I felt like a fool standing there rattled by it. And I still do whenever I look through my pictures of that trip and see that man and his red Make America Great Again hat.

The third time that I saw a MAGA hat, I finally understood its power. This time, no one was wearing it; it was sprawled out with ludicrously designed bootleg Keep America Great apparel that reminded me of the New Kids on the Block clothing I once begged my mother to purchase. That type of clothing doesn’t have a long life, my mother told me then. She was right. At the time, emblazoning a bunch of teeny-bopper singers’ faces on my chest seemed like an easy way to put forth my personality. No different from the “God, Guns &amp; Trump” shirts and hats I saw at this roadside caravan in West Virginia, just days before the 2020 presidential election.

My husband and I had pulled over not because the gear beckoned us but because the sight of a hyperactive Black man hawking MAGA hats caught my eye. We were less than a mile away from Harpers Ferry, where John Brown, a white man, had conducted his noble abolitionist raid, and here was a Black man selling red hats and Confederate flags to burly, going-through-bad-times white people without any irony.

“Brother, what the eff are you doing?” I asked him, laughing. He smiled. A gold tooth flashed. Biography came. He was from up North. “Wasn’t about no Trump. Be serious,” he told me. He also did Freaknik, Daytona, Sturgis. Merchandise is merchandise. If he had things to sell, he would sell them.

“But Trump?” I said, shaking my head.

He shrugged. A good salesman, he was a quick study of me. His mood changed to no more jokes, just frustration. “Do me a favor? Please don’t run off my business. It’s a hustle, my hustle.”

I agreed. We laughed together once more, and we drove off, with him waving goodbye to us in our rearview mirror. Two days later, we drove back that way and passed the stand. The brother was still there, this time with a huge handwritten sign that said, “5 dollars. Everything must go.” Including the hats.

Another memory: Once, on the border of two countries in Africa, getting out to stretch my legs, I saw something that I still consider whenever I think of the power of a MAGA hat and the psychic hold that Donald Trump has over his acolytes and his opponents. On the edge of a market was a small table at which what seemed to be talismanic pouches and remedies were being sold. I asked my friend what they were used for, and he told me to stay away. An avowed Christian, he sniffed the air with resentment and explained that they were occult things to protect against bad spirits. “You have no need for this.”

I agreed with him. But when he wasn’t looking, I headed over to the table and studied the sachets and the small crowd of people who, in their stockpiling — their avid apparent belief in their purchases to recover them, empower them or do right what life had done them wrong — would later remind me of the West Virginians standing in a line, desperate to buy their MAGA looks, clothes intended to project permanence and strength, days before their MAGA world came tumbling down.

Hegel, Marx and Freud would most likely object to what I’m about to suggest, but the only word that comes to mind whenever I’m asked to consider the hat, and the third presidential campaign of Mr. Trump, is “fetish.” Hegel, in the 1820s, put forth an easily refuted lie: that “Africans” worship “the first thing that comes in their way,” be it “an animal, a tree, a stone or a wooden figure.” “If rain is suspended,” he wrote, “if there is a failure in the crops, they bind and beat or destroy the Fetich and so get rid of it, making another immediately, and thus holding it in their own power.” A fetish object, as identified by these biased Europeans who struggled to define cosmologies they could not understand, was an African object imbued with spiritual belief. But as J. Lorand Matory, a distinguished professor of cultural anthropology at Duke University, recognized in his brilliant upending of the concept of fetish, “The Fetish Revisited,” their claim that this irrational relationship with “false” gods was specific to Africans actually exposed the limitations of these European thinkers. “Fetish” is a polarizing term, its value often animated by rival societies and personal expectations. And the West has also long had its own kind of, as Mr. Matory put it, “equally useful but human-made reifications.”

The 45th president, for those who abhor him and those who adore him, is not just a well-utilized object. He is a fetish object. If possessed of any form of brilliance, he is a brilliant synthesizer of low American moments; his presence replays the racial suspiciousness of the 1980s and of “Birth of a Nation” all at once. He is a brilliant manifestation of what a poor, angry man hopes a rich, angry man will be like; he brilliantly demonstrates what an embittered loser hopes winning will feel like — vengeful and delicious. A fetish figure is illogical to those on the outside, but it makes perfect sense to those who venerate it.

The menaces and right-wing fires that Mr. Trump unleashed are now beyond his control and, worse, are all but ready to consume him for being a tactless distraction. He outrages traditional conservatives because his behavior blitzkriegs conventions and conceals nothing. His refusal to act like a reasonable person and play by the rules pulls back the curtains on the greased poles upholding so many American structures that prevent and deter equity and progress. He is brash and indiscreet. He is unnecessary trouble. If you consider him as a symbolic object, you understand that an object often outlives its usefulness and routinely gets discarded when more potent, new idols appear.

Whatever remains of Mr. Trump’s close-to-supernatural hold on America relies on two things: his base’s need for him to articulate what would get most people fired and the incoherence and insincerity of the many liberals who discussed him with so much compulsion, they almost spun like dervishes. Once he appeared, they avoided having to truly commit themselves to the progressive movement, and they did not produce any real strategies to combat the xenophobic racism he bellowed; instead victory, for many liberals, in particular the wealthy ones, became all about defeating the man, not the underpinnings of what had propelled him to power or the foundational myths that created him. They put up Breonna Taylor’s image in their windows and did little else. Whole histories of subversions and violent radical protest were co-opted into trite abbreviations like “D.E.I.” People donated to circumvent self-interrogation. He gave them camouflage. It was and is a dangerous loop. For me, the weightlessness of the liberal response to the surge of right-wing thought in America is as concerning as the return of the former president.

That MAGA’s greatest demographic enemy when it came to the polls was Black women is proof of the long arm of Black history. Who else was ready to take him off his vulture’s perch? His racial chauvinism was remarkable only in the sense that it was a deft regurgitation of the bones of his predecessors.

My grandmother died many years ago. But I think of her often, especially whenever I think of Mr. Trump. My grandmother and me? It’s not that we had an easy relationship — we did not — but now, in the era of Trump, she exists for me as a parable or an oracle, an unburied Southern ghost, smoking, gray haired, sipping her Sanka, eye cocked at my ways and confident that I was not the one. She was complicated, and so she was a profound introduction to a country I still do not understand but belong to and cannot quit. I have no idea what my grandmother thought of the Trumps in any deep way. But through her, I was introduced to a glossary that lasts, of the most American of names, ideals, signs and symbols. And among the most persevering of them is Donald Trump’s.

For the 15 years that she lived in our house, my grandmother was a Winston-smoking primer for an America that I believed was long gone, a time catacombed inside her taste for Mary Jane candies, afternoons spent shellacking down her shoulder-length hair with bergamot hair grease. She spent her almost indistinguishable days in front of her television watching her shows: “In the Heat of the Night,” “Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous” with Robin Leach and “The Young and the Restless.” What was going on outside was their business. In her room, we lived in the American South, as she recalled it.

I keep saying that my grandmother was Southern, but she was not just Southern. She was Louisianian, and therefore her morality was hot and judgmental but also fervid, touched with the kind of heat of someone who had seen the extremes and lusciousness of life, swamps, boudin blanc, rosaries, floods and sensuality. She spoke of uplift, excess, decay and wrought-iron French architecture, Louisiana whiffs of Haiti and West Africa. She read the Bible daily and smoked until the birth of my younger sister, someone who gave her a reason to live. She moved North to care for us but was so wary of her new surroundings that she rarely socialized or left her room. She was Black by choice and Black and Asian by biology, and she preferred dark skin, in particular pitch-colored men above all, as if to assert that the racial designation bestowed upon her by Jim Crow could be bested by her sincere love of a deep-down brown-skinned handsome man. She married many times. Her mother went to college, but my grandmother suffered the vast humiliation of not doing well in anything except home economics at the school where her mother taught. So my grandmother was determined to make sure that her three girls would return to her mother’s legacy and that do-for-self form of formal Black self-education.

My grandmother didn’t work yet managed money so well that not only did they all get graduate degrees, but they did so with few loans. My grandmother was unyielding toward me, often telling me if I ran too fast, I would fall. I had no idea what this threat or admonition — or was it fear? — meant until I was much older and she was dead.

Because my grandmother loved her television, I have known of Donald Trump my entire life. He was the rich man of my childhood. He is now the rich man of my adulthood. I remember sitting in my grandmother’s room watching some terrible chiffon of a television movie that showed a fictionalized version of the Trumps’ marriage. There was Ivana Trump, ostensibly skiing across the Czech border on an endless slope toward freedom. And there were the two of us, grandmother and child, finding the rare mutual core to cheer together for something — a woman’s flight away from her limitations, propelled by her wits, as best could be represented by two pieces of fiberglass in forward motion taking her closer and closer to the kind of life my grandmother, as a Black woman, could only imagine: Greenwich, Conn., gold veneer, a rich slag of a husband and the bright lights of New York City.

When I was young, maybe too young, she was also the first person to tell me about another fetish, the Ku Klux Klan. She didn’t fear it, but she knew all about it.

This is where we must hold these convergences in the same American line: That my grandmother introduced me to the Ku Klux Klan and the phenomenal wealth of Mr. Trump can make sense only in the context of her room, where not only the South rose again but it also stampeded into her a sense of things the way that racism does for all Black people, uninvited, braying and ready to ride over you senseless.

I wonder what my grandmother would have thought of Mr. Trump’s evolution into public, overt racism, if the overripening of his capitalism into fetid hatred would have surprised her. Or if she would have accepted it as the confirmation of her remove from people she did not trust, her extraperceptive sense that everything was possible within them and that a dislike of Black people and Black self-determination should always be expected, if not anticipated. But as much as she distrusted everyone, my Black Southern grandmother held the good liberals around us at a certain distance, as if she could tell they were not rugged warriors. No, our friends in our Northern city of Philadelphia were the kinds of people wholly unprepared to battle with the nastiness she had seen and witnessed. They made the fight sound good, but their knuckles and wills were untested. This strange woman in our house! I spent much of my childhood thinking that my socially calloused grandmother was wrong on that account. Until she was right.

These days, so many of us speak the language of emergency, but where is the language of integrity, sincerity and dedication?

Gone is the ability to bear down, to think beyond ourselves, even in the most basic ways. Instead, we have been left to navigate a disabling pandemic on our own, with the most vulnerable left to their own resources.

We are becoming a country anesthetized to people saying, “I am afraid for my life.” The war on one another demands that we not stop to ask, “Why are you afraid?” but rather that we bear our right to be callous and to keep on.

Mr. Trump gave people something to coalesce around as a communion of disdain, but it signified nothing at the end of the day. The vaporization of investment appeared everywhere. For centuries, Quakers, known as the Friends, led the fight for abolition, sat out the Vietnam War and fought tirelessly for civil rights in America. But two years ago, Brooklyn Friends School attempted to decertify its teachers’ union, using a Trump-backed ruling designed to prevent certain employees from unionizing.

In 2017, The New Yorker published a fantastic cartoon cover of Mr. Trump blowing air into a boat’s sail that resembled an eerie K.K.K. hood. This strong public stance against white supremacy was later gravely undermined by the intrepid work of the magazine’s archivist Erin Overbey, who disclosed a number of statistics about diversity at the publication. (She was later fired.) The same magazine that had implied that Mr. Trump was a bigot was discovered to have published in 30 years of its weekly publication fewer than five profiles by Black women.

In 2020, David Zapolsky, Amazon’s general counsel, reportedly [*described*](https://www.vice.com/en/article/5dm8bx/leaked-amazon-memo-details-plan-to-smear-fired-warehouse-organizer-hes-not-smart-or-articulate) Christian Smalls — a Black Amazon worker who had led a significant walkout at one of its warehouses — as being “not smart or articulate.” Two months later, in the heat of that June we will never forget, without offering any kind of apology to Mr. Smalls, a Black labor leader standing up to a billionaire, Mr. Zapolsky [*wrote*](https://www.vox.com/recode/2020/6/3/21279473/amazon-david-zapolsky-email-black-lives-matter-christian-smalls-covid-19) a memo detailing his commitment to Black life.

Those harnessing this brand of power would actually like us to imagine that our strength is a fluke. Or would have us think that the precariousness and alienation that Black people experience is merely a kind of speculative fiction unless filmed or photographed. When in reality we simply have to ask ourselves why we keep imagining that those with no blisters on their fingers, no courage or clarity of spirit should be at all qualified to take on Mr. Trump or the right.

In a bifurcated political system such as America’s, us against them is often taken to the utmost extremes. The faded stain of civil war is always present. But Mr. Trump, because he broadcast so loudly a kind of uncommon indecency, if not ignorance, provided those who opposed him with a four-year screed that propelled us all into an airless nightmare whether we want to admit it or not. Found in Mr. Trump’s inability to shut up was a kind of fuel for a furious energy that had been missing in liberal circles for decades. People knitted pussy hats. They put images of slaughtered Black people in their windows. They purchased rhinestone-lettered bracelets that spelled “Obama.” They took to the streets fortified to declare mutiny against Mr. Trump’s America. It was an energetic performance. But ultimately, it was just that: a performance. Mr. Trump, the president, was treated by so many like a boogeyman, the person bellowing at the perimeters of our towns who impatiently demanded more while those bemoaning him continued to feed and negotiate with him in order to preserve their own lives.

But liberals cannot continue to depend upon Black urban centers, the ***working class*** and the young to save this fragile democracy without any authentic commitment to improving our futures in tangible ways. They have to view the defense of our lives not as a culture war but as a progression of values to bring forth leaders who can see America in its totality. There must be lasting recognition of the young voters and the communities laboring nonstop to send Mr. Trump and his hate to the dustbin of history. The work will not be light. But it cannot splinter us. We see now that there is a way out of this shattering, out of this American fetishism and fatalism and into recovery.

The first time I headed South on my own, with no obligation to see aunts and cousins, I headed straight to Oxford, Miss. Where the heat makes you feel vertiginous. Crowded with Ole Miss college students, Oxford rests on red clay and fallen magnolia flower petals, swarmed by echoes, shadows, history and grief. I felt the anguish of the past there, the fragility of the present. And in a motel just off the main square, I found reinforcement from the words of a writer who mostly wrote about women like my beautiful grandmother only as maids, but he still retained a kind of unsettling sight, a way of seeing how ill we are and why. He was a brilliant American because he knew he was flawed. He knew that none of us are perfect, that we all have inherited a sickness and ache from residing in this place and we must contend with it by facing it with a sense of honesty that actually dismantles, disintegrates and reveals. And so in “Absalom, Absalom!” there is a passage that all “good” American liberals should read whenever they find themselves fearful about the return of Mr. Trump:

“His very body was an empty hall echoing with sonorous defeated names; he was not a being, an entity,” William Faulkner wrote. “He was a barracks filled with stubborn back looking ghosts still recovering, even 43 years afterward, from the fever which had cured the disease, waking from the fever without even knowing that it had been the fever itself which they had fought against and not the sickness.”

Rachel Kaadzi Ghansah is an essayist. In 2018, she won a Pulitzer Prize for feature writing.

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PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAMON WINTER/THE NEW YORK TIMES) (SR8-SR9) This article appeared in print on page SR8, SR9.

**Load-Date:** November 19, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Feast. It's Only Human.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64CF-9931-JBG3-6256-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 24, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1233 words

**Byline:** By Abhijit Banerjee

**Body**

There's a long tradition among social thinkers and policymakers of treating workers as walking, talking machines that turn calories into work and work into commodities that get sold on the market. Under capitalism, food is important because it provides fuel to the work force. In this line of thinking, enjoyment of food is at best a distraction and often a dangerous invitation to indolence.

The scolding American lawmakers who want to forbid the use of food stamps to purchase junk food are part of a long lineage that goes back to the Victorian workhouses, which made sure that the food was never inviting enough to encourage sloth. It is the continuing obsession with treating ***working-class*** people as efficient machines for turning nutrients into output that explains why so many governments insist on giving bags of grain to the poor instead of money that they might waste. This infantilizes the poor and, except in very special circumstances, it does nothing to improve nutrition.

The pleasure of eating, to say nothing of cooking, has no place in this narrative. And the idea that if working people knew what was good for them, they'd simply seek out more food as fuel is a woefully limited view of the eating experience of most of the world. As anybody who has been poor or has spent time with poor people knows, eating something special is a source of great excitement.

As it is for everyone. Standing at the end of this very dark and disappointing year, almost two years into a pandemic, we all need the joy of a feast -- whether actual or metaphorical.

Every village has its feast days and its special festal foods. Somewhere goats will be slaughtered, somewhere ceremonial coconuts cracked. Perhaps fresh dates will be piled on special plates that come out once a year. Maybe mothers will pop sweetened balls of rice into the mouths of their children.

Friends and relatives will come over to help roast an entire camel for Eid; to share scoops of feijoada, that wonderful Brazilian stew of beans simmered with off-cuts, from pig's ears to cow's tongue; to pinch the dumplings for the Lunar New Year; to fold the delicate edges of sweet coconut-stuffed Maharashtrian karanji, to be fried under the watchful eye of the matriarch. The feast's inspiration might be religious, but it could as well be a wedding, a birth, a funeral or a harvest.

People across the socioeconomic spectrum have adapted these celebrations as opportunities to feast, too: My family in Kolkata, many, many generations away from farming, still celebrates the winter harvest. Rice, coconuts, date sugar, sweet potatoes, milk, sesame seeds and more are turned into countless varieties of mishti, delicious Bengali desserts -- and those warned off eating too much sugar have to suffer the sight of them piled high on tables.

It is probably no accident that feasts tend not to be the most efficient or nutritious ways to get fed: The ingredients can be expensive (camels don't come cheap); the making takes planning and hours of mindful work. And yet, especially when life is hard, these moments spent cooking and anticipating and then that bite into something nice can provide much-needed variety and joy. Cheap, nutritious and monotonous are what most people eat day in and day out. An occasional splurge on something delicious, a meal that excites the mouth, makes it easier to keep going.

This feasting season, that momentary joy is likely to feel especially essential. Most of us have had reasons to worry -- about ourselves, about our children and parents, about where the world is headed. This year many lost friends and relatives, jobs and businesses. Many spent months working in Zoom-land, languishing even as they counted themselves lucky to be employed.

There's a widespread need to reconnect to all the things that make life worth living, and what better moment than now? What better way than with a feast?

Now, it is easy to become sententious and moralistic about the holiday season, even for an entirely nonreligious person like me. Does it have to be quite so much about consumption? Is there not something a little vulgar and indolent in all this unrestrained feasting? What about the true meanings of Christmas and Hanukkah? What about the life of the spirit?

I believe that this is probably reading history backward. The human practice of feasting has been traced back at least to the dawn of the agricultural age. Some 12,000 years ago in a cave in what is now northern Israel, partying humans left behind the remains of 71 tortoises and three wild cattle. And the celebration of the winter solstice as an act of defiance against the cold and dark certainly predates all organized religion. What better way to warm the innards than with lavish consumption? Dishes rich in fat and sugar, lubricated with glogg or mead, while huddled around a fire. Feasting, drinking, community and warmth are where this holiday season began.

Of course, for many around the world, feasting arm to arm isn't going to be possible this year. The Omicron variant of the coronavirus and the rising tide of infections it has brought have thwarted hopes for a more normal holiday season, and people are hesitating to travel or to come together across a table.

But it's worth remembering that a feast does not require a 16-pound roast turkey or a goat on a spit. Maybe all that we can commit to this year is to do something special for ourselves, a feast for the spirit. It can be a meal, yes, but it could also be a long phone call with an old friend, both prepared to be silly and laugh a lot. To get into a feasting mind-set, what matters is doing something that is not what you would usually do, something that feels special and lavish.

Let me suggest one small but exquisite feast: Buy half a pound or so of soft, flavorful cheese. (I like robiola or Taleggio or a ripeish Brie.) Cut it into morsels, roughly the size of the top phalanx of your index finger, and place those in a shallow bowl. Slice two fat cloves of peeled garlic thinly and add them to a cup of nice fruity olive oil, along with a teaspoon of gently crushed peppercorns and two tablespoons of chopped fresh tarragon or another fresh herb. Whisk in a teaspoon of salt and a tablespoon of sherry or white wine vinegar and pour the mixture over the cheese. Refrigerate for four hours or overnight; take the bowl out an hour before you are ready to feast. Warm a baguette or other crusty bread, pour yourself a glass of whatever you like to drink and settle down to watch a good film or listen to a beloved album as you scoop up chunks of macerated cheese and garlicky olive oil.

When the cheese is gone, you might wonder whether those slices of garlic are worth biting into. They are.

Abhijit Banerjee teaches economics at M.I.T. He was a recipient of the 2019 Nobel in economic science for work on an experimental approach to alleviating global poverty. He is a co-author of ''Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty.'' This year he published a cookbook, ''Cooking to Save Your Life,'' with Cheyenne Olivier.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/23/opinion/culture/holiday-feasting-rich-poor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/23/opinion/culture/holiday-feasting-rich-poor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Cheyenne Olivier FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 24, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Sundays, Holy and Without the News***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62K4-X8T1-DXY4-X1TP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 2, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2021 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 2; TIMES INSIDER

**Length:** 835 words

**Byline:** By Terence McGinley

**Body**

The breakout of the Civil War created a huge demand for news and allowed The Times to vault over a taboo and put out a daily paper on Sundays.

Times Insider explains who we are and what we do, and delivers behind-the-scenes insights into how our journalism comes together.

Today, the Sunday print edition of The New York Times is a thick bundle of news and features, with enough information and diversions to while away the day. But it wasn't always this way. In fact, for the first 10 years of publication, The Times did not print a Sunday edition at all. ''The New-York Daily Times is published every morning, (Sunday excepted),'' read the first words of the first issue, on Sept. 18, 1851.

One of the biggest news stories imaginable would change that.

Many of the Sunday newspapers printed in the United States early in the 19th century were weekly editions. A daily Sunday paper filled with the news was not customary, and one big obstacle was the Christian Sabbath. Many worshipers did not want anything competing with the clergy, and new entries were often met with public backlash.

In New York, defenders of Sunday morals railed against anything that smacked of commerce. Vending, drinking establishments and especially trains -- large, loud and carrying the mail -- were frequent subjects of ire. Newspapers distracted the devoted. The Observer, The Sunday Courier and The Citizen of the World were three examples of early New York papers that had tried, and failed, to overcome the religious custom in New York, according to the book ''The Daily Newspaper in America'' by Alfred McClung Lee.

But in 1851, The Times was founded in a changing city. Sunday distribution was increasing, a trend since cheap dailies began appearing in American cities in the 1830s. The New York Herald had published a regular Sunday edition since 1841. According to Mr. Lee, James Gordon Bennett Sr., who founded The Herald, had learned from Boston's Sabbath rows in the 1820s that ''the American reader consumes most avidly that which he detests most blatantly.''

More generally, Sunday mores were softening. For growing numbers of ***working class*** immigrants, Sunday was the only day off and spent socializing in festive public gatherings.

The Times supported the New York Sabbath Committee, a body of civic leaders and clergy members formed in 1857 to rescue Sunday morals and ''arrest particular forms of Sabbath desecration.'' That its core readership was upper class Anglo-Saxon society probably played a role. Alarm at fading religious mores appeared frequently in the early pages of The Times, which published letters with complaints about the clamor of trade and German lager houses operating on Sundays. It also reported on the fuss over boats using the Erie Canal on Sundays.

Since the Sabbath Committee's first meeting on April 1, 1857, its doings were covered closely by The Times. One of the committee's first moves was to write to the heads of the major railroads, ''through which traffic and travel and moral influences perpetually flow,'' about their Sunday passages in the city. Soon after (even before liquor), the committee went after the newsboys hawking papers. The Times reported that after an appeal by the committee to Sunday publishers failed to silence the vending, a police order had it suppressed.

''The result of this action revealed the true power possessed by the Sunday press, for its course was condemned and the question settled that the Sabbath was a day that the strong arm of the law might keep sacred,'' read a Times article from a committee meeting in 1859.

If The Times, which was still edited by its co-founder Henry J. Raymond, was equivocating while more Sunday editions cropped up in New York, it wouldn't have to for much longer.

When South Carolina militia bombarded the U.S. Army at Fort Sumter on April 12, 1861, the country, and newspapers, were changed. And the Sabbath taboo, which had already been weakening, was essentially shattered.

By April 18, with Fort Sumter fallen and war apparent, The Times had to explain to readers who found the paper delivered late and the news stands sold out that ''we can only urge in excuse that our recent surge in circulation has been far more rapid than we were prepared for.''

Two days later, subscribers were told to expect a special Sunday edition the following day.

The culture wars would not fully dissipate during the Civil War. The New York Sabbath Committee regretted that the Battle of Bull Run was fought on a Sunday, and worried that a generation of young soldiers would forget piety. But the news was urgent -- the United States was cracking up -- and by the second Sunday after Fort Sumter, The Times committed to a Sunday edition ''during the war excitement.'' It even announced that ''special trains will run over the Hudson River and New-Haven Railroads on Sunday morning, for the newspaper accommodation of the people along the line.''

Once readers were accustomed to Sunday editions, there was no going back.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/insider/sunday-newspapers.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/insider/sunday-newspapers.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: The first Sunday edition of The New York Times, on April 21, 1861.

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2021

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[***A Big Idea About the Homeless***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:640J-MDH1-JBG3-60JM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 3, 2021 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2021 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 23; JAY CASPIAN KANG

**Length:** 1236 words

**Byline:** By Jay Caspian Kang

**Body**

Are the unhoused a ''people''? If the answer is yes, then don't they deserve equal protection under the law? These questions were broached last week by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California in a long report titled ''Outside the Law: The Legal War Against Unhoused People.'' Rather than think of homelessness as a condition, the authors argue, lawmakers should protect those who live on the street in the same way that the Constitution and California law protect groups based on race, gender or religion. The report calls for ''state legislation prohibiting discrimination based on housing status.''

It's a quietly big idea that tries to do three things at once.

First: It offers a legal framework to protect the homeless against discrimination. If, say, a city enacted a policy that made it illegal for homeless people to use public bathrooms, advocates for the homeless could then sue. As it is now, you wouldn't be able to argue that such a move was illegal because it discriminates against the homeless. This is for the very simple reason that targeting them, often with bills that don't mention them specifically but clearly have been written for them, is legal.

Second: The authors believe that classifying the unhoused as a social group and talking about them as such in public at, say, city council meetings and on national television will help negate some of the stigma attached to them. The hope is that it will force people to recognize the homeless as human beings who are part of the broader community.

Third: The idea that the homeless are a people may help garner support for the construction of more affordable and public housing.

California's homelessness crisis can sometimes feel like a never-ending series of catastrophes, but Eve Garrow, one of the report's authors, believes we have reached an inflection point when it comes to the treatment of unhoused people. ''As the crisis -- which is an affordable-housing crisis -- gets worse and worse, visible houselessness is rising,'' she told me. ''Local governments have become increasingly sophisticated in finding ways to discriminate against and persecute unhoused people.''

Most Californians agree something has to change. Poll after poll has shown that voters in the state see homelessness as a top priority. In response, Gov. Gavin Newsom recently signed a $22 billion legislative package that provides some support for mental health problems among this population, regulates shelters and creates oversight for how money for homelessness solutions gets distributed. Last November, a report issued by the California auditor found that mismanagement and ''the lack of a comprehensive plan'' effectively squandered $2.7 billion in bond resources that were supposed to go toward the building of affordable housing. The emphasis in the new legislation seems to be on making sure this waste doesn't continue.

While there's a lot of inefficiency and often a sense of hopelessness on the side of helping the unhoused, law enforcement and hostile local governments have taken decisive, coordinated action to clear out camps, jail individuals and pass legislation that effectively makes being homeless illegal within city limits. The A.C.L.U. report includes an eye-opening account of the city of Chico. It has a sizable homeless population that has only grown since wildfires displaced tens of thousands of people in the surrounding areas. In 2013, Chico lawmakers began passing a series of ordinances that made it illegal to sit or lie down on sidewalks between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. or to store personal property in public spaces.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, as the homeless population continued to increase, new City Council members were voted in who ran on a more aggressive stance. They have made it illegal to camp in a city park and heightened the penalty from a citation to possible jail time. Local law enforcement also began routine sweeps to try to push the unhoused out of the city.

Other cities in California have used similar tactics. Even though most do not specifically mention the unhoused, the A.C.L.U. argues that they are still the target of harsh restrictions. ''A law that seems neutral can have a disparate impact on a specific group,'' Garrow said. ''There are also ways to demonstrate that a law that appears to be neutral was actually created to target a specific group by going back and reviewing City Council meetings and the rhetoric lawmakers use to justify such ordinances. It's really, really clear.''

One may be bothered by how poorly the homeless are being treated but still feel a bit uneasy about classifying them as a distinct social group. The designation seems to suggest that homelessness is permanent and out of the control of the individual. Is there some danger or at least some irresponsibility in extending protections to people based on what some might call a temporary or even deserved condition? Will it lead to protections for any people who want to proclaim themselves a group?

''I don't actually have any fears about that,'' Garrow said. ''Living without a house is not an immutable characteristic, but it is a stigmatizing label that targets them and changes their lives completely.''

I'm inclined to agree with Garrow, in part because I don't really see some slippery slope so that every group that feels persecuted in any small way -- say, conservative students at elite colleges -- successfully lobbies the state legislature on behalf of its trampled rights. The unhoused seem like a clear social category, and the law should protect them from discrimination.

It's also worth asking whether Californians actually have all that much control over their housing status. The affordable-housing crisis in the state, which, as the report points out, began with the defunding of subsidized and affordable housing when Ronald Reagan was president, does not leave much room for grit and human agency. Can every poor person in the state suddenly get a job that pays the $60,000 annual salary required to afford a one-bedroom apartment in Los Angeles?

The enormous housing crisis in California has harmed nearly all residents, whether they are middle-class professionals priced out of the city, ***working-class*** gig employees who live in apartments with five roommates or the growing unhoused population that has fallen out of the system completely.

I am not sure whether classifying the unhoused as a protected group would persuade people to start thinking about their neighbors with more compassion or sympathy or it would clear the way for the extensive construction of affordable housing in their cities. But I don't think the two issues -- the way the unhoused are brutally treated and the lack of housing in the state for them -- should be separated.

The punitive policies detailed in the report will not stop encampments from sprouting up in public parks, under highway overpasses or in abandoned parking lots across the state. To understand why there needs to be more affordable housing in a community, you have to first accept that the people who are living on the street deserve to be your neighbors and are not just problems to be criminalized, jailed or expelled away.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com)

Jay Caspian Kang (@jaycaspiankang), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of ''The Loneliest Americans.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/opinion/california-homeless-crisis.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/01/opinion/california-homeless-crisis.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 3, 2021

**End of Document**



[***When The Times Didn’t Print on Sundays; Times Insider***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62K4-WCM1-DXY4-X1JX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 2, 2021 Sunday 05:00 EST

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**Section:** INSIDER

**Length:** 839 words

**Byline:** Terence McGinley

**Highlight:** The breakout of the Civil War created a huge demand for news and allowed The Times to vault over a taboo and put out a daily paper on Sundays.

**Body**

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In New York, defenders of Sunday morals railed against anything that smacked of commerce. Vending, drinking establishments and especially trains — large, loud and carrying the mail — were frequent subjects of ire. Newspapers distracted the devoted. The Observer, The Sunday Courier and The Citizen of the World were three examples of early New York papers that had tried, and failed, to overcome the religious custom in New York, according to the book “The Daily Newspaper in America” by Alfred McClung Lee.

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PHOTO: The first Sunday edition of The New York Times, on April 21, 1861.

**Load-Date:** May 2, 2021

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[***Trump's Brutish Code of Honor Explains His Feud With Liz Cheney***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64PM-0RC1-DXY4-X1P1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 5, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 20; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1390 words

**Byline:** By Jon A. Shields

**Body**

In the modern Republican Party, there has never been anything quite like Liz Cheney's war with Donald Trump. Whereas once, the party's most heated rivalries were primarily ideological -- like the feud between Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater -- today's have little to do with policy. Instead, they are about rival systems of honor that are remaking identity politics on the right.

These competing honor systems grow in different social milieus: One is relatively blue collar and home to Mr. Trump's MAGA movement, while the other is college educated and home to Ms. Cheney's Never Trumpers. Like so much of American society, the G.O.P. is coming apart by class.

Though Ms. Cheney seems to view Mr. Trump as someone without principle, he lives by a code. As Bob Woodward once described it: ''Never show weakness. You've always got to be strong. Don't be bullied. There is no choice.''

This ancient way of life, which permeated the Queens of Mr. Trump's youth and is generally familiar to citizens outside the professional class, has gone by many names in America: ''hillbilly justice'' in Appalachia, the ''code of the street'' in poor urban neighborhoods and the ''code of the West'' in many Western states, including Wyoming, which Ms. Cheney represents in the House. The people who live in these honor cultures, as social scientists call them, are expected to protect their honor by always standing up to their enemies and generally letting others know they are not to be messed with.

Because an honor culture requires those who are slighted or dissed to seek vengeance, Mr. Trump is obsessed with Ms. Cheney. At the Save America rally on Jan. 6 last year, he implored, ''The Liz Cheneys of the world, we got to get rid of them.'' And during his first public appearance since leaving the White House, he singled out Ms. Cheney once again by noting that her ''poll numbers have dropped faster than any human being I've ever seen.''

Wyoming has long been shaped by an honor culture, as the Cheney family must know well. Dick Cheney had to navigate it as a student at Natrona County High in the 1950s. When he was caught fighting on school grounds, his teacher required both combatants to duel it out in a boxing match. After seeking a boxing coach, Mr. Cheney won the showdown. Proceeds from the event went to the school booster club.

Until recently, though, the honor culture of Mr. Cheney's high school had little to do with the Wyoming Republican Party, which was insular and run by affluent ranchers and members of the professional class. Now that culture is remaking the highest reaches of the party as MAGA insurgents wrest control from the establishment. Hence, state party meetings, once sleepy and wonky affairs, are increasingly marked by bravado.

At the Republican state convention in 2020, for example, a fistfight broke out between two county chairmen that sent one to the hospital with a broken ankle and dislocated shoulder. The man who won the scrape is not to be messed with: He has reportedly attended meetings with a gun at the ready, as well as an ax handle, which, according to his attorney, he uses as a cane.

This insurgent, blue-collar culture has not been well received by the Never Trump politicos in Wyoming. Susan Stubson, an attorney aligned with the establishment, said, ''I find it threatening.'' Another prominent member of Ms. Cheney's circle called it ''toxic.''

Whatever else it is, this old honor culture has deepened today's identity politics. Ostracized from the genteel establishment, many ***working-class*** Wyomingites see themselves in these new shows of Trumpian bravado. Like other Americans, they feel a sense of kinship with those who act like them. As Ms. Stubson lamented, ''We had never been able to connect to the larger community.'' Her husband, Tim Stubson, a former Wyoming representative, admitted that ''there was a current there that we were not aware of.''

Honor culture isn't about just identity, though. This primitive code also seems indispensable to those Republicans radicalized by today's polarized politics. If one is persuaded that the left is on the verge of destroying American civilization, then electing as many fearless fighters and strongmen as possible is the order of the day. That is why a prominent MAGA donor like Tom Klingenstein said he sees Mr. Trump as ''just what the doctor ordered'' in ''these revolutionary times.''

Enter Harriet Hageman, Mr. Trump's proxy candidate in his war against Ms. Cheney. A lawyer who once aligned with the old guard, Ms. Hageman broke from Ms. Cheney's clique to pursue power. Attuned to Wyoming's new right, her first campaign ad is already appealing to the state's deeply rooted honor culture. It accuses Ms. Cheney of breaking the ''code of the West,'' one that requires ''loyalty,'' ''honor'' and a willingness to ''fight'' for compatriots.

Ms. Cheney, though, is fighting on behalf of her own code of honor. Hers is driven by a fidelity to what the Yale political theorist Steven Smith calls ''enlightened patriotism,'' one that insists on ''loyalty to a particular constitutional form that we call liberal democracy or constitutional democracy.''

Such patriotism has always been in tension with the motto ''my country, right or wrong,'' because it is beholden to abstract, creedal principles, such as equality, individualism and the rule of law. And because these principles are open to interpretation, patriotism in the United States has long had a distinctly critical, questioning character. Mr. Smith even suggests that it birthed the nation, since the American revolutionaries regarded themselves as the true British patriots, not traitors.

Not unlike those British subjects facing a subversive king, Ms. Cheney had no real choice when faced with Mr. Trump's assault on our constitutional order. To Ms. Cheney -- and her Republican supporters in Wyoming -- it would have been shameful to remain loyal to Mr. Trump. This is why, on the first anniversary of the Capitol invasion, she admonished on Twitter, ''Anyone who denies the truth of what happened on January 6th ought to be ashamed of themselves.''

Beneath the surface of their honor feud lurk clashing understandings of political ambition. Unlike Mr. Trump, Ms. Cheney is seeking the esteem of future generations by doing what's in the public interest even if she is cast out of office for doing so. Ms. Cheney told a Wyoming paper that just moments before her fellow Republicans pushed her out of House leadership, she warned them ''that history was watching.''

Mr. Trump, meanwhile, is so loyal to his narrow code that he lacks even the theory of mind to understand Ms. Cheney's ambition. For him, losing any contest is always dishonorable because it tarnishes his reputation as a strongman. Hence, his enduring fixation with ratings, polling and the ''stolen'' 2020 election. It's also why he asked Marine Gen. John F. Kelly, ''I don't get it. What was in it for them?'' as they stood over the graves at Arlington National Cemetery, according to reporting in The Atlantic.

There seem to be no noble defeats for Mr. Trump. And that means that Ms. Cheney's willingness to risk political death must be mysterious to him. She is not just his most formidable foe; she's an enigma.

Even if they understood each other better, their feud would still be impossible to resolve. Unlike sharp policy disagreements that can end in grudging compromises, Mr. Trump and Ms. Cheney see any concession in their feud as dishonorable. Mr. Trump cannot concede defeat in 2020, and thus Ms. Cheney cannot de-escalate her war against him. And because that's true, Mr. Trump can't ignore Ms. Cheney. They are wed to each other, captured by rival codes of honor that are remaking the American right.

Jon A. Shields, a professor of government at Claremont McKenna College, is the author of three books, including ''Trump's Democrats,'' which he co-wrote with another professor at Claremont, Stephanie Muravchik. They are working on the book about Liz Cheney together.

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/opinion/trump-liz-cheney-feud.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/03/opinion/trump-liz-cheney-feud.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MANDEL NAGAN/AFP AND TOM WILLIAMS/CQ ROLL CALL, VIA GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** February 5, 2022

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[***A Feast Isn’t Just About Food. It’s About Joy.; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64C9-92H1-DXY4-X472-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 23, 2021 Thursday 14:37 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; culture

**Length:** 1237 words

**Byline:** Abhijit Banerjee

**Highlight:** There’s a widespread need to reconnect to all the things that make life worth living, and what better moment than now?

**Body**

There’s a long tradition among social thinkers and policymakers of treating workers as walking, talking machines that turn calories into work and work into commodities that get sold on the market. Under capitalism, food is important because it provides fuel to the work force. In this line of thinking, enjoyment of food is at best a distraction and often a dangerous invitation to indolence.

The scolding American lawmakers [*who want to forbid*](https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2017/02/24/should-people-be-barred-from-buying-junk-food-with-food-stamps) the use of food stamps to purchase junk food are part of a long lineage that goes back to the Victorian workhouses, which made sure that [*the food was never inviting enough*](https://www.history.com/news/in-the-19th-century-the-last-place-you-wanted-to-go-was-the-poorhouse) to encourage sloth. It is the continuing obsession with treating ***working-class*** people as efficient machines for turning nutrients into output that explains why so many governments insist on [*giving bags of grain to the poor*](https://arxiv.org/abs/2106.00213) instead of money that they might waste. This infantilizes the poor and, except in very special circumstances, it [*does nothing to improve nutrition*](https://economics.mit.edu/files/11344).

The pleasure of eating, to say nothing of cooking, has no place in this narrative. And the idea that if working people knew what was good for them, they’d simply seek out more food as fuel is a woefully limited view of the eating experience of most of the world. As anybody who has been poor or has spent time with poor people knows, eating something special is a source of great excitement.

As it is for everyone. Standing at the end of this very dark and disappointing year, almost two years into a pandemic, we all need the joy of a feast — whether actual or metaphorical.

Every village has its feast days and its special festal foods. Somewhere goats will be slaughtered, somewhere ceremonial coconuts cracked. Perhaps fresh dates will be piled on special plates that come out once a year. Maybe mothers will pop sweetened balls of rice into the mouths of their children.

Friends and relatives will come over to help roast an entire camel for Eid; to share scoops of feijoada, that wonderful Brazilian stew of beans simmered with off-cuts, from pig’s ears to cow’s tongue; to pinch the dumplings for the Lunar New Year; to fold the delicate edges of sweet coconut-stuffed Maharashtrian karanji, to be fried under the watchful eye of the matriarch. The feast’s inspiration might be religious, but it could as well be a wedding, a birth, a funeral or a harvest.

People across the socioeconomic spectrum have adapted these celebrations as opportunities to feast, too: My family in Kolkata, many, many generations away from farming, still celebrates the winter harvest. Rice, coconuts, date sugar, sweet potatoes, milk, sesame seeds and more are turned into countless varieties of mishti, delicious Bengali desserts — and those warned off eating too much sugar have to suffer the sight of them piled high on tables.

It is probably no accident that feasts tend not to be the most efficient or nutritious ways to get fed: The ingredients can be expensive (camels don’t come cheap); the making takes planning and hours of mindful work. And yet, especially when life is hard, these moments spent cooking and anticipating and then that bite into something nice can provide much-needed variety and joy. Cheap, nutritious and monotonous are what most people eat day in and day out. An occasional splurge on something delicious, a meal that excites the mouth, makes it easier to keep going.

This feasting season, that momentary joy is likely to feel especially essential. Most of us have had reasons to worry — about ourselves, about our children and parents, about where the world is headed. This year many lost friends and relatives, jobs and businesses. Many spent months working in Zoom-land, [*languishing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/19/well/mind/covid-mental-health-languishing.html) even as they counted themselves lucky to be employed.

There’s a widespread need to reconnect to all the things that make life worth living, and what better moment than now? What better way than with a feast?

Now, it is easy to become sententious and moralistic about the holiday season, even for an entirely nonreligious person like me. Does it have to be quite so much about consumption? Is there not something a little vulgar and indolent in all this unrestrained feasting? What about the true meanings of Christmas and Hanukkah? What about the life of the spirit?

I believe that this is probably reading history backward. The human practice of feasting has been traced back at least to the dawn of the agricultural age. Some 12,000 years ago in a cave in what is now northern Israel, [*partying humans*](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/08/100830152526.htm) left behind the remains of 71 tortoises and three wild cattle. And the celebration of the winter solstice as an act of defiance against the cold and dark certainly [*predates all organized religion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2000/12/23/weekinreview/have-a-very-scary-christmas.html). What better way to warm the innards than with lavish consumption? Dishes rich in fat and sugar, lubricated with glogg or mead, while huddled around a fire. Feasting, drinking, community and warmth are where this holiday season began.

Of course, for many around the world, feasting arm to arm isn’t going to be possible this year. The Omicron variant of the coronavirus and the rising tide of infections it has brought have thwarted hopes for a more normal holiday season, and people are hesitating to travel or to come together across a table.

But it’s worth remembering that a feast does not require a 16-pound roast turkey or a goat on a spit. Maybe all that we can commit to this year is to do something special for ourselves, a feast for the spirit. It can be a meal, yes, but it could also be a long phone call with an old friend, both prepared to be silly and laugh a lot. To get into a feasting mind-set, what matters is doing something that is not what you would usually do, something that feels special and lavish.

Let me suggest one small but exquisite feast: Buy half a pound or so of soft, flavorful cheese. (I like robiola or Taleggio or a ripeish Brie.) Cut it into morsels, roughly the size of the top phalanx of your index finger, and place those in a shallow bowl. Slice two fat cloves of peeled garlic thinly and add them to a cup of nice fruity olive oil, along with a teaspoon of gently crushed peppercorns and two tablespoons of chopped fresh tarragon or another fresh herb. Whisk in a teaspoon of salt and a tablespoon of sherry or white wine vinegar and pour the mixture over the cheese. Refrigerate for four hours or overnight; take the bowl out an hour before you are ready to feast. Warm a baguette or other crusty bread, pour yourself a glass of whatever you like to drink and settle down to watch a good film or listen to a beloved album as you scoop up chunks of macerated cheese and garlicky olive oil.

When the cheese is gone, you might wonder whether those slices of garlic are worth biting into. They are.

Abhijit Banerjee teaches economics at M.I.T. He was a recipient of the 2019 Nobel in economic science for work on an experimental approach to alleviating global poverty. He is a co-author of “Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty.” This year he published a cookbook, “Cooking to Save Your Life,” with Cheyenne Olivier.

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**Load-Date:** December 24, 2021

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[***A Quietly Big Idea on How We Think About Homeless People; Jay Caspian Kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6406-Y2N1-JBG3-62GD-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

November 1, 2021 Monday 14:54 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1235 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** Should housing status be a protected category like race, gender or religion?

**Body**

Are the unhoused a “people”? If the answer is yes, then don’t they deserve equal protection under the law? These questions were broached last week by the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California in a long report titled “[*Outside the Law: The Legal War Against Unhoused People*](https://www.aclusocal.org/sites/default/files/outsidethelaw-aclufdnsca-report.pdf).” Rather than think of homelessness as a condition, the authors argue, lawmakers should protect those who live on the street in the same way that the Constitution and California law protect groups based on race, gender or religion. The report calls for “state legislation prohibiting discrimination based on housing status.”

It’s a quietly big idea that tries to do three things at once.

First: It offers a legal framework to protect the homeless against discrimination. If, say, a city enacted a policy that made it illegal for homeless people to use public bathrooms, advocates for the homeless could then sue. As it is now, you wouldn’t be able to argue that such a move was illegal because it discriminates against the homeless. This is for the very simple reason that targeting them, often with bills that don’t mention them specifically but clearly have been written for them, is legal.

Second: The authors believe that classifying the unhoused as a social group and talking about them as such in public at, say, city council meetings and on national television will help negate some of the stigma attached to them. The hope is that it will force people to recognize the homeless as human beings who are part of the broader community.

Third: The idea that the homeless are a people may help garner support for the construction of more affordable and public housing.

California’s homelessness crisis can sometimes feel like a never-ending series of catastrophes, but Eve Garrow, one of the report’s authors, believes we have reached an inflection point when it comes to the treatment of unhoused people. “As the crisis — which is an affordable-housing crisis — gets worse and worse, visible houselessness is rising,” she told me. “Local governments have become increasingly sophisticated in finding ways to discriminate against and persecute unhoused people.”

Most Californians agree something has to change. [*Poll*](https://www.kget.com/news/politics/your-local-elections/housing-ties-homelessness-as-top-issue-facing-california-new-poll-shows/) after [*poll*](https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article239325588.html) has shown that voters in the state see homelessness as a top priority. In response, Gov. Gavin Newsom recently signed a [*$22 billion*](https://www.gov.ca.gov/2021/09/29/governor-newsom-signs-legislation-to-address-homelessness-and-mental-health-services-highlights-22-billion-housing-and-homelessness-package/) legislative package that provides some support for mental health problems among this population, regulates shelters and creates oversight for how money for homelessness solutions gets distributed. Last November, a [*report*](http://auditor.ca.gov/reports/2020-108/summary.html) issued by the California auditor found that mismanagement and “the lack of a comprehensive plan” effectively squandered $2.7 billion in bond resources that were supposed to go toward the building of affordable housing. The emphasis in the new legislation seems to be on making sure this waste doesn’t continue.

While there’s a lot of inefficiency and often a sense of hopelessness on the side of helping the unhoused, law enforcement and hostile local governments have taken decisive, coordinated action to clear out camps, jail individuals and pass legislation that effectively makes being homeless illegal within city limits. The A.C.L.U. report includes an eye-opening account of the city of Chico. It has a sizable homeless population that has only grown since wildfires displaced tens of thousands of people in the surrounding areas. In 2013, Chico lawmakers began passing a series of ordinances that made it illegal to sit or lie down on sidewalks between 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. or to store personal property in public spaces.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, as the homeless population continued to increase, new City Council members were voted in who ran on a more aggressive stance. They have made it illegal to camp in a city park and heightened the penalty from a citation to possible jail time. Local law enforcement also began routine sweeps to try to push the unhoused out of the city.

Other cities in California have used similar tactics. Even though most do not specifically mention the unhoused, the A.C.L.U. argues that they are still the target of harsh restrictions. “A law that seems neutral can have a disparate impact on a specific group,” Garrow said. “There are also ways to demonstrate that a law that appears to be neutral was actually created to target a specific group by going back and reviewing City Council meetings and the rhetoric lawmakers use to justify such ordinances. It’s really, really clear.”

One may be bothered by how poorly the homeless are being treated but still feel a bit uneasy about classifying them as a distinct social group. The designation seems to suggest that homelessness is permanent and out of the control of the individual. Is there some danger or at least some irresponsibility in extending protections to people based on what some might call a temporary or even deserved condition? Will it lead to protections for any people who want to proclaim themselves a group?

“I don’t actually have any fears about that,” Garrow said. “Living without a house is not an immutable characteristic, but it is a stigmatizing label that targets them and changes their lives completely.”

I’m inclined to agree with Garrow, in part because I don’t really see some slippery slope so that every group that feels persecuted in any small way — say, conservative students at elite colleges — successfully lobbies the state legislature on behalf of its trampled rights. The unhoused seem like a clear social category, and the law should protect them from discrimination.

It’s also worth asking whether Californians actually have all that much control over their housing status. The affordable-housing crisis in the state, which, as the report points out, began with the defunding of subsidized and affordable housing when Ronald Reagan was president, does not leave much room for grit and human agency. Can every poor person in the state suddenly get a job that pays the $60,000 annual salary required to afford a one-bedroom apartment in Los Angeles?

The enormous housing crisis in California has harmed nearly all residents, whether they are middle-class professionals priced out of the city, ***working-class*** gig employees who live in apartments with five roommates or the growing unhoused population that has fallen out of the system completely.

I am not sure whether classifying the unhoused as a protected group would persuade people to start thinking about their neighbors with more compassion or sympathy or it would clear the way for the extensive construction of affordable housing in their cities. But I don’t think the two issues — the way the unhoused are brutally treated and the lack of housing in the state for them — should be separated.

The punitive policies detailed in the report will not stop encampments from sprouting up in public parks, under highway overpasses or in abandoned parking lots across the state. To understand why there needs to be more affordable housing in a community, you have to first accept that the people who are living on the street deserve to be your neighbors and are not just problems to be criminalized, jailed or expelled away.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 2, 2021

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[***Top Democrats Want Tom Suozzi Out of Governor’s Race. He’s Still Running.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65DW-F2C1-JBG3-60NV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 11, 2022 Wednesday 14:28 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1728 words

**Byline:** Nicholas Fandos

**Highlight:** In the New York Democratic primary, Representative Tom Suozzi is fighting Gov. Kathy Hochul for moderate voters, with a focus on fighting crime and cutting taxes.

**Body**

In the New York Democratic primary, Representative Tom Suozzi is fighting Gov. Kathy Hochul for moderate voters, with a focus on fighting crime and cutting taxes.

Representative Thomas R. Suozzi is not the kind of person to be swayed by the advice of fellow Democrats. But as he runs for governor of New York this year, he sure has gotten his share.

There was Representative Hakeem Jeffries, a favorite to be the next Democratic House speaker, who counseled him not to give up his House seat on Long Island.

Eliot Spitzer, the former governor who trounced him in a 2006 primary, warned he had no clear lane to victory. Even Hillary Clinton weighed in, urging Mr. Suozzi to forgo a messy primary and help Democrats fight to keep the House majority.

It doesn’t take a political science degree to understand the argument. Gov. Kathy Hochul is enjoying a double-digit lead, [*a mountain of campaign cash*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/20/nyregion/hochul-fund-raising-donors.html) rivaling the Adirondacks and the full muscle of a Democratic establishment eager to see New York’s first female governor win a full term.

None of it has deterred Mr. Suozzi, 59. As potential opponents like Letitia James and Bill de Blasio dropped out of the race, the three-term congressman and outspoken centrist from Nassau County has flouted the advice of allies, tossing aside a coveted House seat to embark on a frenetic attempt to spoil Ms. Hochul’s potential coronation.

The race undoubtedly remains Ms. Hochul’s to lose. But with less than two months until Primary Day, there are signs that weeks of public appeals may finally be finding an audience among New Yorkers who believe they have fresh reasons to doubt the governor or more progressive alternatives.

Ms. Hochul’s administration is still fighting off a cloud of scandal, after her handpicked second-in-command, Brian A. Benjamin, [*resigned in the face of public corruption charges*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/nyregion/brian-benjamin-resigns-indicted.html) last month. And [*recent public polling*](https://scri.siena.edu/2022/04/25/while-nyers-strongly-support-new-bail-law-changes-only-1-3-think-they-will-decrease-crime-38-say-theyll-have-no-effect/) suggests that she is vulnerable to attacks on issues that Mr. Suozzi has put at the center of his campaign, like rising crime and [*her decision to spend $600 million*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/16/nyregion/new-buffalo-bills-stadium.html) in taxpayer money on a new stadium for the Buffalo Bills.

“New Yorkers are not just going to forget about this poor judgment she’s exercised,” Mr. Suozzi said the other day, as Ms. Hochul [*cajoled lawmakers into changing state law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/02/nyregion/brian-benjamin-ballot-removal.html) to get Mr. Benjamin off the ballot.

“We shouldn’t let them forget,” he added.

Seeking to draw contrasts with his opponents — Ms. Hochul and Jumaane Williams, the New York City public advocate — Mr. Suozzi describes himself as a “common-sense Democrat” and a “proven executive.” His political ads portray him as a centrist in a time of extremes, someone better qualified to lead one of the nation’s largest states than Ms. Hochul, a former county clerk, congresswoman and lieutenant governor, who took office last August when Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo [*resigned in scandal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/10/nyregion/andrew-cuomo-resigns.html).

Prominent Democrats fear that Mr. Suozzi’s hard-charging candidacy could endanger both the swing district he represents and Ms. Hochul’s chances against a Republican this fall.

“Tom is making it difficult for Kathy and the other Democrats down ballot,” said Representative Kathleen Rice, a fellow Nassau County Democrat who has known him for decades.

“He really does have a big heart and believes in traditional Democratic values of taking care of the poor and a big social safety net,” Ms. Rice added. “I just think that if he had been able to check his ego earlier in his career, he could have already run for president.”

Political analysts are skeptical he can close the gap.

Insurgents have successfully defeated Democratic incumbents in New York by running to their left, as[*Mr. Williams is trying to do*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/08/nyregion/jumaane-williams-governor-wfp.html) this year. But there are few cases of a Democratic challenger winning a primary by running to the right, particularly against someone like Ms. Hochul, who shares Mr. Suozzi’s general political orientation as a Catholic, suburban moderate.

“He’s basically vying for the same voter that she is,” said Ester Fuchs, a political science professor at Columbia University. “People have to have a reason to say, ‘She’s doing a terrible job, she shouldn’t continue.’ I don’t see that happening.”

The position is a familiar one for Mr. Suozzi, who followed his Italian immigrant father into law and politics at a young age, became mayor of his affluent hometown, Glen Cove on the Long Island Sound, at 31 and proceeded to take a series of political moonshots.

It got Mr. Suozzi elected as the [*first Democratic county executive in a generation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2001/11/07/nyregion/2001-elections-nassau-county-suozzi-wins-easily-rebuke-nassau-s-gop-machine.html) in Nassau, where he won plaudits for turning around the county’s troubled finances. Yet a long-shot campaign to upset Mr. Spitzer in the Democratic race for governor in 2006 [*ended badly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/09/13/nyregion/13suozzi.html), and a few years later, Mr. Suozzi [*unexpectedly lost re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/07/nyregion/07suozzi.html) in Nassau with $2 million unspent.

In an interview, he insisted this year is not a repeat of 2006.

“I was running against Eliot Spitzer, the sheriff of Wall Street,” Mr. Suozzi said. “Now, I’m running against Kathy Hochul, who I don’t think has any kind of record of accomplishment that anybody could point to.”

Ms. Hochul’s allies vigorously dispute that characterization. But while the governor has [*significantly consolidated party and union support*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/16/nyregion/kathy-hochul-governor.html) behind her, she does lack the kind of voter enthusiasm that Mr. Spitzer enjoyed at the height of his popularity.

Much of Mr. Suozzi’s campaign is a continuation of centrist positions he staked out in Washington, where he joined the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus and crusaded, unsuccessfully, to repeal a state and local tax deduction cap implemented by President Donald J. Trump that hurt well-off suburbanites. He also took liberal stances, starting a labor caucus and racking up an F rating from the National Rifle Association and top scores from Planned Parenthood.

On a recent campaign stretch that took him from suburban diners to a Black church in Queens, the congressman at times sounded like his Republican counterparts, promising to wage an all-out assault on crime (“This is a crime crisis!”), to cut income and property taxes (“People are leaving our state — it’s not the weather”) and to fight the “socialist” Democrats who are “killing our party” by attacking police. He also reminded voters that Eric Adams, the mayor of New York City, had offered him a deputy mayor post.

“People say, ‘That’s not a Democratic issue,’” Mr. Suozzi said. “Yes it is. Democrats are worried about crime and taxes. Democrats are afraid to take the subway.”

The message resonated with suburban voters who showed up in Westchester and Rockland Counties to hear Mr. Suozzi over free plates of eggs. A warm retail campaigner, he greeted potential voters — as well as some patrons just trying to enjoy a private meal — in fragments of no fewer than five languages: English, Spanish, Italian, Mandarin and Greek.

“Nothing against Kathy Hochul, but right now I think it’s important to have someone in the role that has the credentials and the history of being able to boost the economy,” said Maria Abdullah, a businesswoman in Westchester who attended one of the gatherings.

The question is whether Mr. Suozzi can attract the broader spectrum of voters needed to defeat Ms. Hochul, particularly when she may outspend him four to one. Mr. Suozzi is clearly targeting Mr. Adams’s coalition of ***working-class*** Black and Latinos around New York City, betting that the party faithful are tired of progressive voices.

He chose Diana Reyna, a former city councilwoman who was the first Dominican woman elected in New York State, as his running mate; Fernando Ferrer, the former Bronx borough president, is campaign chairman.

At times, though, Mr. Suozzi seems to be going out of his way to alienate another powerful block of primary voters. Progressives have expressed outrage at anti-crime policies they believe are retrograde and took offense at a radio appearance in which he seemingly approved of a Florida law opponents have branded “Don’t Say Gay.” (He later said he[*had been “inartful”*](https://gothamist.com/news/suozzi-says-his-comments-on-floridas-dont-say-gay-bill-were-inartful) and opposed the law.)

Lisa Tyson, the director of the Long Island Progressive Coalition, said it’s not the time for bipartisanship. “There’s no middle ground between Republicans and Democrats anymore,” she said. “This is about fighting for justice and fighting for food.”

Other prominent party figures have winced at the tone Mr. Suozzi has used to attack the state’s first female leader, whom he often refers to as an unqualified “interim governor.”

“What he seems to be saying is, ‘I should be governor because I can do it better,’” said Jay Jacobs, the state Democratic Party chairman. “The underlying implication is that he is a male and she is a female. That’s not where this party should be going.”

Mr. Suozzi said Mr. Jacobs, who chaired his 2006 campaign, was “absolutely wrong.” He also defended his approach to Ms. Hochul: “Kathy Hochul has not been elected governor of New York State, and she is serving from now until the end of Andrew Cuomo’s term,” he said. “The definition of that is interim.”

A spokesman for the governor declined to comment.

Mr. Suozzi does inspire fierce loyalty among his supporters, who say he can be a creative and, at times, groundbreaking leader.

“Tom is a doer. Tom is an administrator. Tom knows what the city needs right now: safety and economic opportunity for all groups of people,” said Anthony Scaramucci, who said Mr. Suozzi’s father gave him a job as a young paralegal years before he briefly served as Mr. Trump’s White House communications director.

Mr. Scaramucci and his wife each contributed $22,600 to the campaign.

Mr. Suozzi readily acknowledges that the safe political road would keep him on a path to re-election for a House seat.

“I could stay in Congress the rest of my life if I wanted to and keep on getting re-elected, I believe,” he said. “But I’m giving it up because I feel so strongly that people are suffering in my state and something dramatic has to be done — and because I feel that my party has lost its way.”

PHOTOS: 2022: Representative Thomas R. Suozzi, center, and his running mate, Diana Reyna, right, greeted patrons at the Lindenwood Diner in Brooklyn in March. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SENG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); 2001: Mr. Suozzi announcing his candidacy for Nassau County executive. (PHOTOGRAPH BY SUZANNE DECHILLO/THE NEW YORK TIMES); 2006: Mr. Suozzi with Eliot Spitzer, a rival in that year’s primary for governor. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES ESTRIN/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 12, 2022

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[***What to Cook Right Now***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:625V-YJ31-JBG3-61YT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 10, 2021 Wednesday 08:54 EST

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**Section:** DINING

**Length:** 729 words

**Byline:** Sam Sifton

**Highlight:** A no-recipe recipe for pasta with brussels sprouts and diced bacon is just the thing for your weeknight feed.

**Body**

Good morning. I’ve been talking a lot about no-recipe recipes recently, in advance of the publication of “[*New York Times Cooking: No-Recipe Recipes*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/)” next week, and my colleague Tina Jordan reached out to me the other day with a stellar one. It’s for a fiery weeknight pasta dish with brussels sprouts and diced bacon.

Here’s Tina: “Dice a whole bunch of bacon or pancetta (how much depends on how many people you’re cooking for; personally I think the more, the better). Set it frying in a very large skillet or Dutch oven. Meanwhile, set a pot of water to boil and begin chiffonading a pound or two of brussels sprouts (again, depends on how many people you’re serving). If you don’t have brussels sprouts, slice up a head of broccoli, though it’s much better with brussels sprouts. When the bacon is done, remove it with a slotted spoon to drain and crisp up. If there’s more than a tablespoon or two of bacon fat in the skillet, remove the excess. Don’t drain off too much, though; you need some fat.

“Dump the brussels sprouts in the bacon fat and add a good amount of crushed red pepper (to taste I suppose, but the dish needs the kick of the red pepper). Around this time, your water’s going to be boiling, so use whatever pasta you’d like (this works well with skinny stuff, like thin spaghetti). Meanwhile, keep tossing the thinly sliced brussels sprouts in the pan until they’re browned and a little crispy. Dress with the juice of at least one lemon, toss in the hot cooked pasta and a whole bunch of freshly grated Parm, and combine, adding a little pasta water if you need it. Top with the cooked diced bacon or pancetta and eat right away.”

Doesn’t that sound grand? It might be just the thing for a Wednesday dinner.

For later in the week, Yewande Komolafe has [*a great article in The Times*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/) about swallows, the staple food of mashed roots or tubers that takes many forms throughout regional African and Afro-Caribbean cuisines. In it, she explores both traditional preparations of swallows and modern options, like the fufu that’s common in the diaspora. Naturally, there’s a recipe attached to the article, and I hope you’ll make it soon: [*fufu (swallows)*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/), typically served with a vegetable soup like [*efo riro*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/) and, in this case, topped with [*braised goat*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/) (above).

If you’re going to be celebrating [*St. Patrick’s Day*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/) next week, it’s time to start thinking about your [*corned beef*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/). I like at least a five-day cure on mine. Then you can cook the meat with cabbage and carrots for the holiday or, as I do, shred it to use in [*Irish tacos*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/).

Other things to cook tonight or real soon: [*sheet-pan roasted mushrooms and spinach*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/); [*lentils diavolo*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/); [*sour cream chicken enchiladas*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/). And would you take a look at this [*ginger-dill salmon*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/) as well? Or this fine [*pasta e ceci*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/)

Thousands and thousands more recipes await you on [*NYT Cooking*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/). Go noodle around over there and see what strikes your fancy. Save the recipes you like, something you can do even if they don’t come for our site — [*here’s how to do that*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/). Rate the ones you’ve made. And please do leave notes on them if you’ve discovered a cool shortcut or ingredient substitution, or if you have an observation about the recipe that you’d like to remember or share with fellow subscribers.

Yes, fellow subscribers. You need to be a subscriber to enjoy all the benefits of NYT Cooking. Your subscription is what makes NYT Cooking possible. Please, if you haven’t already, I hope you will consider [*subscribing today*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/).

We are meanwhile standing by to help, should anything go wrong in your kitchen or our technology. Just write [*cookingcare@nytimes.com*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/). Someone will get back to you, I promise.

Now, it’s a long, long way from cardamom and pears, but you’ve got to read [*Hugo Lindgren’s epic story about the Jamestown Jackals*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/), a ***working-class*** professional basketball team. It’s in GQ, though it was originally published by [*Victory Journal*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/).

I loved every word of [*Stella Bugbee’s paean to Zizmorcore*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/) in New York Magazine, which took me back to Canal Jean circa 1982.

Here’s [*Amanda Petrusich on Bessie Smith*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/), in the Oxford American.

Finally, to end where we started, [*I hope you’ll join me and Melissa Clark next Tuesday, March 16*](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/624974/the-new-york-times-cooking-no-recipe-recipes-by-sam-sifton/), for a discussion of no-recipe recipes and how to use them! I’ll be back on Friday.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Johnny Miller for The New York Times. Food Stylist: Rebecca Jurkevich. Prop Sylist: Paige Hicks. FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 12, 2021

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[***One Year From Election, Trump Trails Biden but Leads Warren in Battlegrounds***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XF3-HTS1-DXY4-X12J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 16, 2020 Thursday 11:44 EST

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**Section:** UPSHOT

**Length:** 2038 words

**Byline:** Nate Cohn

**Highlight:** Signs that the president’s advantage in the Electoral College has persisted or even increased since 2016.

**Body**

Signs that the president’s advantage in the Electoral College has persisted or even increased since 2016.

Despite low national approval ratings and the specter of impeachment, [*President Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) remains highly competitive in the battleground states likeliest to decide his re-election, according to a set of new surveys from The New York Times Upshot and Siena College.

Across the six closest states that went Republican in 2016, he trails Joe Biden by an average of two points among registered voters but stays within the margin of error.

Mr. Trump leads [*Elizabeth Warren*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) by two points among registered voters, the same margin as his win over Hillary Clinton in these states three years ago.

The [*poll*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) showed Bernie Sanders deadlocked with the president among registered voters, but trailing among likely voters.

The results suggest that Ms. Warren, who has emerged as a front-runner for the Democratic nomination, might face a number of obstacles in her pursuit of the presidency. The poll supports concerns among some Democrats that her ideology and gender — including the fraught question of “likability” — could hobble her candidacy among a crucial sliver of the electorate. And not only does she underperform her rivals, but the poll also suggests that the race could be close enough for the difference to be decisive.

In national polls, Mr. Trump’s political standing has appeared to be in grave jeopardy. His approval ratings have long been in the low 40s, and he trails Mr. Biden by almost nine points in a [*national polling average*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html). But as the 2016 race showed, the story in the battleground states can be quite different. Mr. Trump won the election by sweeping Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Florida, Arizona and North Carolina — even while losing the national vote by two points.

Democrats would probably need to win three of the six states to win the White House, assuming other states voted as they did in 2016 — an outcome that is not at all assured.

The Times/Siena results and other data suggest that the president’s advantage in the Electoral College relative to the nation as a whole [*remains intact or has even grown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) since 2016, raising the possibility that the Republicans could — for the third time in the past six elections — win the presidency while losing the popular vote.

There is a full year before Election Day, and a lot can change. Ms. Warren is an energetic campaigner. She could moderate her image or motivate young and nonwhite voters, including the millions who might not yet even be included in a poll of today’s registered voters. Mr. Biden could lose the relatively conservative voters who currently back him; the president could be dealt irreparable political damage during the impeachment process.

But on average over the last three cycles, head-to-head polls a year ahead of the election — matching the eventual nominees of each party — have been as close to the final result as those taken the day before. The stability of the president’s approval rating is a reason to think this pattern might hold again for a fourth cycle, at least for the three leading and already well-known Democrats tested in these polls.

While Mr. Biden ranks as the strongest Democrat in the swing states polled, the findings are not necessarily great news for him, either. His appeal to Democrats hinges on the view that he’s a safe bet against the president, yet his lead against Mr. Trump is not nearly so comfortable that he could be considered a sure thing.

The Times/Siena polls depict an exceptionally energized and polarized electorate that remains divided along the lines of the 2016 presidential election. More than 90 percent of registered voters say they’re “almost certain” or “very likely to vote,” exceeding the 87 percent who said the same thing in Times/Siena polls conducted in the final weeks of the 2016 election.

Three years later, more than 90 percent of Mr. Trump’s supporters from 2016 approve of his performance, while more than 90 percent of Mrs. Clinton’s voters disapprove.

The major demographic cleavages of the 2016 election also remain intact. Mr. Trump [*struggles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) [*badly*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) among college-educated white voters and nonwhite voters, though there are signs his standing among the latter group has improved modestly since the last presidential election. He counters with a wide lead among white voters who did not graduate from a four-year college.

In contrast to recent national surveys, the Times/Siena polls find that the president’s lead among white, ***working-class*** voters nearly matches his decisive advantage from 2016. This group represents nearly half of registered voters in these states, and a majority in the Northern battlegrounds that decided the last election.

The poll offers little evidence that any Democrat, including Mr. Biden, has made substantial progress toward winning back the white ***working-class*** voters who defected to the president in 2016, at least so far. All the leading Democratic candidates trail in the precincts or counties that voted for Barack Obama and then flipped to Mr. Trump.

As a result, Democrats appear to have made little progress in reclaiming their traditional advantage in the Northern battleground states, despite their sweep there in the 2018 midterms. Respondents in these states said they voted for Democratic congressional candidates by an average of six points, all but identical to their actual winning margins.

Nearly two-thirds of the Trump voters who said they voted for Democratic congressional candidates in 2018 [*say that they’ll back the president*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) against all three named opponents.

Nonetheless, Mr. Biden holds the edge among both registered voters and likely voters, and even among those who cast a ballot in 2016. He has a lead of 55 percent to 22 percent among voters who say they supported minor-party candidates like Gary Johnson and Jill Stein, and among those who say they voted but left the 2016 presidential race blank. It comes on top of a slight shift — just two points in Mr. Biden’s favor — among those who say they voted for either Mrs. Clinton or Mr. Trump.

Ms. Warren and Mr. Sanders, on the other hand, lose a sliver of Mrs. Clinton’s vote and make fewer inroads among Mr. Trump’s supporters.

The wide spread between the three candidates might be a surprise. But even in today’s polarized era, 21 percent of registered voters don’t simply line up for Mr. Trump or his Democratic opponents in the three head-to-head matchups. This includes 6 percent of the electorate that currently supports Mr. Biden against Mr. Trump but not Ms. Warren against Mr. Trump. There is also 3 percent of the electorate currently willing to support Ms. Warren but not Mr. Biden. And then there are the voters who are undecided in either matchup.

In states likely to be closely fought, even a modest swing among these voters could resolve the election in either side’s favor. In this poll, they swing the election in favor of Mr. Biden but leave Ms. Warren or Mr. Sanders short.

Ms. Warren’s challenge is not just name recognition. She also underperformed her rivals against Mr. Trump in separate head-to-head polling of Iowa, where she and other candidates have been campaigning in earnest ahead of the Democratic caucus.

Ms. Warren trailed Mr. Trump by six points in Iowa, the widest gap among leading Democrats, even though she [*led the Democratic caucus*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html) in our poll. Pete Buttigieg, who is generally not as well known as Ms. Warren, trailed Mr. Trump by four points in Iowa, which was the only state where we included him in head-to-head polling against the president. Mr. Biden trailed by one point and Mr. Sanders by three.

An analysis of the 205 respondents from the six core battleground states who support Mr. Biden but not Ms. Warren suggests that she might struggle to win many of them over.

Over all, 26 percent of these voters say they have a favorable view of Ms. Warren, compared with 47 percent who have an unfavorable view.

They say, by a margin of 74 percent to 24 percent, that they would prefer a more moderate Democrat nominee to a more liberal one. By a nearly identical margin, they would prefer a Democrat who promises to find common ground with Republicans over one who promises to fight for a bold progressive agenda.

Of voters who support Mr. Biden but not Ms. Warren, 52 percent agree with the statement that Ms. Warren is too far to the left for them to feel comfortable supporting her for president, while 26 percent disagree.

The Biden voters who say Ms. Warren is too far to the left are relatively well educated and disproportionately reside in precincts that flipped from Mitt Romney in 2012 to Mrs. Clinton four years later. They oppose single-payer health care or free college, and they support the Republicans’ 2017 tax law. They are not natural Democratic voters: 41 percent consider themselves conservative; 20 percent say they’re Republican; 33 percent supported Mr. Trump or Mr. Johnson in 2016.

Dawn Marshall, an independent from Tampa, Fla., said that with the exception of Mr. Biden, the Democrats running for president are too left-leaning for her.

“They want to be socialists, and this is not a socialistic country,” she said. “This is a working country where people go out, do the best that they can do, find jobs. I am so sick and tired of having to support other folks. We can’t be equal.”

Ms. Marshall, a telecom engineer who is black and Native American, would not seem to be representative of her demographic group. Yet nonwhite Biden supporters are likelier than white Biden voters to say they would choose Mr. Trump over Ms. Warren.

At the same time, 41 percent of the voters who support Mr. Biden but not Ms. Warren say they agree with the statement that most of the women who run for president “just aren’t that likable,” likely bolstering concerns among some Democrats that sexism could be a burden on her candidacy.

These Biden supporters are disproportionately male and ***working class***. This group holds a variety of conservative views on cultural issues: 55 percent agree that discrimination against whites has become as big a problem as discrimination against minorities; 79 percent agree that political correctness has gone too far; 54 percent would reduce legal immigration.

Some women also fall into this group. Elysha Savarese, 26, works in victims advocacy in Florida. She voted for Mr. Trump and said she would not do so again.

But she wouldn’t vote for Ms. Warren, either.

“There’s just something about her that I just don’t like,” she said. “I just don’t feel like she’s a genuine candidate. I find her body language to be very off-putting. She’s very cold. She’s basically a Hillary Clinton clone.”

As for female presidential candidates in general, she said, “They’re super unlikable.”

The poll does show a natural area of potential growth for Ms. Warren: the 32 percent of Biden-but-not-Warren voters who do not agree that most female presidential candidates are unlikable or that Ms. Warren is too far to the left.

These voters like Mr. Biden — he has a 92 percent favorable rating among them — but 52 percent say they don’t know enough about Ms. Warren to have an opinion. Fifty-nine percent are nonwhite. Mr. Sanders has a wide lead against the president among these voters.

If these respondents had backed Ms. Warren in the Times/Siena survey, the poll results would have shown her and Mr. Trump deadlocked in an election highly reminiscent of 2016.

Claire Cain Miller contributed reporting.

The Times/Siena poll of 3,766 registered voters was conducted from Oct. 13 to Oct. 26. The margin of sampling error for an individual state poll is plus or minus 4.4, except for Michigan at plus or minus 5.1 points. Together, the battleground sample has a margin of error of plus or minus 1.8 percentage points.

The Times/Siena poll of 1,435 registered voters in Iowa was conducted from Oct. 25 to Oct. 30 and has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

Full cross-tabs and methodology are [*available here*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/05/podcasts/the-daily/whos-ahead-2020.html).

In 2018, the Times/Siena polls had an average error of 2.5 points in 10 polls in these states over the final three weeks of the campaign. If they had been joined together as one large poll, as is the case here, the final result would have been within 1 point.

PHOTOS (A15)

**Load-Date:** July 16, 2020

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[***Under Attack, Asian-Americans Turn to Politics***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CC-FDS1-JBG3-606B-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 5, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1679 words

**Byline:** By Sabrina Tavernise

**Body**

Divided by generation, ethnicity and class, but currently galvanized by a surge of racially motivated attacks, Asian-Americans are growing rapidly as political players.

When Mike Park first heard about the recent shootings in Atlanta, he felt angry and afraid. But almost immediately, he had another thought.

''We can't just sit back,'' he said. ''We can't sit in our little enclave anymore.''

Born in South Carolina to Korean immigrants, Mr. Park grew up wanting to escape his Asian identity. He resented having to be the one student to speak at Asian-Pacific day and felt embarrassed when his friends did not want to eat dinner at his house because of the unfamiliar pickled radishes and cabbage in his refrigerator.

Now 42, Mr. Park embraces both his Korean heritage and an Asian-American identity he shares with others of his generation. The Atlanta shootings that left eight dead, six of them women of Asian descent, made him feel an even stronger sense of solidarity, especially after a surge in bias incidents against Asians nationwide.

''I do think this horrible crime has brought people together,'' said Mr. Park, who works as an insurance agent in Duluth, Ga., an Atlanta suburb that is a quarter Asian. ''It really is an awakening.''

For years, Asian-Americans were among the least likely of any racial or ethnic group to vote or to join community or advocacy groups. Today they are surging into public life, running for office in record numbers, and turning out to vote unlike ever before. They are now the fastest-growing group in the American electorate.

But as a political force, Asian-Americans are still taking shape. With a relatively short history of voting, they differ from demographic groups whose families have built party loyalties and voting tendencies over generations. Most of their families arrived after 1965, when the United States opened its doors more widely to people in Asia. There are vast class divisions, too; the income gap between the rich and the poor is greatest among Asian-Americans.

''These are your classic swing voters,'' said Karthick Ramakrishnan, director of AAPI Data. ''These immigrants did not grow up in a Democratic household or Republican household. You have a lot more persuadability.''

Historical data on Asian-American voting patterns is spotty. Analyses of exit polls show that a majority voted for George Bush in 1992, Mr. Ramakrishnan said. Today, a majority of Asians vote for Democrats, but that masks deep differences by subgroup. Vietnamese-Americans, for example, lean more toward Republicans, and Indian-Americans lean strongly toward Democrats.

It is too early for final breakdowns of the Asian-American vote in 2020, along either party or ethnic lines. But one thing seems clear -- turnout for Asian-Americans appears to have been higher than it has ever been. Mr. Ramakrishnan analyzed preliminary estimates from the voter data firm Catalist that were based on available returns from 33 states representing two-third of eligible Asian-American voters. The estimates found that adult Asian-American citizens had the highest recorded increase in voter turnout among any racial or ethnic group.

As relatively new voters, many Asian-Americans find themselves uniquely interested in both major parties, drawn to Democrats for their stances on guns and health care, and to Republicans for their support for small business and emphasis on self-reliance. But they do not fit into neat categories. The Democratic position on immigration attracts some and repels others. The Republican anti-Communist language is compelling to some. Others are indifferent.

Former President Donald J. Trump's repeated reference to the ''China virus'' repelled many Chinese-American voters, and the Democrats' support for affirmative action policies in schools has drawn strong opposition from some Asian groups. Even the violence and slurs against Asians, which began spiking after the coronavirus began to spread last spring, have pushed people in different directions politically. Some blame Mr. Trump and his followers. Others see Republicans as supporters of the police and law and order.

Yeun Jae Kim, 32, voted for the first time last year. His parents had moved from Seoul to a Florida suburb when he was a child and started a truck parts salvage business. Mr. Kim went on to graduate from Georgia Tech and then to a job at Coca-Cola in Atlanta, but, like his parents, he was so focused on making it that he did not vote, or think about politics much at all.

Last year changed his mind. But how to vote and whom to choose? He and his wife spent hours watching videos on YouTube and talking at church to a politically experienced friend, also a Korean-American.

''For me it was pretty hard,'' said Mr. Kim, who described himself as ''in the middle'' politically. ''There are certain things I really like about what the Democratic Party is doing. And there are certain things I really like about what the Republicans are doing.''

He wanted to keep his vote private. But he said that casting a ballot made him feel good.

''It made me feel really proud of the country,'' he said. ''Like everybody is in this together. It helped me feel connected with other people who were voting too.''

Part of the new energy in Asian-American politics comes from second-generation immigrants, who are now in their 30s and 40s and are forming families that are far more racially mixed and civically engaged than those of their parents. A new Asian-American identity is being forged from dozens of languages, cultures and histories.

''Right now, it is this coming of age,'' said Marc Ang, 39, a conservative political activist and business owner in Orange County, Calif. His father, an immigrant from the Philippines of Chinese descent, came to California in the 1980s as a white-collar worker in the steel industry. The state is now home to about a third of the country's Asian-American population.

''Suddenly we are top doctors, top lawyers, top business people,'' said Mr. Ang, who pointed out that the approximately 6 million Asians in California are equivalent to the size of Singapore. ''It is just inevitable that we become a voting bloc.''

Mr. Ang, a Republican, worked to defeat an affirmative action proposition in California last year. But he praised Democrats and their efforts to draw attention to the storm of slurs and physical attacks over the past year, which he said have been a galvanizing force, unifying even the least politically involved people from countries as different as China, Vietnam, the Philippines and South Korea.

More Asian-Americans are running for office than ever before. They include Andrew Yang, among the early leaders in the race for New York mayor, and Michelle Wu, the city councilor who is running for mayor of Boston. A Filipino-American, Robert Bonta, just became attorney general of California.

At least 158 Asian-Americans ran for state legislatures in 2020, according to AAPI Data, up by 15 percent from 2018.

Marvin Lim, a Georgia state representative, calls himself a 1.5-generation immigrant: He came to the United States from the Philippines when he was 7.

Mr. Lim spent a number of years on public assistance, and said his family ''did not see the bootstraps working for us.'' He became a civil rights lawyer and began to vote for Democrats because their values, he said, aligned more with his. Now 36, he won a House seat in Georgia in November, and last month met with President Biden during his visit to Atlanta after the shootings.

''I have never felt more like I mattered,'' he said.

Asian-Americans lean toward Democrats. All the more so among the American-born. But there are things pushing Asians away from the Democrats as well.

Anthony Lam, a Vietnamese immigrant who fled as a refugee in the 1970s and grew up ***working class*** in Los Angeles, had usually voted for Democrats. But as the owner of a hair salon in San Diego, he became increasingly frustrated with directives for coronavirus lockdowns and turned off by the unrest during Black Lives Matter protests. When he criticized the looting, he said some white Democrats chastised him.

''They said, 'You don't understand racism,''' he said. ''I'm like, 'Wait a minute. You get racism just now? I've been living with this for 40 years.'''

Mr. Lam voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016. He supported Mr. Yang in the Democratic primary last year. But he said he eventually voted for Mr. Trump, mostly out of frustration with Democrats.

Despite recent increases in political representation, some Asian-American communities still feel invisible, and some members argue that could lead to a rightward turn.

Rob Yang, a Hmong-American who owns shoe and apparel stores in Minneapolis and St. Paul, grew up poor as a refugee. He has watched the turmoil in the wake of the George Floyd killing in his traditional, largely ***working-class*** Hmong community. His own stores were stripped of their merchandise during the Black Lives Matter protests.

Mr. Yang voted for Mr. Biden. He said that he supported the Black Lives Matter movement but that some in his community did not. Years of feeling invisible had frustrated and demoralized them.

The way he sees it, Asians still do not have enough of a voice, and he worries that the pressure of holding everything in for years is reaching dangerous levels. He said he worried that a populist Asian leader, ''an Asian Trump,'' could have a huge following by tapping into this frustration. ''We've been holding it all in for so long, it will just take the right circumstances for us to blow,'' he said.

For Mr. Park, the insurance agent in suburban Atlanta, the attacks in his city and others across America were a searing reminder that economic success does not ensure protection from the racial animus that is part of American life. It is now up to Asian-Americans, he said, to stand up and claim their space in American politics.

''It's moving away from the idea that 'the nail that sticks out gets hammered in,''' he said. ''We are realizing it's OK to stick out.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/04/us/georgia-asian-americans-politics.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/04/us/georgia-asian-americans-politics.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: MIKE PARK, born to Korean immigrants in South Carolina, about the recent shootings in Atlanta. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Volunteers assembling campaign yard signs at an Asian Pacific Americans for Trump field office in Orlando, Fla., in September. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEXANDER DRAGO/REUTERS)

An early vote event with Asian American and Pacific Islander community groups in Las Vegas in February. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

Andrew Yang of New York and Michelle Wu of Boston are both running for mayor.

MARC ANG, an immigrant from the Philippines and a Republican. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN YOUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16)

**Load-Date:** April 5, 2021

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[***Macron Sets Out to Build a 'Dam' Against Le Pen. Can It Hold Up?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656N-Y7T1-JBG3-625K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 12, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1517 words

**Byline:** By Norimitsu Onishi and Constant Méheut

**Body**

After Sunday's vote, when nearly a third of ballots went to the extreme right, a united front of mainstream voters looked more precarious than ever.

PARIS -- A day after Marine Le Pen, the far-right leader, emerged as his challenger for the final round of France's presidential election in less than two weeks, President Emmanuel Macron immediately set about on Monday to build the ''dam.''

Dams are the mainstream French voters who, time and again, have put political differences aside in the second round and voted for anyone but a Le Pen in a so-called ''Republican front'' to deny the far right the presidency.

But after Sunday's first round, when 32 percent of French voters supported candidates on the extreme right -- a record -- the dam may be more precarious than ever.

Mr. Macron, widely criticized for a listless campaign, moved quickly Monday to shore it up, directly challenging Ms. Le Pen and her party, the National Rally, in the economically depressed north where she dominated Sunday.

In Denain, a city won by Ms. Le Pen, Mr. Macron spoke of the worries of the youth in Denain and other social issues. He tried to remind voters of the extremist roots of Ms. Le Pen's party, referring to it by its old name, the National Front.

At a campaign stop of her own in a rural area, Yonne, Ms. Le Pen said that the dam was a dishonest strategy to win an election, adding that ''it's a way to save yourself when you don't deserve it.''

In a triumphant speech against the majestic backdrop of the Louvre Museum five years ago, Mr. Macron had launched his presidency by pledging to unite the French so that there would be ''no reason at all to vote for the extremes.''

But in addition to Ms. Le Pen's second-place finish, with 23 percent of the vote, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leftist veteran, won 22 percent of Sunday's votes to finish a strong third.

Mr. Mélenchon's supporters -- split in their attitudes toward Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen -- could now help determine the election's final outcome on April 24.

After five years of Mr. Macron, who trounced Ms. Le Pen in the 2017 runoff, the far-right leader emerged stronger than ever. She has softened her image in a successful process of ''undemonizing'' and focused relentlessly on ordinary voters' economic hardship.

In Yonne, Ms. Le Pen hammered away at the themes that carried her through to the second round. Meeting with a cereal farmer, she spoke of how rising prices of fuel and fertilizers following the war in Ukraine would raise the cost of staples at supermarkets and hurt the most vulnerable.

The far right's record performance on Sunday resulted from a combination of factors, including Ms. Le Pen's own efforts to revamp her image, a successful cultural battle waged by conservative forces in recent years, and a series of Islamist attacks in France since 2015.

But critics say that it also reflected Mr. Macron's continued strategy of triangulating France's electoral landscape. While Mr. Macron was regarded as a center-left candidate five years ago, he shifted rightward during his presidency, sensing that his main challenge would come from Ms. Le Pen.

That shift was embodied by a series of laws toughening France's stance on immigration, empowering the police, and combating Islamist extremism. Many working French also felt that his economic policies unfairly favored the rich and have left them more adrift.

If Mr. Macron's intention was to defuse Ms. Le Pen's appeal by stripping her of her core issues, critics say the approach backfired by ushering the talking points of the far right deeper into the mainstream political debate.

Then, Ms. Le Pen also shifted her message to pocketbook issues that have now resonated even more broadly as energy prices spike because of the war in Ukraine.

Sacha Houlié, a lawmaker and a spokesman for Mr. Macron's campaign, said that the president was aiming to strengthen the dam strategy. He acknowledged that there have been ''some mistakes'' and ''blunders,'' noting that some government ministers had picked up themes and expressions promoted by the far right.

But Mr. Houlié denied that Mr. Macron had normalized far-right ideas, saying his government had mainly tried to respond to people's growing concerns on crime and immigration. ''We cannot sweep the dust under the carpet,'' he said, referring to the issues.

But many, especially Mr. Mélenchon's supporters of the left, feel so betrayed that Mr. Macron may have a harder time in this next election persuading them to join his call for unity by building a dam against Ms. Le Pen, whom the president has called a danger to democracy.

Alexis Lévrier, a historian who has written about Mr. Macron's relations with the news media, said that as Mr. Macron tried to reshape French politics around a strict divide between his mainstream movement and Ms. Le Pen, he ''contributed to the rise in power of the far right.''

Unwittingly, ''he's a pyromaniac firefighter,'' Mr. Lévrier said.

A resident of Guyancourt -- a well-off, left-leaning city southwest of Paris where Mr. Mélenchon came in first Sunday -- Stéphanie Noury said that, in 2017, she gave Mr. Macron her vote as part of a dam against the far right. But this time, she planned to stay home for the final round.

''Macron played into the hands of the extreme right,'' said Ms. Noury, 55, a human resources manager who voted Sunday for Mr. Mélenchon. ''He told himself that he would always win against the extreme right.''

Compared to 2017, Ms. Le Pen's share of the first-round vote went up by a couple of percentage points despite the direct challenge of a new rival, the far-right TV pundit Éric Zemmour, who urged his supporters to vote for Ms. Le Pen in the upcoming showdown.

On Sunday, Ms. Le Pen, Mr. Zemmour and a third far-right candidate, Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, together got 32 percent of the vote. In 2017, Ms. Le Pen and Mr. Dupont-Aignan collected 26 percent in the first round.

Voters first formed a dam against the extreme right in 2002 when Ms. Le Pen's father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, shocked the political establishment by making it into a runoff against Jacques Chirac. Another dam helped defeat Ms. Le Pen in 2017.

To gain credibility on the right, in 2019, Mr. Macron gave his first long interview on the sensitive issues of immigration and Islam to Valeurs Actuelles, a magazine that straddles the right and far right.

''By talking to us, Emmanuel Macron came to seek some legitimacy on these subjects, from right-wing people who felt he was doing nothing,'' said Geoffroy Lejeune, the publication's editor. ''He knows that by doing this, he's sending a big signal.''

Aurélien Taché, a lawmaker once allied with Mr. Macron, said the president was elected in 2017 thanks to voters who put aside their political differences and united against Ms. Le Pen.

He said Mr. Macron should have taken those votes -- mainly from the left -- into account in his policies afterward.

''He did not consider them,'' he said, adding that Mr. Macron instead worked to ''set up this cleavage'' between him and Ms. Le Pen, leading to a ''high-risk rematch.''

''There have been, on a whole range of topics, very strong concessions made to the far right,'' Mr. Taché said, also citing tougher immigration rules and the application of a stricter version of French secularism, called laïcité.

But Mr. Taché, who quit Mr. Macron's party in 2020 over the president's shift to the right, was especially critical of the government's landmark law against separatism, which has been criticized inside and outside France, including by the U.S. envoy on international religious freedom.

The law amounted to ''making Islam and Muslims invisible,'' Mr. Taché said.

Some academics, political opponents and Muslim organizations have also criticized the law as discriminating against French Muslims by leading to the widespread closing of mosques, Muslim associations and schools.

That resentment may now also complicate Mr. Macron's dam-building effort.

To be re-elected this time, for instance, he will have to persuade voters in places likes Trappes, a ***working-class*** city with a large Muslim population southwest of Paris, to join the dam against Ms. Le Pen.

A longtime stronghold of Mélenchon supporters, Trappes strongly backed Mr. Macron in the 2017 runoff. But comments by voters Sunday suggested that the dam might not be as effective this time.

Frédéric Renan, 47, a computer programmer, said he would abstain or cast a blank vote in a showdown between Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen.

''Macron opened the door to the extreme right,'' Mr. Renan said, adding that the president's economic policies hurt the poor and fueled the rise of the far right.

''I don't see how voting for Macron is a vote in a dam against the extreme right,'' he said. ''Some people will say that not participating in the dam against the extreme right is irresponsible, that the threat of the extreme right is greater than what Emmanuel Macron proposes, but I'm not convinced.''

Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen-far-fight.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/11/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen-far-fight.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron campaigning in Denain, a city in northern France, on Monday. He is lobbying voters on the left to support him again, but some of his previous backers feel betrayed by choices he's made on immigration, the economy and Islamist extremism. The runoff election will be held April 24. (POOL PHOTO BY LEWIS JOLY)

Marine Le Pen on Monday in Soucy, France. Her campaign has embraced pocketbook issues, such as the rising prices of fuel. In recent years, she has benefited from a revamping of her image and a successful cultural battle waged by French conservatives. As a result, some right-wing ideas are now more mainstream. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EMMANUEL DUNAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** April 12, 2022

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[***How Trump’s Brutish Code of Honor Explains His Feud With Liz Cheney; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64P6-DW81-DXY4-X4DM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 3, 2022 Thursday 11:39 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1389 words

**Byline:** Jon A. Shields

**Highlight:** The former president lives by a code: “Never show weakness. You’ve always got to be strong. Don’t be bullied.”

**Body**

In the modern Republican Party, there has never been anything quite like Liz Cheney’s war with Donald Trump. Whereas once, the party’s most heated rivalries were primarily ideological — like the feud between Nelson Rockefeller and Barry Goldwater — today’s have little to do with policy. Instead, they are about rival systems of honor that are remaking identity politics on the right.

These competing honor systems grow in different social milieus: One is relatively blue collar and home to Mr. Trump’s MAGA movement, while the other is college educated and home to Ms. Cheney’s Never Trumpers. Like so much of American society, the G.O.P. is coming apart by class.

Though Ms. Cheney seems to view Mr. Trump as someone without principle, he lives by a code. As Bob Woodward once described it: “Never show weakness. You’ve always got to be strong. Don’t be bullied. There is no choice.”

This ancient way of life, which permeated the Queens of Mr. Trump’s youth and is generally familiar to citizens outside the professional class, has gone by many names in America: “hillbilly justice” in Appalachia, the “code of the street” in poor urban neighborhoods and the “code of the West” in many Western states, including Wyoming, which Ms. Cheney represents in the House. The people who live in these honor cultures, as social scientists call them, are expected to protect their honor by always standing up to their enemies and generally letting others know they are not to be messed with.

Because an honor culture requires those who are slighted or dissed to seek vengeance, Mr. Trump is obsessed with Ms. Cheney. At the Save America rally on Jan. 6 last year, [*he implored*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/22/magazine/liz-cheney-vs-maga.html), “The Liz Cheneys of the world, we got to get rid of them.” And during his first public appearance since leaving the White House, [*he singled out*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/28/us/politics/trump-cpac-republicans.html) Ms. Cheney once again by noting that her “poll numbers have dropped faster than any human being I’ve ever seen.”

Wyoming has long been shaped by an honor culture, as the Cheney family must know well. Dick Cheney had [*to navigate it as a student at Natrona County High in the 1950s*](https://www.amazon.com/Cheney-Americas-Powerful-Controversial-President/dp/0060723467/ref=sr_1_17?crid=S32C4D4X0V0K&amp;keywords=dick+cheney&amp;qid=1643738295&amp;s=books&amp;sprefix=dick+cheney%2Cstripbooks%2C92&amp;sr=1-17&amp;asin=0060723467&amp;revisionId=&amp;format=4&amp;depth=1). When he was caught fighting on school grounds, his teacher required both combatants to duel it out in a boxing match. After seeking a boxing coach, Mr. Cheney won the showdown. Proceeds from the event went to the school booster club.

Until recently, though, the honor culture of Mr. Cheney’s high school had little to do with the Wyoming Republican Party, which was insular and run by affluent ranchers and members of the professional class. Now that culture is remaking the highest reaches of the party as MAGA insurgents wrest control from the establishment. Hence, state party meetings, once sleepy and wonky affairs, are increasingly marked by bravado.

At the Republican state convention in 2020, for example, [*a fistfight broke out*](https://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/govt-and-politics/gillette-police-cite-albany-county-gop-chair-say-he-instigated-fight-that-left-him-in/article_d5103933-6594-5987-a748-e7b1aa2c78ff.html) between two county chairmen that sent one to the hospital with a broken ankle and dislocated shoulder. The man who won the scrape is not to be messed with: He [*has*](https://county17.com/2020/06/29/wyoming-republican-party-chairman-cited-for-assault-battery/) reportedly attended meetings with a gun at the ready, as well as an ax handle, which, according to his attorney, he uses as a cane.

This insurgent, blue-collar culture has not been well received by the Never Trump politicos in Wyoming. Susan Stubson, an attorney aligned with the establishment, said, “I find it threatening.” Another prominent member of Ms. Cheney’s circle called it “toxic.”

Whatever else it is, this old honor culture has deepened today’s identity politics. Ostracized from the genteel establishment, many ***working-class*** Wyomingites see themselves in these new shows of Trumpian bravado. [*Like other Americans*](https://www.amazon.com/Democracy-Realists-Elections-Responsive-Government/dp/0691178240/ref=sr_1_1?crid=2KR7Q0HN5FMI6&amp;keywords=democracy+for+realists&amp;qid=1643738523&amp;s=books&amp;sprefix=democracy+for+realists%2Cstripbooks%2C104&amp;sr=1-1&amp;asin=0691178240&amp;revisionId=&amp;format=4&amp;depth=1), they feel a sense of kinship with those who act like them. As Ms. Stubson lamented, “We had never been able to connect to the larger community.” Her husband, Tim Stubson, a former Wyoming representative, admitted that “there was a current there that we were not aware of.”

Honor culture isn’t about just identity, though. This primitive code also seems indispensable to those Republicans radicalized by today’s polarized politics. If one is persuaded that the left is on the verge of destroying American civilization, then electing as many fearless fighters and strongmen as possible is the order of the day. That is why a prominent MAGA donor like Tom Klingenstein said he [*sees Mr. Trump*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/video/2020/10/13/claremont_institute_chairman_thomas_klingenstein_trump_2020_a_man_vs_a_movement.html) as “just what the doctor ordered” in “these revolutionary times.”

Enter Harriet Hageman, Mr. Trump’s proxy candidate in his war against Ms. Cheney. A lawyer who once aligned with the old guard, Ms. Hageman broke from Ms. Cheney’s clique to pursue power. Attuned to Wyoming’s new right, her [*first campaign ad*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egPY884jF64&amp;t=26s) is already appealing to the state’s deeply rooted honor culture. It accuses Ms. Cheney of breaking the “code of the West,” one that requires “loyalty,” “honor” and a willingness to “fight” for compatriots.

Ms. Cheney, though, is fighting on behalf of her own code of honor. Hers is driven by a fidelity to what the Yale political theorist [*Steven Smith calls*](https://www.amazon.com/Reclaiming-Patriotism-Extremes-Steven-Smith/dp/0300254040/) “enlightened patriotism,” one that insists on “loyalty to a particular constitutional form that we call liberal democracy or constitutional democracy.”

Such patriotism has always been in tension with the motto “my country, right or wrong,” because it is beholden to abstract, creedal principles, such as equality, individualism and the rule of law. And because these principles are open to interpretation, patriotism in the United States has long had a distinctly critical, questioning character. Mr. Smith even suggests that it birthed the nation, since the American revolutionaries regarded themselves as the true British patriots, not traitors.

Not unlike those British subjects facing a subversive king, Ms. Cheney had no real choice when faced with Mr. Trump’s assault on our constitutional order. To Ms. Cheney — and her Republican supporters in Wyoming — it would have been shameful to remain loyal to Mr. Trump. This is why, on the first anniversary of the Capitol invasion, [*she admonished*](https://twitter.com/RepLizCheney/status/1479141569458548749) on Twitter, “Anyone who denies the truth of what happened on January 6th ought to be ashamed of themselves.”

Beneath the surface of their honor feud lurk clashing understandings of political ambition. Unlike Mr. Trump, Ms. Cheney is seeking the esteem of future generations by doing what’s in the public interest, even if she is cast out of office for doing so. Ms. Cheney told a Wyoming paper that just moments before her fellow Republicans pushed her out of House leadership, [*she warned them*](https://trib.com/news/state-and-regional/govt-and-politics/read-what-rep-liz-cheney-had-to-say-when-she-sat-down-with-the-star/article_d229795a-81d8-5fd3-92a3-87b766a1561f.html) “that history was watching.”

Mr. Trump, meanwhile, is so loyal to his narrow code that he lacks even the theory of mind to understand Ms. Cheney’s ambition. For him, losing any contest is always dishonorable because it tarnishes his reputation as a strongman. Hence, his enduring fixation with ratings, polling and the “stolen” 2020 election. It’s also why he asked Marine Gen. John F. Kelly, “I don’t get it. What was in it for them?” as they stood over the graves at Arlington National Cemetery, according to [*reporting in The Atlantic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/09/trump-americans-who-died-at-war-are-losers-and-suckers/615997/).

There seem to be no noble defeats for Mr. Trump. And that means that Ms. Cheney’s willingness to risk political death must be mysterious to him. She is not just his most formidable foe; she’s an enigma.

Even if they understood each other better, their feud would still be impossible to resolve. Unlike sharp policy disagreements that can end in grudging compromises, Mr. Trump and Ms. Cheney see any concession in their feud as dishonorable. Mr. Trump cannot concede defeat in 2020, and thus Ms. Cheney cannot de-escalate her war against him. And because that’s true, Mr. Trump can’t ignore Ms. Cheney. They are wed to each other, captured by rival codes of honor that are remaking the American right.

Jon A. Shields, a professor of government at Claremont McKenna College, is the author of three books, including “[*Trump’s Democrats*](https://www.amazon.com/Trumps-Democrats-Stephanie-Muravchik/dp/0815738633),” which he co-wrote with another professor at Claremont, Stephanie Muravchik. They are working on the book about Liz Cheney together.

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**Load-Date:** February 7, 2022

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[***In Democratic Bastion, 'Affordability' Replaces Sweeping Liberal Vows***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YW-23C1-DXY4-X0XX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 11, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1573 words

**Byline:** By Tracey Tully

**Body**

In the first budget address of his second term, Gov. Philip Murphy responded to New Jersey voters' discontent at a time of surging gas costs and high taxes.

Gas prices are soaring. The war in Ukraine has rattled the stock market. And, months ahead of midterm elections, voters in key suburban swing districts in New Jersey are restive, contributing to increased dissatisfaction with the state's Democratic leader, Gov. Philip D. Murphy.

For much of his first term, Mr. Murphy governed as a steadfast liberal eager to talk about his successful efforts to protect abortion rights, legalize marijuana and enact stricter gun control laws.

But on Tuesday, in his first budget address since winning re-election by just three percentage points in a state where Democrats vastly outnumber Republicans, Mr. Murphy offered a radically tempered message.

The sweeping liberal rhetoric that defined his first budget address in 2018 was replaced by a recalibrated definition of progress and a promise to make New Jersey -- where the cost of living is among the highest in the nation -- a more affordable place to live.

Months after remnants of Hurricane Ida crippled large parts of the state, killing at least 25 people, he did not utter the phrase ''climate change.'' There were no overt references to criminal justice, racial equity or immigrant rights. He cited a signature first-term win -- lifting the minimum wage to $15 -- just once, and instead chose to talk about tax cuts and rebates and a one-year ''fee holiday'' that would allow residents to visit state parks and renew driver's licenses for free.

''If you compare the really sharp racial justice messaging from last year to this year, there is a really big disconnect,'' said Sara Cullinane, director of Make the Road New Jersey, a left-leaning coalition focused on immigrant and worker rights.

''It seems that there's a pivot,'' she added.

Instead of the unabashedly left-leaning budget message that set the tone for his first term, there were 24 mentions of the words ''affordable'' or ''affordability.''

''The Democratic Party is looking down at the 2022 midterms coming and knowing that its message needs to be revamped,'' said Ashley Koning, director of the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University.

''Many voters, probably most voters, are disenchanted.''

Mr. Murphy is scheduled to move from vice chairman to chairman of the National Governors Association in July and to take over leadership of the Democratic Governors Association for the second time next year. Democrats must defend governorships in the key battleground states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, races seen as must-wins to stave off Republican restrictions on voting rights.

The governor has made it clear that he heard the message voters sent in November in Virginia and New Jersey, where Republican turnout surged and Democrats lost seven seats in the Legislature, including the Senate president's.

''Quite frankly,'' Professor Koning said, ''they're not interested in hearing about climate change and racial justice.''

Democrats worry that the same factors that contributed to Mr. Murphy's re-election by smaller-than-expected margins -- pandemic fatigue, rising costs and President Biden's waning popularity -- could also spell trouble during November's midterm congressional elections.

Just before Mr. Murphy delivered Tuesday's address, the Eagleton Center released a poll showing that the number of voters with a favorable impression of the governor had dropped to 33 percent, down from 50 percent in November. Of the people surveyed, more than 40 percent gave him failing grades in connection with New Jersey's high property taxes and cost of living.

''Governor Murphy has never wavered in his vision to make New Jersey stronger and fairer for everyone who calls our state home,'' Mr. Murphy's spokeswoman, Alyana Alfaro Post, said.

''This year's budget proposal builds on that progress,'' she added, ''and continues opening doors of opportunity for all New Jerseyans.''

During his first term, Mr. Murphy accomplished many of his most ambitious policy goals: adding a tax on income over $1 million; legalizing adult-use marijuana; establishing paid sick leave for workers; and giving undocumented immigrants access to driver's licenses.

On Tuesday, he talked about the millionaires' tax but did not mention the other victories, referring only to the ''many steps we took together over the past four years,'' before focusing on property taxes.

''This budget attacks two of New Jersey's most difficult and intractable problems: property taxes and affordable housing,'' Mr. Murphy told a joint session of the Legislature, in a marked shift from comments he made in 2019 minimizing concerns over the state's high taxes.

''If you're a one-issue voter and tax rate is your issue, either a family or a business -- if that's the only basis upon which you're going to make a decision,'' Mr. Murphy said three years ago, ''we're probably not your state.''

This year's budget proposal -- a record-high $48.9 billion spending plan -- did not appear to veer from priorities Mr. Murphy set during his first term and would continue to fund programs important to Mr. Murphy's progressive allies.

The plan, which the Legislature must approve by July, sets aside more money for education, mental health programs, health care for children of undocumented immigrants, addiction treatment and lower-cost housing. For the second year, Mr. Murphy has proposed making a full payment to the state's underfunded public-employee pension system.

Just as he did in his first budget address, Mr. Murphy quoted the Irish playwright Oscar Wilde's definition of a cynic -- someone who knows ''the price of everything and the value of nothing.'' But that is where the parallels end.

Gone was the fiery rhetoric from 2018, when he talked about the state's high poverty rate, income inequality and the importance of embracing ''the immediacy of the problems before us.''

There was no renewed mention this week of initiatives to narrow the state's racial income gap using tools like so-called baby bonds, an ultimately unsuccessful budget proposal he made in 2020 to give most newborns $1,000, payable with interest when they turned 18.

Instead, a plan to set aside money to build 3,300 units of lower-cost housing was depicted as a win for the ***working class***, not the working poor.

''Let's not lose sight of who actually benefits when we build more affordable housing,'' Mr. Murphy said of units available to people with low to moderate incomes. ''It's the educator or first responder who can finally live within the community they serve. It's also the server at the local diner, the cashier at the grocery store.''

Julia Sass Rubin, a professor at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, said the speech represented a change in messaging, but not a ''major retraction'' of Mr. Murphy's left-leaning priorities.

''If you keep walking the walk, maybe they think they can adjust the talk a little bit, without substantively changing the direction,'' Professor Rubin said.

''It's a way of trying to shore up what could be a vulnerability -- both for the midterm elections and Democrats more broadly,'' she added.

Jack Ciattarelli, Mr. Murphy's Republican challenger who came close to unseating the governor, said the budget address showed Mr. Murphy was ''definitely feeling the pressure from the closeness of the race and the themes that we hit on repeatedly, which up until this point he's been tone-deaf on.''

But the contents of the plan, he said, were the ''same old, same old.''

''There's never been a better opportunity to completely reform the way we do property taxes,'' said Mr. Ciattarelli, who plans to run for governor again in four years.

Officials with left-leaning advocacy groups said that they found things to like in the budget draft, as well as missed opportunities.

Ms. Cullinane, of Make the Road, praised the roughly $100 million the governor set aside for undocumented immigrants and working families who have been ineligible for federal pandemic-related aid.

Andrea McChristian, law and policy director for the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, applauded Mr. Murphy's efforts to expand college access and to fund a pilot program designed to keep juveniles out of prison. But she questioned the absence of any discussion about closing juvenile lockups, making reparation payments to Black residents harmed by slavery or a renewed push to implement baby bonds.

''That's definitely a missed moment,'' Ms. McChristian said.

The missing emphasis on social justice is particularly worrisome in a year when New Jersey is flush with cash from sales tax collections, revenue generated by the robust housing and stock markets and federal stimulus funds, Ms. McChristian said.

''This is the moment to be bold,'' she said, adding, ''We have huge racial disparities here.''

Doug O'Malley, director of Environment New Jersey, called it a ''status quo'' budget that continues to provide vital support for offshore wind energy but fails to take other meaningful steps toward addressing the climate crisis or establishing a guaranteed source of funding for public transit.

''New Jersey should be investing in climate change solutions,'' Mr. O'Malley said, ''not fighting this fight with one hand behind its back.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/nyregion/nj-governor-murphy-budget-address.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/nyregion/nj-governor-murphy-budget-address.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: In the first budget address of his second term, Gov. Philip Murphy of New Jersey responded to voters' discontent at a time of surging gas costs and high taxes with a radically tempered message, a far cry from the unabashedly left-leaning speech he delivered in 2018. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE GUSTAFSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

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[***Upward Mobility***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63GH-F7W1-JBG3-60JP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 29, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 15; FICTION

**Length:** 1106 words

**Byline:** By Kawai Strong Washburn

**Body**

SILENT WINDS, DRY SEAS By Vinod Busjeet

Humanity has never stopped moving. Since the beginning of the species, we've continually migrated, until there isn't a square foot of Earth that hasn't felt our presence. The reasons have varied widely -- from following the seasons to fleeing collapsing societies, and everything imaginable in between -- but if we have one truth, it is nomadism.

Migration and its opportunities are at the heart of Vinod Busjeet's debut, ''Silent Winds, Dry Seas.'' The novel is narrated by Vishnu, a young man of Indian descent who has grown up in Mauritius under British colonial rule in the 1950s and 60s, and whose sights are set on success beyond his homeland's shores. That ambition ultimately lands him in America, within the corridors of some of the country's most elite institutions. There's a straightforward story here, a coming-of-age narrative with America as a shining beacon; and yet, given the novel's principal setting -- on an island nation off the coast of East Africa in the Indian Ocean -- one hopes we might gain some greater understanding of humankind from the contrasts between the cultures and trajectories of these two starkly different countries. It's an open question as to whether the story takes up that opportunity.

When the novel begins, Vishnu has returned to the island after 30 years to be at his ailing father's bedside. His mother recounts his family's rocky past -- from abusive, arranged marriages to siblings battling over property -- as it played out against the backdrop of a country beginning to fray at its racial and fiscal seams. Having long ''straddled the ***working class*** and the lower middle class'' in a socioeconomically, racially and linguistically stratified Mauritius, Vishnu's Hindi-speaking family is ever angling for a higher station in life, with all their hopes now pinned on him.

So, we have our stakes. And yet, as the plot spools out in a relatively staid order -- A then B then C, with some jumps in time and interludes of poetry -- Vishnu never seems to engage with those stakes in any significant way; things simply happen, and we move on. Through dialogue, we learn of the family's ancestral fall from grace, offhand commentary about pigmentation and the anglicizing of names, and surprising admiration for local remnants of French and British colonizers. But neither dialogue nor narration gives way to the characters' interiority.

This absence is most jarring when the narrator approaches matters of colonialism, class or race as if they are neither good nor bad, but simply the way life is. When Vishnu's father says a family friend ''thinks an English name fits his skin color better,'' Busjeet reveals no reaction on Vishnu's part; the next sentence cuts to another scene. When we do glimpse his thoughts, they often lack depth. When Vishnu's Mauritian friends predict his future success, ''I smiled, but I didn't know what to say,'' Vishnu narrates. ''Sure, my goal was to thrive among the elite. I was flattered, but what if I let them down?''

If there's little of Vishnu's inward life on the page, there's certainly plenty of his surroundings. The middle of the novel takes us through natural disasters, political upheaval, bureaucratic corruption and economic instability. For readers unfamiliar with Mauritius, this history is illuminating, the richness of detail showcasing some of the best writing in the book. As Cyclone Carol menaces the island in 1960, Busjeet moves from a description of the marijuana the island's Hindus partook in on happier occasions, to a sky stained blood-red by storm winds, then to a scrum of customers angling for a shop's plywood and canned food, overseen by the savvy ''white-haired Chinese woman counting on an abacus'' while dispensing disaster survival advice. The tension in such moments is palpable enough to inject needed bits of fuel into the story.

Eventually, Vishnu arrives, in more ways than one. He wins a secondary school scholarship on the island, and later travels to London. He's admitted to one Ivy League university and then another, securing several mentorships that give him contact highs off of old-money America. In several moments where he might be derailed -- like when he's assigned a work-study job he thinks is beneath him, in the kitchen of the Yale dining hall -- Vishnu deploys the sort of slick, self-important persuasiveness many a political insider would kill for. While he occasionally overreaches and stumbles (in an entertaining sequence during a college internship in Washington, D.C., a single expensive dinner renders him penniless, forcing him back into the sort of kitchen job he's previously avoided), Vishnu never second-guesses his ultimate goal of social status and material wealth. He's most reflective when pridefully examining his ''sookwaar,'' or delicate, hands, in contrast to the callused hands of the working men around him; but the observation opens no door to deeper thoughts about inequity. Nor is there much room for nuance in Vishnu's regard for the United States, which he blithely endorses, if not admires.

Is there anything wrong with this? It is a fantasy of the well-heeled that there's something inherently noble or soul-validating to be found in blue-collar struggles with economic decay. A reasonable level of wealth, and the security and comfort it brings, remains a central goal for most of us, migrant or otherwise. But read in our current moment, when American pursuit -- glorification, even -- of excess has resulted in one of the most pernicious societies in modern history, Vishnu's heedless pining for the one percent feels, at best, problematic. There are flashes in the final pages that he might be starting to realize this (''Was I at heart a non-materialist?'' Vishnu ponders after failing to secure an investment banking job. ''Or did I enjoy the good life that money brings?''), but they're too ambivalent to count as a moral progression.

In the end, all of Vishnu's striving leads exactly where we knew it would, as he'd alluded to it all along, narrating from adulthood. And yet, the story has been far from pointless. For one, it's satisfying to read such a vivid rendering of a world unfamiliar to many. For another, bearing witness to a migratory rise in status gives one a sense of optimism, even if the reality is much more complicated than the novel suggests. That may be enough for many readers, even as the deeper insights into humanity and its heterogeneity remain elusive.Kawai Strong Washburn is the author of ''Sharks in the Time of Saviors.''SILENT WINDS, DRY SEASBy Vinod Busjeet272 pp. Doubleday. $27.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/books/review/vinod-busjeet-silent-winds-dry-seas.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/17/books/review/vinod-busjeet-silent-winds-dry-seas.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Gaurab Thakali FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 29, 2021

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[***How Young Latinos’ Online and TV Habits Offer Political Clues for 2022***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656S-K151-JBG3-633W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 12, 2022 Tuesday 09:26 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1792 words

**Byline:** Jazmine Ulloa

**Highlight:** A new report exploring young Latinos’ views on immigration sheds light on one of the most important voter groups in the midterm elections, and found a noteworthy gender divide.

**Body**

A new report exploring young Latinos’ views on immigration sheds light on one of the most important voter groups in the midterm elections, and found a noteworthy gender divide.

Greetings from your co-host Leah Askarinam. Blake Hounshell is off this week. We have an item tonight from our colleague Jazmine Ulloa, who reports on a new analysis of young Latinos’ media habits.

Online disinformation hit Latino communities hard ahead of the 2020 presidential election.

It came in the form of videos, tweets and WhatsApp messages, YouTube videos and the rants of Spanish-language radio hosts. It included false reports of widespread violence on the streets of Democratic cities after the murder of George Floyd, QAnon conspiracy theories, and overblown claims of terrorists and criminals crossing the U.S.-Mexico border.

As the most egregious material spread online — and in the private text chains of young Latinos’ tías and tíos — organizers with United We Dream Action, an immigrant rights organization founded and led by young immigrants, jumped [*into the fray*](https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/10/20/nation/spanish-speaking-latino-voters-are-being-bombarded-with-disinformation-ahead-election/). The group trained members to provide accurate information to their families and friends and create shareable content across social media platforms that was meant to dispel anti-immigrant and [*anti-Black narratives*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/21/us/politics/spanish-election-2020-disinformation.html).

Now, with the 2022 midterms months away and both parties scrambling for the votes of one of the most crucial swing groups in American politics, the organization [*released a report*](https://medium.com/harmony-labs/finding-the-immigrant-story-a1aab067c704) today that more deeply explores Latinos’ online engagement with material about immigration. [*Long exploited*](https://www.latimes.com/politics/la-na-pol-immigration-disinformation-20180817-story.html) by bad actors on the web, the contentious issue is widely expected to be pivotal in elections across the country.

The immigrant advocacy network teamed up with Harmony Labs, a nonprofit research group in New York, to study the television and online consumption habits of more than 20,000 Latinos nationwide who agreed to share their data from Jan. 1 to Aug. 31, 2021. Latinos over 36 were more likely to encounter polarizing anti-immigrant narratives than other cohorts, the analysis found, mainly through right-wing news sites, television and YouTube.

It also found an interesting gender divide among younger Latinos.

Latinas ages 18 to 35 drew from a much wider variety of news and entertainment sources than their older counterparts, the analysis found, and were more likely to seek out stories not just about immigration policy but also about immigrants and the immigrant experience.

Their search queries and content consumption were curious and community-driven, reflecting “a desire to understand and engage with the people and world around them,” according to the findings.

But Latino men in the same age cohort were far different. Those surveyed tended to inhabit “a very insular, virtual world,” the researchers said. Many young Latino men spent much of their time online engaging with anime and fantasy gaming, and did not absorb much media about immigration or immigrants at all, either positive or negative. When they did consume immigration content, it tended to be about policy and stemmed from conservative-leaning sources.

GameStop stocks and Covid news

Beyond that, their news consumption choices tended to be more individualistic and entrepreneurial. Of 45,000 articles read by Latinos in the first nine months of 2021, only two topics appeared to grab the attention of large numbers of young Latino men: the amateurs who drove up the [*stock price of GameStop*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/28/business/gamestop-stock-market.html), and Covid-related school closures.

Both young Latinos and Latinas demonstrated less interest in politics, and for the young men, the top “political” personalities were influencers who discuss a broad variety of cultural topics and fall across the political spectrum: [*Philip DeFranco*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/01/magazine/on-youtube-amateur-is-the-new-pro.html), [*Joe Rogan*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/business/joe-rogan.html) and [*Mr. Beast*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/04/technology/mr-beast-youtube.html).

The vacuum of political information for young Latino men, coupled with their desire for economic stability and penchant for individualism, is likely to leave that group more susceptible to right-wing anti-immigrant narratives and disinformation in the future, the groups concluded.

This uniquely positions young Latino men for negative arguments “that there isn’t enough for them and that someone else is taking their opportunities,” said Juanita Monsalve, the senior marketing and creative director for United We Dream Action. But it also creates an opportunity to intervene with counter-messaging, she added.

“We have this research to figure out how to create culturally responsive content and show up in the spaces where they want to consume it,” Monsalve said.

The report’s findings track with previous research on Latinos’ political leanings — and they add to the picture that is emerging of how these voters are newly up for grabs.

Latinos in general tend to lean Democratic, but in 2020, Donald Trump [*improved his performance*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/30/us/politics/latinos-republicans-conservative-vote-gop.html) among these voters in some parts of the country, and with ***working-class*** Latino men in particular, by centering his messaging on the economy.

Young Latinas are likely to be more liberal than their male peers, and are more worried about social justice and equity issues like racism, immigration and climate change.

[*More young Latino men voted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/05/us/politics/latino-voters-democrats.html) for Trump in 2020 than they did in 2016, but whether Republicans will continue to build support among the demographic “is an open question,” said Vladimir Enrique Medenica, an assistant professor at the University of Delaware and director of survey research at the University of Chicago’s [*GenForward project*](https://genforwardsurvey.com/), which surveys voters ages 18-36.

What is known, he said, is that many have no interest in politics, or they identify as independent or do not have an affiliation to either major political party. This is partly because many feel alienated from politics and unrepresented by either party.

Many also face greater barriers to college education and economic opportunities, both of which help shape people’s political views and can be particularly important to the process of politicization for second-generation Latinos, whose parents immigrated to the United States and who may not have developed a strong attachment to either Democrats or Republicans, Medenica said.

Opening for Republicans

In Florida, where Spanish-language [*hosts have amplified*](https://www.politico.com/news/2020/09/14/florida-latinos-disinformation-413923) anti-Black narratives and exaggerated claims of election fraud, Republicans have seen an opening to appeal to more young Latino men through YouTube and social media, said Andrea Cristina Mercado, the executive director of Florida Rising, a racial justice organization focused on building political power for marginalized communities.

As an example, she pointed to [*an ad*](https://twitter.com/rondesantisfl/status/1509661377396367361?s=27&amp;t=0Vgyqz4KQWXI-anwH42E7w) released last month by Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida with the U.F.C. fighter Jorge Masvidal, who is of Cuban and Peruvian descent.

To counter any political messages this election cycle meant to sow racism, division or voter confusion, Mercado’s group has been relying on “promotoras de la verdad,” Latina organizers who serve as “truth warriors” and have been canvassing homes to combat misinformation on issues including the coronavirus, vaccines, Florida’s [*recently passed law*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/us/desantis-florida-dont-say-gay-bill.html) restricting classroom discussion about sexual orientation and gender identity, and the upcoming midterms.

“Latina women are organizing to take back the narrative and the disinformation poisoning our community,” Mercado said. But they cannot do it alone, she added.

What to read

* With Republican-controlled states pushing a wave of L.G.B.T.Q. restrictions on classroom education, youth sports and health care, our colleagues Katie Glueck and Patricia Mazzei [*report on a fight that is reordering the nation’s politics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/us/politics/transgender-laws-us.html) and, for some Americans, shaking their sense of belonging.
* New York’s lieutenant governor, Brian Benjamin, was [*arrested and charged with bribery, fraud and falsification of records*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/nyregion/brian-benjamin-arrested.html) while he was a state senator, in a development that rattled the state’s politics. He later [*resigned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/nyregion/brian-benjamin-resigns-indicted.html).
* In a last-minute move that came without explanation, [*Republicans in the U.S. House killed a bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/us/politics/gop-joseph-hatchett-florida.html) to name a federal courthouse in Tallahassee after Justice Joseph Hatchett, the first Black man to serve on the Florida Supreme Court.

1. Yelp announced [*that it would cover expenses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/business/yelp-abortion-employees.html) for its employees and their spouses who must travel out of state for abortion care, [*becoming the latest company*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/12/business/dealbook/yelp-texas-abortion.html) to respond to the Texas law that bans abortion after about six weeks of pregnancy.

Endorsement disarray in Pennsylvania

David McCormick had been trying to pitch himself to Pennsylvania voters as the Republican most aligned with Donald Trump in his Senate primary.

So what will he do now that Trump has [*endorsed his top rival, Mehmet Oz*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/09/us/politics/trump-doctor-oz-senate-endorsement.html)

“There is no pivot,” said Jim Schultz, an informal adviser to McCormick’s campaign who was previously a lawyer for the Trump White House.

After the Trump endorsement, McCormick’s campaign unleashed what it said was a six-figure ad buy for [*a new commercial*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SZQYXhc0n0s), showing Oz praising Hillary Clinton and Anthony Fauci and dancing with Michelle Obama. The ad labels Oz as “Pro China,” “Pro Transgender Children” and “Anti Gun.”

The competition for Trump’s blessing had been fierce, with McCormick trying to make the case that Oz’s Turkish background was a weakness. Dina Powell McCormick, the wife of McCormick and a former Trump White House official, is said to have told Trump that [*Oz’s Muslim faith would be a political liability*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/18/us/politics/dr-oz-trump-mccormick-senators-race.html) in parts of Pennsylvania.

But McCormick and his allies are now treading lightly, showing respect to Trump while taking aim at the very candidate he endorsed.

“President Trump’s endorsement certainly is a big deal,” McCormick said in a radio interview on Monday. “But I think the really big deal is that Mehmet isn’t a conservative and not an America First conservative.”

The [*conservative*](https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columnists/what-the-hell-was-he-thinking-pennsylvania-conservatives-react-to-trumps-support-of-oz) [*blowback*](https://thehill.com/news/campaign/3264495-trumps-oz-endorsement-in-pennsylvania-vexes-gop-allies/) to Trump’s endorsement of Oz, the former star of “The Dr. Oz Show,” was immediate.

Dave Ball, chairman of the Washington County Republican Party, said on Tuesday: “In this area, President Trump is very popular. Dave McCormick is very popular. But Dr. Oz isn’t very popular. He has very little support.”

Sean Parnell, the original candidate endorsed by Trump, who dropped out of the race [*after accusations of abuse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/22/us/politics/sean-parnell-suspends-pennsylvania-senate.html), also criticized the decision, [*tweeting that Oz*](https://twitter.com/SeanParnellUSA/status/1512941900013125642?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1512941900013125642%7Ctwgr%5E%7Ctwcon%5Es1_&amp;ref_url=https%3A%2F%2Fgreeleytribune.net%2Ftrumps-mehmet-oz-support-criticized-by-conservatives-romney-2-0%2F) was “the farthest thing from America First and he’d be very bad for PA.”

McCormick’s campaign trotted out its own attempt at a big-name endorsement: [*Rick Santorum*](https://www.axios.com/ick-santorum-endorses-dave-mccormick-pennsylvania-senate-race-a46bc3ac-b8d0-418e-b80d-f1f475c2b794.html), a former senator from the state whose conservative platform, and [*sweater vests*](https://www.cnn.com/2012/01/04/tech/web/santorum-sweater-vests/index.html), helped ingratiate him among conservative voters in the 2012 presidential race.

— 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: QAnon conspiracy theories were one of many forms of online misinformation that targeted Latino voters during the 2020 election. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Jeff Swensen/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 13, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Amid Awakening, Asian-Americans Are Still Taking Shape as a Political Force***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62C5-P681-JBG3-64CP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 4, 2021 Sunday 16:36 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1772 words

**Byline:** Sabrina Tavernise

**Highlight:** Divided by generation, ethnicity and class, but currently galvanized by a surge of racially motivated attacks, Asian-Americans are growing rapidly as political players.

**Body**

Divided by generation, ethnicity and class, but currently galvanized by a surge of racially motivated attacks, Asian-Americans are growing rapidly as political players.

When Mike Park first heard about the recent shootings in Atlanta, he felt angry and afraid. But almost immediately, he had another thought.

“We can’t just sit back,” he said. “We can’t sit in our little enclave anymore.”

Born in South Carolina to Korean immigrants, Mr. Park grew up wanting to escape his Asian identity. He resented having to be the one student to speak at Asian-Pacific day and felt embarrassed when his friends did not want to eat dinner at his house because of the unfamiliar pickled radishes and cabbage in his refrigerator.

Now 42, Mr. Park embraces both his Korean heritage and an Asian-American identity he shares with others of his generation. The Atlanta shootings that left eight dead, six of them women of Asian descent, made him feel an even stronger sense of solidarity, especially after a surge in bias incidents against Asians nationwide.

“I do think this horrible crime has brought people together,” said Mr. Park, who works as an insurance agent in Duluth, Ga., an Atlanta suburb that is a quarter Asian. “It really is an awakening.”

For years, [*Asian-Americans*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/04/28/us/asian-american.html) were among the least likely of any racial or ethnic group to vote or to join community or advocacy groups. Today they are surging into public life, running for office in record numbers, and turning out to vote unlike ever before. They are now [*the fastest-growing group in the American electorate*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/05/07/asian-americans-are-the-fastest-growing-racial-or-ethnic-group-in-the-u-s-electorate/).

But as a political force, Asian-Americans are still taking shape. With a relatively short history of voting, they differ from demographic groups whose families have built party loyalties and voting tendencies over generations. Most of their families arrived after 1965, when the United States opened its doors more widely to people in Asia. There are vast class divisions, too; [*the income gap*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/24/us/atlanta-shooting-spa-owners.html) between the rich and the poor is greatest among Asian-Americans.

“These are your classic swing voters,” said Karthick Ramakrishnan, director of AAPI Data. “These immigrants did not grow up in a Democratic household or Republican household. You have a lot more persuadability.”

Historical data on Asian-American voting patterns is spotty. Analyses of exit polls show that [*a majority voted for George Bush in 1992*](https://prospect.org/civil-rights/asian-americans-became-democrats/), Mr. Ramakrishnan said. Today, a majority of Asians vote for Democrats, but that masks deep differences by subgroup. Vietnamese-Americans, for example, lean more toward Republicans, and Indian-Americans lean strongly toward Democrats.

It is too early for final breakdowns of the Asian-American vote in 2020, along either party or ethnic lines. But one thing seems clear — turnout for Asian-Americans appears to have been higher than it has ever been. Mr. Ramakrishnan [*analyzed preliminary estimates*](http://aapidata.com/blog/2020-vote-media-guide-march25/) from the voter data firm Catalist that were based on available returns from 33 states representing two-third of eligible Asian-American voters. The estimates found that adult Asian-American citizens had the highest recorded increase in voter turnout among any racial or ethnic group.

As relatively new voters, many Asian-Americans find themselves uniquely interested in both major parties, drawn to Democrats for their stances on guns and health care, and to Republicans for their support for small business and emphasis on self-reliance. But they do not fit into neat categories. The Democratic position on immigration attracts some and repels others. The Republican anti-Communist language is compelling to some. Others are indifferent.

Former President Donald J. Trump’s repeated reference to the “China virus” repelled many Chinese-American voters, and the Democrats’ support for affirmative action policies in schools has drawn strong opposition from some Asian groups. Even the violence and slurs against Asians, which began spiking after the coronavirus began to spread last spring, have pushed people in different directions politically. Some blame Mr. Trump and his followers. Others see Republicans as supporters of the police and law and order.

Yeun Jae Kim, 32, voted for the first time last year. His parents had moved from Seoul to a Florida suburb when he was a child and started a truck parts salvage business. Mr. Kim went on to graduate from Georgia Tech and then to a job at Coca-Cola in Atlanta, but, like his parents, he was so focused on making it that he did not vote, or think about politics much at all.

Last year changed his mind. But how to vote and whom to choose? He and his wife spent hours watching videos on YouTube and talking at church to a politically experienced friend, also a Korean-American.

“For me it was pretty hard,” said Mr. Kim, who described himself as “in the middle” politically. “There are certain things I really like about what the Democratic Party is doing. And there are certain things I really like about what the Republicans are doing.”

He wanted to keep his vote private. But he said that casting a ballot made him feel good.

“It made me feel really proud of the country,” he said. “Like everybody is in this together. It helped me feel connected with other people who were voting too.”

Part of the new energy in Asian-American politics comes from second-generation immigrants, who are now in their 30s and 40s and are forming families that are far more racially mixed and civically engaged than those of their parents. A new Asian-American identity is being forged from dozens of languages, cultures and histories.

“Right now, it is this coming of age,” said Marc Ang, 39, a conservative political activist and business owner in Orange County, Calif. His father, an immigrant from the Philippines of Chinese descent, came to California in the 1980s as a white-collar worker in the steel industry. The state is now home to about a third of the country’s Asian-American population.

“Suddenly we are top doctors, top lawyers, top business people,” said Mr. Ang, who pointed out that the approximately 6 million Asians in California are equivalent to the size of Singapore. “It is just inevitable that we become a voting bloc.”

Mr. Ang, a Republican, worked to [*defeat an affirmative action proposition in California*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/16/us/liberals-race.html) last year. But he praised Democrats and their efforts to draw attention to the storm of slurs and physical attacks over the past year, which he said have been a galvanizing force, unifying even the least politically involved people from countries as different as China, Vietnam, the Philippines and South Korea.

More Asian-Americans are running for office than ever before. They include [*Andrew Yang*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/22/nyregion/andrew-yang-bias-asian-atlanta.html), among the early leaders in the race for New York mayor, and [*Michelle Wu*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/15/us/elections/michelle-wu-a-progressive-mounts-a-challenge-to-bostons-mayor.html), the city councilor who is running for mayor of Boston. A Filipino-American, [*Robert Bonta*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/us/rob-bonta-california-attorney-general.html), just became attorney general of California.

At least 158 Asian-Americans ran for state legislatures in 2020, according to AAPI Data, up by 15 percent from 2018.

Marvin Lim, a Georgia state representative, calls himself a 1.5-generation immigrant: He came to the United States from the Philippines when he was 7.

Mr. Lim spent a number of years on public assistance, and said his family “did not see the bootstraps working for us.” He became a civil rights lawyer and began to vote for Democrats because their values, he said, aligned more with his. Now 36, he won a House seat in Georgia in November, and last month met with President Biden during his visit to Atlanta after the shootings.

“I have never felt more like I mattered,” he said.

Asian-Americans lean toward Democrats. All the [*more so among the American-born*](https://aapidata.com/2020-survey/). But there are things pushing Asians away from the Democrats as well.

Anthony Lam, a Vietnamese immigrant who fled as a refugee in the 1970s and grew up ***working class*** in Los Angeles, had usually voted for Democrats. But as the owner of a hair salon in San Diego, he became increasingly frustrated with directives for coronavirus lockdowns and turned off by the unrest during Black Lives Matter protests. When he criticized the looting, he said some white Democrats chastised him.

“They said, ‘You don’t understand racism,’” he said. “I’m like, ‘Wait a minute. You get racism just now? I’ve been living with this for 40 years.’”

Mr. Lam voted for Hillary Clinton in 2016. He supported Mr. Yang in the Democratic primary last year. But he said he eventually voted for Mr. Trump, mostly out of frustration with Democrats.

Despite recent increases in political representation, some Asian-American communities still feel invisible, and some members argue that could lead to a rightward turn.

Rob Yang, a Hmong-American who owns shoe and apparel stores in Minneapolis and St. Paul, grew up poor as a refugee. He has watched the turmoil in the wake of the George Floyd killing in his traditional, largely ***working-class*** Hmong community. His own stores were stripped of their merchandise during the Black Lives Matter protests.

Mr. Yang voted for Mr. Biden. He said that he supported the Black Lives Matter movement but that some in his community did not. Years of feeling invisible had frustrated and demoralized them.

The way he sees it, Asians still do not have enough of a voice, and he worries that the pressure of holding everything in for years is reaching dangerous levels. He said he worried that a populist Asian leader, “an Asian Trump,” could have a huge following by tapping into this frustration. “We’ve been holding it all in for so long, it will just take the right circumstances for us to blow,” he said.

For Mr. Park, the insurance agent in suburban Atlanta, the attacks in his city and others across America were a searing reminder that economic success does not ensure protection from the racial animus that is part of American life. It is now up to Asian-Americans, he said, to stand up and claim their space in American politics.

“It’s moving away from the idea that ‘the nail that sticks out gets hammered in,’” he said. “We are realizing it’s OK to stick out.”

PHOTOS: MIKE PARK, born to Korean immigrants in South Carolina, about the recent shootings in Atlanta. (PHOTOGRAPH BY NICOLE CRAINE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Volunteers assembling campaign yard signs at an Asian Pacific Americans for Trump field office in Orlando, Fla., in September. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEXANDER DRAGO/REUTERS); An early vote event with Asian American and Pacific Islander community groups in Las Vegas in February. (PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES); Andrew Yang of New York and Michelle Wu of Boston are both running for mayor.; MARC ANG, an immigrant from the Philippines and a Republican. (PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN YOUNG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A16)

**Load-Date:** June 23, 2023

**End of Document**



[***A New Cinematic Star Turn for Naples***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64BT-FRB1-JBG3-624P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 21, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1264 words

**Byline:** By Elisabetta Povoledo

**Body**

For ''The Hand of God,'' the director Paolo Sorrentino has returned to his hometown, whose cultural profile has been lifted in recent years by the Elena Ferrante novels and films like ''Gomorrah.''

NAPLES, Italy -- Paolo Sorrentino's latest film ''The Hand of God'' begins with a bird's-eye view of Naples, his hometown, at dawn, with a lone vintage car traveling along a seafront road while the rest of the city uncharacteristically sleeps.

As a backdrop to this autobiographical coming-of-age story, Naples is at turns fantastical and decadent, sunny and unpredictable, comfortably familiar and ultimately confining.

Off camera, it is even more.

In the 20 years since Sorrentino last made a film here -- his directorial debut ''One Man Up'' -- the city has also matured as a center of movie making in Italy. These days, film and television crews are a common sight on Neapolitan streets, both downtown but also in its rougher hinterlands. These productions have nurtured the formation of a local industry, including actors, specialized technicians and cinematographers.

''There's been enormous growth,'' said Maurizio Gemma, the director of the local Film Commission of the Campania Region, which has focused on attracting and facilitating the work of film and television productions since 2005.

Back then, Gemma said, there were 10 or 12 projects shooting in the area. Today, ''we are shooting nearly 150 projects a year,'' he said, including big-budget television shows like HBO's ''My Brilliant Friend,'' based on the best-selling Elena Ferrante novels.

''Our greatest satisfaction is that inside these important titles there's the work of many professionals in our region,'' Gemma said. But then, he added, ''we've always had a propensity toward show business, culture; it's part of our history, it's in our DNA.''

Naples is a city of contradictions, of ornate Baroque palazzos alongside derelict housing, of unrelenting and unruly traffic and an official unemployment rate of 21.5 percent, twice the national average. But it is also a city of culture, both highbrow and popular, and the birthplace of songs like ''O sole mio'' and ''Santa Lucia.''

Its shabby grandeur, narrow alleys and sweeping views of the Bay of Naples with Vesuvius as a backdrop make the city a natural open air film set.

In recent years, production sets have been drawn to the suburbs of Naples, and its less salubrious underbelly. The bleak 2009 film ''Gomorrah'' by Matteo Garrone, who is Roman, and the popular TV series of the same name brought these derelict areas to a wider international audience.

The director Antonio Capuano, who features prominently in ''The Hand of God,'' said at a recent screening of his 1998 film ''Polvere di Napoli'' -- which he wrote with Sorrentino -- that ''Gomorrah'' had become a ''the postcard of Naples, and this is horrible.''

Pasquale Iaccio, the author of several books about Neapolitan cinema, said that ''Gomorrah'' was merely one ''aspect of Naples among many other'' clichés about the city that still held court.

He offered as proof an anecdote from the Neapolitan shoot for the film ''Eat Pray Love,'' where producers paid the residents of a downtown Naples alley to hang clothes and sheets from their windows, because an alley without them ''just wouldn't be Naples for the American script,'' he said.

The cinematic attraction of Naples is keeping the city busy. ''Let's just say there's a lot to do,'' said Gea Vaccaro, a Naples city official overseeing the office that helps production companies navigate city bureaucracy and permits. ''Naples is a complex city,'' she said.

One of the ways the city helps visiting productions is to provide them with office space, setting aside rooms in a massive palazzo in the city center -- Sorrentino's team for ''The Hand of God'' occupied an airy room with ceiling frescoes.

Mayor Gaetano Manfredi, who was elected in October, said in an interview that the fertile cinematographic season ''reinforced the international brand of Naples,'' and permitted the considerable diaspora of Neapolitans living abroad to maintain a connection with their city.

''The economic angle should also not be discounted,'' Manfredi said.

Last year, Italian regions set aside some 50 million euros ($57 million) to attract television and film productions, supplemented by other government funds and tax credits, according to Tina Bianchi, the secretary general of the Italian Film Commissions, the umbrella group for regional cinematic commissions.

The industry's rapid growth has been some time in the making, according to Francesco Nardella, the deputy director of the arm of Italy's national broadcaster that co-produces ''Un Posto al Sole,'' (''A Place in the Sun'') a wildly popular Italian weeknight drama set in Naples, as well as other series here.

''Un Posto al Sole,'' which celebrated 25 years on the air last October, has been -- and continues to be -- ''a fundamental motor'' for movie making in Naples, Nardella said.

''Training'' new generations of actors and technicians ''is the key word,'' he said. ''And the seeds have grown.''

Alongside shows like ''Un Posto al Sole'' and ''La Squadra,'' another Naples-based series that ended a 10-season run in 2010, starting in the '90s, film directors like Antonio Capuano, Pappi Corsicato, Stefano Incerti and Mario Martone brought Naples to the big screen.

''We draw on a reservoir filled with the most extraordinary actors that exists in Italy,'' Martone said in an interview this week. His latest film, ''Qui Rido Io,'' (''The King of Laughter'') stars Toni Servillo, best known to American audiences as the lead in Sorrentino's Oscar-winning ''The Great Beauty.'' Servillo was born in Afragola, a Neapolitan suburb, and acted onstage in the city for many years.

''Naples has returned to being the capital of Italian cinema, as it was at its origins,'' said Martone, who opens ''Qui Rido Io'' with footage of the city shot by the Lumière brothers in 1898.

In the early years of cinema, Naples vied with Turin as the center of Italian movie making, and more than 350 films were made there during the silent era, according to Alex Marlow-Mann, a professor at the University of Kent in England who has written a book about Neapolitan cinema.

That all came to an end in the 1920s, when the local film industry ground to a halt during the fascist regime. Not only did Benito Mussolini centralize the industry in Rome, founding Cinecittà Film Studios in 1937, but he objected to the Neapolitan penchant for melodramas, often set in ***working-class*** environments, and spoken in dialect. ''That was not the image of Italy Mussolini wanted to promote, so censorship set in,'' Marlow-Mann said.

Movies continued to be made there after World War II, Marlow-Mann said, but they were mostly formulaic genre films that fell flat with critics, with the exception of films that followed in the long tradition of Neapolitan comedy, and it was only in the 1990s that Neapolitan cinema began to find its footing again.

At the end of ''The Hand of God,'' the character based on a young Sorrentino leaves Naples for Rome. Actually, Sorrentino only permanently left Naples when he was 37, living in his family home until that time, he said in a recent interview with an Italian newspaper.

In the film, Capuano (Ciro Capano) chides the young man for wanting to leave his hometown.

''No one gets outta this city,'' the director tells him. ''Do you know how many stories there are in this city. Look!,'' he says peering out at a wide view of the Bay of Naples, as dusk sets.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/17/movies/naples-hand-of-god.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/17/movies/naples-hand-of-god.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, the Naples seafront. The director Paolo Sorrentino has set his new film, ''The Hand of God,'' in his home city. Above, in Naples, ornate buildings sit alongside derelict housing. Above right, the popular Italian show ''A Place in the Sun'' is set in the city (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIANNI CIPRIANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

GIUSEPPE D'ANNA/FREMANTLE)

**Load-Date:** December 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Macron Sets Out to Build a ‘Dam’ Against Le Pen. Can It Hold?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:656J-57N1-DXY4-X410-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 11, 2022 Monday 14:43 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1612 words

**Byline:** Norimitsu Onishi and Constant Méheut

**Highlight:** After Sunday’s vote, when nearly a third of ballots went to the extreme right, a united front of mainstream voters looked more precarious than ever.

**Body**

After Sunday’s vote, when nearly a third of ballots went to the extreme right, a united front of mainstream voters looked more precarious than ever.

PARIS — A day after [*Marine Le Pen*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/marine-le-pen), the far-right leader, emerged as his [*challenger for the final round of France’s presidential election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/10/world/europe/french-presidential-election-macron-le-pen.html) in less than two weeks, President [*Emmanuel Macron*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/emmanuel-macron) immediately set about on Monday to build the “dam.”

Dams are the mainstream French voters who, time and again, have put political differences aside in the second round and voted for anyone but a Le Pen in a so-called “Republican front” to deny the far right the presidency.

But after Sunday’s first round, when 32 percent of French voters supported candidates on the extreme right — a record — [*the dam may be more precarious than ever*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/13/world/europe/france-far-right-national-rally-le-pen-macron.html).

Mr. Macron, widely [*criticized for a listless campaign*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/17/world/europe/emmanuel-macron-france-election-debate.html), moved quickly Monday to shore it up, directly challenging Ms. Le Pen and her party, the National Rally, in the economically depressed north where she dominated Sunday.

In Denain, a city won by Ms. Le Pen, Mr. Macron spoke of the worries of the youth in Denain and other social issues. He tried to remind voters of the extremist roots of Ms. Le Pen’s party, referring to it by its old name, the National Front.

At a campaign stop of her own in a rural area, Yonne, Ms. Le Pen said that the dam was a dishonest strategy to win an election, adding that “it’s a way to save yourself when you don’t deserve it.’’

In a [*triumphant speech*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cJh_v5mmuc&amp;ab_channel=LaR%C3%A9publiqueEnMarche%21) against the majestic backdrop of the Louvre Museum five years ago, Mr. Macron had launched his presidency by pledging to unite the French so that there would be “no reason at all to vote for the extremes.’’

But in addition to Ms. Le Pen’s second-place finish, with 23 percent of the vote, Jean-Luc Mélenchon, the leftist veteran, won 22 percent of Sunday’s votes to finish a strong third.

Mr. Mélenchon’s supporters — split in their attitudes toward Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen — could now help determine the election’s final outcome on April 24.

After five years of Mr. Macron, who trounced Ms. Le Pen in the 2017 runoff, the far-right leader emerged stronger than ever. She has [*softened her image*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/europe/marine-le-pen-french-elections-macron.html) in a successful process of “undemonizing’’ and focused relentlessly on ordinary voters’ economic hardship.

In Yonne, Ms. Le Pen hammered away at the themes that carried her through to the second round. Meeting with a cereal farmer, she spoke of how rising prices of fuel and fertilizers following the war in Ukraine would raise the cost of staples at supermarkets and hurt the most vulnerable.

The far right’s record performance on Sunday resulted from a combination of factors, including Ms. Le Pen’s own efforts to revamp her image, a [*successful cultural battle waged by conservative forces*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/world/europe/france-presidential-election-far-right.html) in recent years, and a series of Islamist attacks in France since 2015.

But critics say that it also reflected Mr. Macron’s continued strategy of triangulating France’s electoral landscape. While Mr. Macron was regarded as a center-left candidate five years ago, he [*shifted rightward during his presidency*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/25/world/europe/france-macron-muslims-police-laws.html), sensing that his main challenge would come from Ms. Le Pen.

That shift was embodied by a series of laws toughening [*France’s stance on immigration*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/06/world/europe/france-macron-immigration.html), [*empowering the police*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/15/world/europe/france-security-bill-passes.html), and c[*ombating Islamist extremism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/23/world/europe/france-terrorism-islamist-extremism-laws-passed.html). Many working French also felt that his economic policies unfairly favored the rich and have left them more adrift.

If Mr. Macron’s intention was to defuse Ms. Le Pen’s appeal by stripping her of her core issues, critics say the approach backfired by ushering the talking points of the far right deeper into the mainstream political debate.

Then, Ms. Le Pen also shifted her message to pocketbook issues that have now resonated even more broadly as energy prices spike because of the war in Ukraine.

Sacha Houlié, a lawmaker and a spokesman for Mr. Macron’s campaign, said that the president was aiming to strengthen the dam strategy. He acknowledged that there have been “some mistakes” and “blunders,” noting that some government ministers had picked up [*themes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/17/world/europe/france-crime.html) and [*expressions*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/04/world/europe/france-ensauvagement-far-right-racism.html) promoted by the far right.

But Mr. Houlié denied that Mr. Macron had normalized far-right ideas, saying his government had mainly tried to respond to people’s growing concerns on crime and immigration. “We cannot sweep the dust under the carpet,” he said, referring to the issues.

But many, especially Mr. Mélenchon’s supporters of the left, feel so betrayed that Mr. Macron may have a harder time in this next election persuading them to join his call for unity by building a dam against Ms. Le Pen, whom the president has called a danger to democracy.

Alexis Lévrier, a historian who has written about Mr. Macron’s relations with the [*news media*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/world/europe/france-presidential-election-media-cnews-.html), said that as Mr. Macron tried to reshape French politics around a strict divide between his mainstream movement and Ms. Le Pen, he “contributed to the rise in power of the far right.”

Unwittingly, “he’s a pyromaniac firefighter,” Mr. Lévrier said.

A resident of Guyancourt — a well-off, left-leaning city southwest of Paris where Mr. Mélenchon came in first Sunday — Stéphanie Noury said that, in 2017, she gave Mr. Macron her vote as part of a dam against the far right. But this time, she planned to stay home for the final round.

“Macron played into the hands of the extreme right,’’ said Ms. Noury, 55, a human resources manager who voted Sunday for Mr. Mélenchon. “He told himself that he would always win against the extreme right.’’

Compared to 2017, Ms. Le Pen’s share of the first-round vote went up by a couple of percentage points despite the direct challenge of a new rival, the far-right TV pundit [*Éric Zemmour*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/04/10/world/french-presidential-election#eric-zemmour-a-far-right-tv-pundit-redefines-the-politically-acceptable), who urged his supporters to vote for Ms. Le Pen in the upcoming showdown.

On Sunday, Ms. Le Pen, Mr. Zemmour and a third far-right candidate, Nicolas Dupont-Aignan, together got 32 percent of the vote. In 2017, Ms. Le Pen and Mr. Dupont-Aignan collected 26 percent in the first round.

Voters first formed a dam against the extreme right in 2002 when Ms. Le Pen’s father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, shocked the political establishment by making it into a runoff against Jacques Chirac. Another dam helped defeat Ms. Le Pen in 2017.

To gain credibility on the right, in 2019, Mr. Macron gave his first long interview on the sensitive issues of immigration and Islam to [*Valeurs Actuelles*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/29/world/europe/france-racism-valeurs-actuelles.html), a magazine that straddles the right and far right.

“By talking to us, Emmanuel Macron came to seek some legitimacy on these subjects, from right-wing people who felt he was doing nothing,” said Geoffroy Lejeune, the publication’s editor. “He knows that by doing this, he’s sending a big signal.”

Aurélien Taché, a lawmaker once allied with Mr. Macron, said the president was elected in 2017 thanks to voters who put aside their political differences and united against Ms. Le Pen.

He said Mr. Macron should have taken those votes — mainly from the left — into account in his policies afterward.

“He did not consider them,” he said, adding that Mr. Macron instead worked to “set up this cleavage’’ between him and Ms. Le Pen, leading to a “high-risk rematch.”

“There have been, on a whole range of topics, very strong concessions made to the far right,” Mr. Taché said, also citing tougher immigration rules and the application of a [*stricter version of French secularism, called laïcité*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/20/world/europe/france-secularism-laicite-macron.html).

But Mr. Taché, who quit Mr. Macron’s party in 2020 over the president’s shift to the right, was especially critical of the government’s [*landmark law against separatism*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/16/world/europe/france-law-islamist-extremism.html), which has been criticized inside and outside France, including by the U.S. envoy on international religious freedom.

The law amounted to “making Islam and Muslims invisible,” Mr. Taché said.

Some academics, political opponents and Muslim organizations have also criticized the law as [*discriminating*](https://www.lacoalition.fr/CP-Une-nouvelle-chasse-aux-sorcieres-contre-les-associations-l-enquete-de-l) against French Muslims by leading to the widespread closing of mosques, Muslim associations and schools.

That resentment may now also complicate Mr. Macron’s dam-building effort.

To be re-elected this time, for instance, he will have to persuade voters in places likes [*Trappes*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/08/world/europe/france-mayor-teacher-islam-secularism-laicite.html), a ***working-class*** city with a large Muslim population southwest of Paris, to join the dam against Ms. Le Pen.

A longtime stronghold of Mélenchon supporters, Trappes strongly backed Mr. Macron in the 2017 runoff. But comments by voters Sunday suggested that the dam might not be as effective this time.

Frédéric Renan, 47, a computer programmer, said he would abstain or cast a blank vote in a showdown between Mr. Macron and Ms. Le Pen.

“Macron opened the door to the extreme right,’’ Mr. Renan said, adding that the president’s economic policies hurt the poor and fueled the rise of the far right.

“I don’t see how voting for Macron is a vote in a dam against the extreme right,” he said. “Some people will say that not participating in the dam against the extreme right is irresponsible, that the threat of the extreme right is greater than what Emmanuel Macron proposes, but I’m not convinced.’’

Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.

Adèle Cordonnier contributed reporting.

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron campaigning in Denain, a city in northern France, on Monday. He is lobbying voters on the left to support him again, but some of his previous backers feel betrayed by choices he’s made on immigration, the economy and Islamist extremism. The runoff election will be held April 24. (POOL PHOTO BY LEWIS JOLY); Marine Le Pen on Monday in Soucy, France. Her campaign has embraced pocketbook issues, such as the rising prices of fuel. In recent years, she has benefited from a revamping of her image and a successful cultural battle waged by French conservatives. As a result, some right-wing ideas are now more mainstream. (PHOTOGRAPH BY EMMANUEL DUNAND/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE — GETTY IMAGES)

**Load-Date:** April 18, 2022

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[***The Thread***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6256-PH11-JBG3-648P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 7, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 9

**Length:** 785 words

**Body**

Readers respond to the 2.21.2021 issue. RE: THE WAGES OF HOUSEWORK Jordan Kisner profi led the American and Italian feminist scholar Silvia Federici.

I honor Silvia Federici for her pioneering work on Wages for Housework. She is one of many women in the now frequently derided generation of second-wave feminists whose work deserves a reappraisal. My only objection is Jordan Kisner's reduction of the women's movement into a mainstream ''liberal feminism'' typifi ed by Sheryl Sandberg's ''Lean In'' and a merchandising arm promoting feminist kitsch. Having established this narrow defi nition, Kisner then implies that feminists themselves are at fault for failing to pursue the economic goals of Wages for Housework.

I am tired of feminists being blamed for the failure or incompleteness of their goals. It's like blaming the leaders of the civil rights movement for failing to have made greater progress against racism. I worked in the women's movement in the 1970s and '80s in Milwaukee. Here, feminists -- mostly ***working class*** and of all races -- worked selfl essly on many survival issues dealing with economics, health and freedom from violence. Today feminists continue to be the backbone of neighborhood organizing, shelters, Black Lives Matter, clinic defense, immigrant rights, union organizing and the Fight for $15. Grass-roots feminists do this work for the most part without pay while facing constant harassment. Please, let's revise our defi nitions of feminism and give these women the recognition and respect they deserve. Jamakaya, Milwaukee There is so much more to this article than the headline implies. I love the concepof ''commoning'' I learned about here. Capitalism insists that our primary relationship is always between ourselves and money. All human relationships have to fi t into this primary one. And by necessity, much of our energy has to be in maintaining fi nancial relations with the people who hold most of the money. Commoning reorients our primary relationships directly to one another, without the intermediary of money. It lets us direct our energy to people in our communities, rather than the people who hold all the capital. It's like releasing a mutilated, bound foot from its wrappings and setting it free. Qu, Los Angeles Fabulous piece. As the concept of ''commoning'' swims in my head, I wonder . . . would an electrician spend an hour making repairs at my house in exchange for a home-cooked meal (that takes an hour to prepare)? This examples bares the reality of just how little an hour of domestic work is valued. It is unfathomably low. ''Commoning'' becomes valid only where one hour equals one hour. We have very far to go to reach true equality, but it certainly is a worthy goal. Imagine the quality of our societal and domestic lives if this true level of equality is achieved. Christine Loftus, Pahoa, Hawaii RE: EAT Tejal Rao wrote about brigadeiros. Such lovely writing! When my cousins in São Paulo visit, they bring us cans of brigadeiro paste you can get in any grocery store there. OF COURSE the stuff inside is nowhere near as good as homemade (and would never trigger this beautiful writing!), but it makes for a great, eff ortless activity with little kids; they love rolling the balls in crushed peppermints, cocoa and diff erent-colored sprinkles, and you don't have to turn on the stove. Marjorie, New York I made brigadeiros last weekend to cheer up my son because he misses school so much, and this is his favorite dessert ever. I enjoyed reading Natalia Pereira's story and can relate to the sensory experience of having a mom who was a great cook and made everything from scratch. Leila, Sacramento, Calif RE: LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION Dan Brooks wrote about Garfi eld variants. I also grew up reading, watching and loving Garfi eld. I had the stuff ed animals, the telephone, the books, the plush window cling, about a million Pez dispensers, and for a while my favorite candy was even the Garfi eld lollipop. And I'm not ashamed to admit that as an adult I still try to watch the old holiday specials every year. (To me, Lorenzo Music will always be the voice of Garfi eld.) I was hoping for a brief mention of Gazorpazorpfi eld, but I very much appreciate this article nonetheless. What better time than now, stuck at home after a snowstorm in the middle of a pandemic, to revisit that soft bed of the past. AM, Ohio CORRECTION: An article on Feb. 21 about delivery-app workers referred imprecisely to whether such workers receive compensation if they are injured or fall ill. Th ey are not legally entitled to compensation. It is not the case that they necessarily receive no compensation. Send your thoughts to [*magazine@nytimes.com*](mailto:magazine@nytimes.com)

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/03/pageoneplus/04rex1.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/03/pageoneplus/04rex1.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES CASEBERE)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2021

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[***In Democratic Bastion, Liberal Rhetoric Is Out. ‘Affordability’ Is In.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64YR-FP11-JBG3-60M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 10, 2022 Thursday 09:23 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1601 words

**Byline:** Tracey Tully

**Highlight:** In the first budget address of his second term, Gov. Philip Murphy responded to New Jersey voters’ discontent at a time of surging gas costs and high taxes.

**Body**

In the first budget address of his second term, Gov. Philip Murphy responded to New Jersey voters’ discontent at a time of surging gas costs and high taxes.

Gas prices are soaring. The war in Ukraine has rattled the stock market. And, months ahead of midterm elections, voters in key suburban swing districts in New Jersey are restive, contributing to increased dissatisfaction with the state’s Democratic leader, Gov. Philip D. Murphy.

For much of his first term, Mr. Murphy governed as a steadfast liberal eager to talk about his successful efforts to protect abortion rights, legalize marijuana and enact stricter gun control laws.

But on Tuesday, in his first budget address since [*winning re-election*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/nyregion/murphy-wins-nj-governor.html) by just three percentage points in a state where Democrats vastly outnumber Republicans, Mr. Murphy offered a radically tempered message.

The sweeping liberal rhetoric that defined his [*first budget address*](https://nj.gov/governor/news/addresses/approved/20180313_budget.shtml) in 2018 was replaced by a recalibrated definition of progress and a promise to make New Jersey — where the cost of living is among the highest in the nation — a more affordable place to live.

Months after remnants of [*Hurricane Ida*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/03/nyregion/new-jersey-ida-deaths.html) crippled large parts of the state, killing at least 25 people, he did not utter the phrase “[*climate change*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/17/nyregion/nj-flooding-ida-damage.html).” There were no overt references to criminal justice, racial equity or immigrant rights. He cited a signature first-term win — lifting the [*minimum wage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/17/nyregion/nj-minimum-wage.html) to $15 — just once, and instead chose to talk about tax cuts and rebates and a one-year “[*fee holiday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/03/08/nyregion/nj-budget.html)” that would allow residents to visit state parks and renew driver’s licenses for free.

“If you compare the really sharp racial justice messaging from last year to this year, there is a really big disconnect,” said Sara Cullinane, director of Make the Road New Jersey, a left-leaning coalition focused on immigrant and worker rights.

“It seems that there’s a pivot,” she added.

Instead of the unabashedly left-leaning budget message that set the tone for his first term, there were [*24 mentions*](https://nj.gov/governor/news/addresses/approved/20220308_budget.shtml) of the words “affordable” or “affordability.”

“The Democratic Party is looking down at the 2022 midterms coming and knowing that its message needs to be revamped,” said Ashley Koning, director of the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling at Rutgers University.

“Many voters, probably most voters, are disenchanted.”

Mr. Murphy is scheduled to move from vice chairman to chairman of the [*National Governors Association*](https://www.nga.org/governors/ngaleadership/) in July and to take over leadership of the [*Democratic Governors Association*](https://democraticgovernors.org/) for the second time next year. Democrats must defend governorships in the key battleground states of Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, races seen as [*must-wins to stave off*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/us/politics/governor-races-democrats.html) Republican restrictions on [*voting rights*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/voting-rights-tracker.html).

The governor has made it clear that he heard the message voters sent in November in [*Virginia*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/03/us/politics/democrats-virginia-governor-race.html) and New Jersey, where Republican turnout surged and [*Democrats lost seven seats*](https://newjerseyglobe.com/campaigns/murphy-lost-most-of-2021s-key-legislative-districts/) in the Legislature, including the [*Senate president’s*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/nyregion/stephen-sweeney-durr-nj-election.html).

“Quite frankly,” Professor Koning said, “they’re not interested in hearing about climate change and racial justice.”

Democrats worry that the same factors that contributed to Mr. Murphy’s re-election by smaller-than-expected margins — pandemic fatigue, rising costs and President Biden’s waning popularity — could also spell trouble during [*November’s midterm congressional elections*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/11/us/politics/democrats-biden-midterms.html).

Just before Mr. Murphy delivered Tuesday’s address, the Eagleton Center released a [*poll*](https://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Rutgers-Eagleton-Poll-Gov-Murphy-Second-Term-Ratings-March-8-2022.pdf) showing that the number of voters with a favorable impression of the governor had dropped to 33 percent, down from 50 percent in November. Of the people surveyed, more than 40 percent gave him failing grades in connection with New Jersey’s high property taxes and cost of living.

“Governor Murphy has never wavered in his vision to make New Jersey stronger and fairer for everyone who calls our state home,” Mr. Murphy’s spokeswoman, Alyana Alfaro Post, said.

“This year’s budget proposal builds on that progress,” she added, “and continues opening doors of opportunity for all New Jerseyans.”

During his first term, Mr. Murphy accomplished many of his most ambitious policy goals: adding a tax on income over $1 million; legalizing adult-use marijuana; establishing paid sick leave for workers; and giving undocumented immigrants access to driver’s licenses.

On Tuesday, he talked about the millionaires’ tax but did not mention the other victories, referring only to the “many steps we took together over the past four years,” before focusing on property taxes.

“This budget attacks two of New Jersey’s most difficult and intractable problems: property taxes and affordable housing,” Mr. Murphy told a joint session of the Legislature, in a marked shift from comments he made in 2019 minimizing concerns over the state’s high taxes.

“If you’re a one-issue voter and tax rate is your issue, either a family or a business — if that’s the only basis upon which you’re going to make a decision,” [*Mr. Murphy said*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vN8Nym-NcIA) three years ago, “we’re probably not your state.”

This year’s budget proposal — a record-high [*$48.9 billion spending plan*](https://www.nj.gov/treasury/omb/publications/23bib/BIB.pdf) — did not appear to veer from priorities Mr. Murphy set during his first term and would continue to fund programs important to Mr. Murphy’s progressive allies.

The plan, which the Legislature must approve by July, sets aside more money for education, mental health programs, health care for children of undocumented immigrants, addiction treatment and lower-cost housing. For the second year, Mr. Murphy has proposed making a full payment to the state’s underfunded public-employee pension system.

Just as he did in his first budget address, Mr. Murphy quoted the Irish playwright Oscar Wilde’s definition of a cynic — someone who knows “the price of everything and the value of nothing.” But that is where the parallels end.

Gone was the [*fiery rhetoric*](https://nj.gov/governor/news/addresses/approved/20180313_budget.shtml) from 2018, when he talked about the state’s high poverty rate, income inequality and the importance of embracing “the immediacy of the problems before us.”

There was no renewed mention this week of initiatives to narrow the state’s racial income gap using tools like so-called baby bonds, an ultimately unsuccessful [*budget proposal*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/25/nyregion/baby-bond-nj.html) he made in 2020 to give most newborns $1,000, payable with interest when they turned 18.

Instead, a plan to set aside money to build 3,300 units of lower-cost housing was depicted as a win for the ***working class***, not the working poor.

“Let’s not lose sight of who actually benefits when we build more affordable housing,” Mr. Murphy said of units available to people with [*low to moderate incomes*](https://www.nj.gov/dca/divisions/codes/publications/guide.html#:~:text=Most%20of%20the%20affordable%20housing,percent%20of%20median%20family%20income.). “It’s the educator or first responder who can finally live within the community they serve. It’s also the server at the local diner, the cashier at the grocery store.”

Julia Sass Rubin, a professor at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, said the speech represented a change in messaging, but not a “major retraction” of Mr. Murphy’s left-leaning priorities.

“If you keep walking the walk, maybe they think they can adjust the talk a little bit, without substantively changing the direction,” Professor Rubin said.

“It’s a way of trying to shore up what could be a vulnerability — both for the midterm elections and Democrats more broadly,” she added.

Jack Ciattarelli, Mr. Murphy’s [*Republican challenger*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/nyregion/jack-ciatterelli-concedes-nj-gov.html) who came close to unseating the governor, said the budget address showed Mr. Murphy was “definitely feeling the pressure from the closeness of the race and the themes that we hit on repeatedly, which up until this point he’s been tone-deaf on.”

But the contents of the plan, he said, were the “same old, same old.”

“There’s never been a better opportunity to completely reform the way we do property taxes,” said Mr. Ciattarelli, who plans to run for governor again in four years.

Officials with left-leaning advocacy groups said that they found things to like in the budget draft, as well as missed opportunities.

Ms. Cullinane, of Make the Road, praised the roughly $100 million the governor set aside for [*undocumented immigrants*](https://newjerseymonitor.com/2022/03/08/murphy-proposes-another-potential-fund-for-undocumented-immigrants/#:~:text=The%20governor%20is%20seeking%20%2453,80%2C000%20households%2C%20state%20officials%20said.) and working families who have been ineligible for federal pandemic-related aid.

Andrea McChristian, law and policy director for the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, applauded Mr. Murphy’s efforts to expand college access and to fund a [*pilot program*](https://www.nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/20210811a.shtml) designed to keep juveniles out of prison. But she questioned the absence of any discussion about closing juvenile lockups, making reparation payments to Black residents harmed by slavery or a renewed push to implement [*baby bonds*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/06/us/politics/cory-booker-2020-baby-bonds.html).

“That’s definitely a missed moment,” Ms. McChristian said.

The missing emphasis on social justice is particularly worrisome in a year when New Jersey is flush with cash from sales tax collections, revenue generated by the robust housing and stock markets and federal stimulus funds, Ms. McChristian said.

“This is the moment to be bold,” she said, adding, “We have huge racial disparities here.”

Doug O’Malley, director of Environment New Jersey, called it a “status quo” budget that continues to provide vital support for offshore wind energy but fails to take other meaningful steps toward addressing the climate crisis or establishing a guaranteed source of funding for public transit.

“New Jersey should be investing in climate change solutions,” Mr. O’Malley said, “not fighting this fight with one hand behind its back.”

PHOTO: In the first budget address of his second term, Gov. Philip Murphy of New Jersey responded to voters’ discontent at a time of surging gas costs and high taxes with a radically tempered message, a far cry from the unabashedly left-leaning speech he delivered in 2018. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHELLE GUSTAFSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 11, 2022

**End of Document**



[***End Affirmative Action for Rich White Students, Too; John McWhorter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64NT-JBV1-DXY4-X1TJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 1, 2022 Tuesday 11:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1506 words

**Byline:** John McWhorter

**Highlight:** Obviously.

**Body**

[*My newsletter last week*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/25/opinion/woke-free-speech.html) about illiberalism on the political right led to claims, in the Twittersphere and elsewhere, that I was engaging in “whataboutism” or “both-sides-ism,” perhaps even seeking absolution from the woke left by pointing to examples of censorship on the right.

I’ve often had a similar sense of whataboutism when it comes to the discussion of racial preferences in college admissions, the subject of [*my other newsletter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/28/opinion/affirmative-action.html) last week. Often, calls to eliminate these racial preferences — as mine was — are met with objections asking, “What about?” universities that maintain preferences primarily benefiting white students, notably in the form of legacy admissions.

Under these, children of alumni get special consideration for admission. According to [*one report*](https://www.wsj.com/articles/legacy-preference-gets-fresh-look-following-college-admissions-scandal-11582387200), in 2019, nearly half of colleges factored legacy into freshman admissions. This already dubious practice is compounded when universities cater to financial donors, often white, in admissions decisions.

And its effect is no more a mere “thumb on the scale” than that of racial preferences. Consider Harvard: [*A 2019 paper*](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w26316/w26316.pdf) from the National Bureau of Economic Research found that “Over 43 percent of white admits are ALDC” — athletes, legacies, “dean’s interest” and children of faculty and staff — “compared to less than 16 percent of admits for each of the other three major racial/ethnic groups” and that around three-quarters of them would not have been admitted otherwise. And as The Times [*reported*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/19/us/harvard-admissions-affirmative-action.html) in 2018, a federal lawsuit revealed emails between Harvard’s dean of admissions and university fund-raisers “suggesting special consideration for the offspring of big donors, those who have ‘already committed to a building’ or have ‘an art collection which could conceivably come our way.’”

Legacy preferences are, more or less, affirmative action for white kids.

So, my answer to the whataboutism of using legacy preferences as a defense of or at least a rebuttal to questioning race-based preferences is: Legacy preferences should go as well. Of course. Elite schools such as Amherst College and Johns Hopkins University have ended the practice. [*A 2020 statement*](https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/current-issues/admissions) from John Pérez, then the chair of the University of California Board of Regents, read, “Per long-established U.C. Regents policy, U.C. forbids legacy admissions and does not grant preferential admission to the children of alumni or donors.” A blunt stand-alone statement [*on the admissions website*](https://mitadmissions.org/help/faq/legacy/) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology reads: “M.I.T. doesn’t consider legacy or alumni relations in our admissions process. If you’d like to read more about this policy, check out the blog Just to Be Clear: We Don’t Do Legacy.”

These schools are on the right track. There should be neither preferences for well-to-do white students nor preferences for well-off students of color — even those we might describe as merely upper middle class, such as my own children — but instead, preferences for students of poor or ***working-class*** backgrounds, irrespective of race.

Yet the question might be, “Why not stress that point?” since people contesting racial preferences often don’t.

Perhaps some suppose that someone who contests racial preferences without concurrently objecting to legacy preferences is turning a willful blind eye, eager to let white people off the hook. But this rather hastily casts the opponent of racial preferences as someone of bad faith.

And we must ever beware the idea that people we disagree with on societal issues are either ignorant or sinister. For example, some argue, intuitively, that legacy preferences are necessary to maintain alumni donations. But in [*a chapter*](https://production-tcf.imgix.net/app/uploads/2016/03/08201915/2010-09-15-chapter_5.pdf) of “Affirmative Action for The Rich: Legacy Preferences in College Admissions,” researchers came to the conclusion that “there is no statistically significant evidence of a causal relationship between legacy preference policies and total alumni giving among top universities.”

My own lack of emphasis on legacy preferences over the years has essentially been an example of how hard it can be to get out of your own head. Quite simply, I have tended to think of legacy preferences as something of an embarrassment to the university system, and as such, have assumed that any other Black observer speaking on the issue would be as disinclined as I am to suggest something along the lines of: “What’s wrong with affirmative action for Black students when there’s affirmative action for rich white ones?”

That is, however, the kind of argument I have often perceived. For example, in the aughts, not uncommonly during panel discussions and talks on the pros and cons of racial preferences (of which I have participated in quite a few) people would often parry criticisms of racial preferences by tartly noting that President George W. Bush had been a modestly performing legacy student at Yale. It was almost always a guaranteed applause line — white audience members would make that point with especial élan, if memory serves.

I found it ironic, to say the least, to see white progressives earnestly supposing that they were doing the right thing by implying that Black students should found any part of their self-estimation on pointing to the apparently subpar scholastic performance of our 43rd president. It was an example of what one might call unintentionally woke racism or, as Bush himself phrased it more than two decades ago in a speech to the N.A.A.C.P., “[*the soft bigotry of low expectations*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/onpolitics/elections/bushtext071000.htm).”

And I found it sad that Black people in agreement with those white observers were missing that, in favor of a claim that boils down to something approximating the adage “What’s good for the goose is good for the gander.” That sort of approach strikes me as the antithesis of Black pride. The issue here is not just a matter of who gets certain resources, as in, who gets a goody bag and who doesn’t. It’s about perception as well. Black students often complain about the assumption that they are affirmative action admittees, with consequences ranging from constantly being on the defensive in late-night dorm-room debates to being shunned as study partners. Racial preferences in admissions inevitably reflect on Black students — Black people — as a whole. However unfair it may be, legacy admissions do not reflect on white students or white people, broadly speaking, in the same way.

Zora Neale Hurston, of “Their Eyes Were Watching God” renown, who left us 62 years ago last week, and who today would be considered a Black conservative, had useful words for these issues. Though she didn’t live long enough to comment directly on affirmative action, we can glean what her thoughts would have been in many of her statements, [*such as this one*](https://books.google.com/books?id=Q2dd2AEYMCcC&amp;pg=PA47&amp;lpg=PA47&amp;dq=It+seems+to+me+that+if+I+say+a+whole+system+must+be+upset+for+me+to+win,+I+am+saying+that+I+cannot+sit+in+the+game,+and+that+safer+rules+must+be+made+to+give+me+a+chance.+I+repudiate+that.+If+others+are+in+there,+deal+me+a+hand+and+let+me+see+what+I+can+make+of+it,+even+though+I+know+some+in+there+are+dealing+from+the+bottom+and+cheating+like+hell+in+other+ways.&amp;source=bl&amp;ots=ZbAUiRfPs_&amp;sig=ACfU3U1BaXxFgMxiAs6SraPcxbg2PP2-YA&amp;hl=en&amp;sa=X&amp;ved=2ahUKEwiDuNrcytz1AhVQj3IEHYNFDOsQ6AF6BAgNEAM#v=onepage&amp;q=It%20seems%20to%20me%20that%20if%20I%20say%20a%20whole%20system%20must%20be%20upset%20for%20me%20to%20win%2C%20I%20am%20saying%20that%20I%20cannot%20sit%20in%20the%20game%2C%20and%20that%20safer%20rules%20must%20be%20made%20to%20give%20me%20a%20chance.%20I%20repudiate%20that.%20If%20others%20are%20in%20there%2C%20deal%20me%20a%20hand%20and%20let%20me%20see%20what%20I%20can%20make%20of%20it%2C%20even%20though%20I%20know%20some%20in%20there%20are%20dealing%20from%20the%20bottom%20and%20cheating%20like%20hell%20in%20other%20ways.&amp;f=false):

It seems to me that if I say a whole system must be upset for me to win, I am saying that I cannot sit in the game, and that safer rules must be made to give me a chance. I repudiate that. If others are in there, deal me a hand and let me see what I can make of it, even though I know some in there are dealing from the bottom and cheating like hell in other ways.

Hurston questioned the supposedly progressive notion that the job of an enlightened Black person is to question the basis of the rules — or, in the case of the legacy admissions comparison, to point out when the rules aren’t applied completely fairly — rather than to grapple with the rules and only contest them after we have shown that we can make our way despite double standards and “gotchas” baked into the system. Opinions will differ as to what justifies petitioning for the rules to be changed, and how much, but Hurston’s counsel is an invaluable lodestar for us moderns, regardless.

Many seem to find a particular resonance in the core concerns, reflected in the titles, of books such as “When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America,” by the Columbia political scientist Ira Katznelson, and the aforementioned “Affirmative Action for the Rich,” edited by the lawyer Richard Kahlenberg, who’s written extensively about class-based affirmative action, [*including for The Times*](https://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2014/04/27/should-affirmative-action-be-based-on-income/class-based-affirmative-action-works). Both books are excellent, but people have a way of taking the concept of white affirmative action as implying that its existence, and for so very long, deep-sixes anyone questioning racial preference policies of a mere few decades’ duration.

That’s an oversimplified take, though, ignoring reasoned addresses of racial preferences from many quarters. My position on racial preferences in 2022 (as opposed to 1962) stands. But if, somehow, it wasn’t clear, I look forward, also, to seeing legacy preferences melt away just as soon.

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 Illustration by The New York Times; Photography by TheresaTibbetts/Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 1, 2022

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[***The Last Czar's Palace, Reborn as a Museum***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63Y8-SYX1-DXY4-X1DX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 28, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section D; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1189 words

**Byline:** By Ivan Nechepurenko

**Body**

The last home of Nicholas II has been restored and opened to the public as a museum outside of St. Petersburg.

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia -- Maria Ryadova recalled being in a dusty room inside the Alexander Palace, hopping from one floor beam to another and peering into the dark chasm beneath, on the day she and her team of workers made a momentous discovery.

A pile of broken blue tiles had been hiding in the darkness. These shards, Ms. Ryadova knew from archival black-and-white photos, were the remains of tiles that had once adorned the walls of that room, which used to be czar Nicholas II's private pool and bathroom in the early 1900s. But before they were uncovered, she had never known their color.

The discovery of these glossy pieces of cobalt and turquoise completed another piece of the puzzle that has been reconstructing this imperial mansion, which was once the home of the last czar of Russia and his family.

''This was an incredible find,'' said Ms. Ryadova, 40, who is one of the main architects involved in the project. ''I felt extremely inspired.''

With a team of architects and researchers, Ms. Ryadova has spent more than a decade on these grounds, working to restore the stately yellow edifice to its early-20th-century glory, before World War II and Soviet remodeling led to its deterioration. On Aug. 13, the work of Ms. Ryadova and many others was finally unveiled when Alexander Palace opened to the public as a museum.

This palace is likely be the final major Russian imperial mansion to become a museum, said Tatiana Andreeva, a research specialist. It is the result of years of investigative work by Ms. Andreeva, 37, Ms. Ryadova and their many colleagues, who re-created the interiors by working with a few fuzzy colored pictures, thousands of black-and-white photos, some watercolors, several drapery swatches and memoirs of palace life.

Of Rubble and Rubles

More than a century after the Russian monarchy collapsed with the execution of Nicholas II and his wife, four daughters and son by the Bolsheviks in 1918, historians are working to excavate the country's imperial past.

For some, Alexander Palace has become a symbol of Russia's reconciliation with it. ''I have a complicated attitude toward the aristocrats of pre-Soviet Russia,'' said Max Trudolyubov, 51, a popular blogger and commentator on current affairs. ''But these palaces became monuments.''

Nicholas II has long been portrayed to the Russian people either as a bloody and committed despot -- a relentless oppressor of the ***working class*** -- or a clueless and lighthearted fool who carelessly let his country fall of the cliff into the abyss of Bolshevism.

The reopened palace will allow visitors to immerse themselves in part of the country's history and make their own judgments, said Lev Lurie, a specialist in the history of St. Petersburg and the Romanov family.

''Museum is a theater, with a play rolling out without any actors,'' she said.

In 2011, the Russian state decided to recreate the czar's private suite -- which had been furnished in the Art Nouveau style and was mostly destroyed during World War II and subsequent Soviet reconstructions -- and create a museum around it. In the end, the government has committed more than $28 million to the project, with $12 million coming from the museum and private benefactors. (One of those private benefactors, Bob Atchison of Austin, Texas, is an enthusiast who has assembled a collection of items that were looted from the palace by the Germans and others -- and sold at international auctions -- and who has been collecting money to repair the palace for decades.)

To recreate the czar's private rooms, Ms. Ryadova's team had to remake almost everything: pickled oak parquet floors, wool rugs and silk draperies, and even spittoons that were used by the imperial family and courtiers.

Originally built in 1796 by Catherine the Great for her grandson Alexander, the palace was part of the imperial retreat in Tsarskoye Selo, a sprawling complex of palaces and parks outside of St. Petersburg, Russia's capital at the time.

In 1905, Alexander's great-grand-nephew, Nicholas II, moved his family there permanently to escape the increasingly chaotic and dangerous life in the capital, where riots broke out regularly and his grandfather was killed in 1881.

Nicholas II's choice, on the eve of revolution, to abandon his troops and reunite with his family at Alexander Palace, divides many who study the time period.

To some, it is an indictment: He put his family above the interests of his country, over which he had absolute power.

But to many Russian Orthodox believers, Nicholas II's acceptance of his fate was a show of humility. In 2000, the Russian Orthodox Church canonized him and his family as passion bearers, a category used to identify believers who endured suffering and death with Christ-like piety.

This July, defying all pandemic-related restrictions, thousands of believers joined a religious procession in the city of Yekaterinburg that processed from the location of the mansion where the czar was shot (it was later destroyed) to the spot where the family's remains were disposed in a mine shaft and dissolved with sulfuric acid.

A Palatial Puzzle

As she walked through the palace's nearly finished rooms a few weeks before the opening this summer, Ms. Ryadova said she hoped visitors would be enraptured. She has faced too many challenges and disappointments in this reconstruction to feel otherwise.

For instance, she has been frustrated by the czar's family photos. As avid photographers, they took thousands of pictures inside the palace, including photographs that could be considered some of the world's earliest selfies. Portraits, however, are often useless to restoration specialists because floors and ceilings are usually cut out of the frame.

''Now I tell everyone: Photograph your ceilings!'' Ms. Ryadova said.

Rugs posed a problem, too: In some cases, whole patterns were recreated from a small corner that managed to sneak into a picture or two. (Some of the ceiling restorations are on hold, in hopes that more materials will be discovered.)

In 1944, after the German occupation, most of the properties at Tsarskoye Selo had no windows or roofs. ''The country was in a horrible state, but people wanted to see these ruins rebuilt as they were,'' said Olga Taratynova, the director of the Tsarskoye Selo museum.

So even though the Soviet government had established itself as antithetical to the rule of the czars, it put money toward renovating their palaces. ''It was a political decision,'' Ms. Taratynova, 66, said.

The complex has since become an important tourist destination, not to mention a symbol of Russian history. Ms. Taratynova recalled that in 2002 President George W. Bush visited the Catherine Palace at the site as the guest of President Vladimir Putin. When Mr. Bush entered the grand 8,500-square-foot throne hall, with its gold-plated woodcarving décor, Ms. Taratynova said, he froze, mesmerized, and said simply, ''Wow.''

''We Russians love it when people come to visit and say, 'Wow!''' she said.

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: outside Alexander Palace, near St. Petersburg, Russia

left and right, reconstructed private rooms of Nicholas II, the last czar

left, some of the many era-specific items, and right, bathroom detail

right, the palace was a retreat and part of a sprawling complex. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY GELMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** November 4, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Will East Harlem Ever Get Its Long-Delayed Subway?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64NJ-H9C1-JBG3-61SW-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 31, 2022 Monday 12:00 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1408 words

**Byline:** Ana Ley

**Highlight:** Residents have been waiting almost a century for new stations. Some aren’t sure they’ll be built.

**Body**

Residents have been waiting almost a century for new stations. Some aren’t sure they’ll be built.

Politicians have long promised to bring East Harlem a new subway line that would give [*this historically neglected community*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/20/nyregion/climate-inequality-nyc.html) better transit access to the rest of New York and shift passengers away from [*some of the country’s most crowded train lines*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/01/nyregion/second-avenue-subway-relieves-crowding-on-neighboring-lines.html).

The idea appears to have gained renewed momentum, with Gov. Kathy Hochul vowing to finish the project within a decade and transportation officials saying the $1 trillion federal infrastructure bill passed last year can help cover half the estimated $6.3 billion cost of what would be one of the world’s most expensive transit projects.

Funds from the bill could help finance a more than $3 billion grant request from the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which operates the subway, that the Federal Transit Administration is moving closer to approving. Transit officials hope to break ground by the end of the year.

“Things never looked better for getting the Second Avenue subway to East Harlem,” said Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, a Democrat and the majority leader.

Still, given the long-awaited project’s many starts and stops, the latest announcements have been met with skepticism in a heavily ***working-class*** neighborhood where 71 percent of residents use public transit to get to work, compared with[*a citywide average of 56 percent*](https://censusreporter.org/profiles/16000US3651000-new-york-ny/), according to Census Bureau data.

“I think that it’s sad that it’s taken this long,” said Princess Jenkins, who owns The Brownstone, a clothing store on East 125th Street a short walk from the subway line’s proposed path. “We want people to be able to access this community.”

The Second Avenue subway line was envisioned to stretch north along the Upper East Side of Manhattan to East Harlem, and south to Lower Manhattan. So far only one part of the plan, along the Upper East Side, has been completed. Here is a look at where the project stands.

Why do supporters want this subway line?

While much of Manhattan is well served by the subway, some neighborhoods along the East River, like East Harlem, can be a long walk from the nearest station.

The extension would add three new subway stops along the Q line between 96th Street and 125th Street, and is expected to serve about 123,000 daily riders, according to the transit agency.

Mitchell Moss, a professor of urban planning at New York University, said the new section would be noteworthy as the “first major project that isn’t serving Manhattan’s elite.”

Beside making the subway more accessible, community leaders believe the new line could bring more foot traffic to some of the area’s small businesses and boost the local economy.

“I think you have a lot of people that are pining for the neighborhood to be thriving and vibrant and full of positive energy,” said Carey King, the director of Uptown Grand Central, a nonprofit.

In 2019, the median household income in East Harlem was $32,960, less than half the citywide median household income of $70,590, [*according to an analysis of Census Bureau data by*](https://furmancenter.org/neighborhoods/view/east-harlem)N.Y.U. researchers. About 43 percent of East Harlem’s population of roughly 111,000 identify as Hispanic and 36 percent as Black.

“It could make a really big difference,” said Representative Adriano D. Espaillat, whose district includes East Harlem.

Why has it taken so long?

A proposal to build the Second Avenue subway [*was introduced in 1929*](https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1929/08/30/94177278.html?pageNumber=1). The Great Depression caused the first delay and over the years officials kept diverting funds for competing interests.

“If the state ever needed money, they would just take it from the Second Avenue subway,” said Representative Carolyn Maloney, a Democrat, whose district is adjacent to East Harlem and includes the Upper East Side, where the first phase of the project was built.

[*For decades*](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2009/07/the_tortured_history_of_the_se.html), price hikes, political jockeying and international crises have gotten in the way. In the 1940s, World War II sapped resources and manpower. The Korean War triggered a spike in material costs. In one push in the 1970s, several groundbreakings were held, [*but work stopped when the city nearly went bankrupt*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/19/nyregion/second-avenue-subway-opening.html). The most recent incarnation was started in the 1990s.

The first phase of the subway project [*took about 10 years to build*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/28/nyregion/second-avenue-subway-east-harlem.html) and opened on Jan. 1, 2017, connecting a Lexington Avenue station to Second Avenue and adding new stations at 72nd, 86th and 96th Streets. Before the pandemic, about 200,000 people rode it daily. Ridership has crept up to about 58 percent of that level.

M.T.A. officials say it has eased crowding along the Lexington Avenue line — which had been [*the nation’s most overcrowded subway line*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/01/nyregion/as-second-avenue-subway-opens-a-train-delay-ends-in-happy-tears.html) — reducing ridership during peak morning periods by roughly 40 percent, from 18,400 riders to 10,800.

The extension would create new stations at 106th, 116th and 125th Streets.

Two final phases of the subway line would extend it south to Lower Manhattan, though, for the moment, they are largely just diagrams on a plan.

How much will it cost?

A New York Times investigation showed that at $2.5 billion per mile, [*construction for the first section of the Second Avenue subway*](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/28/nyregion/new-york-subway-construction-costs.html) cost more than almost every other recent transit project in the world.

In total that section cost more than $4.4 billion. Pushing the line north is projected to cost nearly $6.3 billion, and major infrastructure projects almost always end up costing more than initially estimated.

The review by The Times — which included interviews with more than 50 contractors and nearly 100 current and former M.T.A. employees — found that transit projects in New York cost more than in other cities because trade unions, construction companies and consulting firms all take larger profits here than elsewhere.

The M.T.A. would pay half the cost with the expectation that the federal government would cover the rest.

What are the challenges?

A big one, not surprisingly, is money.

During a tour of the proposed construction site late last year, Ms. Hochul said she wanted to break ground by the end of this year and complete the project within six to eight years.

But the M.T.A.’s struggle to lure back riders and the likelihood that hybrid work schedules will endure even after the pandemic has left the agency in a precarious financial state — [*in November, it forecast a $1.4 billion deficit in 2025*](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-11-17/new-york-s-mta-projects-1-4-billion-deficit-in-2025). There are no guarantees that money for the new section of line won’t be diverted again.

Some local leaders and residents also worry that the Second Avenue subway could lead to new development in the neighborhood that pushes out longtime residents and small businesses.

By the end of the first phase of the project, stretches of the Upper East Side had changed. Many mom-and-pop shops had closed, replaced by chain stores and luxury high-rises in an area that has a mix of well-off and middle-income residents. The median residential rent in buildings surrounding Second Avenue rose by 27 percent from 2011 to 2016, according to Street Easy.

And the construction also caused significant disruptions, with neighbors and local businesses complaining of noise and obstructions that it made it hard to get to stores.

Jimmy Levantis, the manager of Nick’s Restaurant &amp; Pizzeria, which is near the 96th Street station, said the decade of construction was “like a hell.” Customers couldn’t walk or drive to his restaurant.

“They came, destroyed everything,” he said. Still, once the new section opened, it did increase business, at least until the pandemic hit.

City Councilwoman Diana Ayala, whose district includes East Harlem, worries about “the unintended consequence of this added infrastructure” and added that a focus should be on “protecting small businesses and taking a look at the potential displacement of residents.”

She worries for people like Hector Quiroz, whose restaurant Lechonera La Isla has spent decades serving pernil and pig’s feet, and is steps away from what would be the new 125th Street station.

Mr. Quiroz, who owns the restaurant along with his wife, said he had no plans to leave.

“Not even a crane could take me away,” Mr. Quiroz said in Spanish.

PHOTOS: Top, transit workers along a stretch of the Second Avenue subway line. The next phase of the project will push the line into East Harlem. Above left is a view of construction in East Harlem in 1977. Above right, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo celebrated the opening of the first phase of the Second Avenue subway five years ago. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS; BENJAMIN NORMAN FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; DON HOGAN CHARLES/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Adult Themes in Candy-Colored Wrappers***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63G3-28C1-JBG3-63JR-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 27, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 6; ART REVIEW

**Length:** 1019 words

**Byline:** By Dawn Chan

**Body**

His animations make for uncomfortable viewing in an exhibition at the New Museum. But fixating on their shock value misses the point.

Wong Ping's animations give us a glimpse into a strange inner world -- a world of hapless and depraved characters caught in a sequence of surreal plot twists.

The New Museum show ''Wong Ping: Your Silent Neighbor,'' through Oct. 3, features six of this Hong Kong artist's engaging animated works, which started turning up in prestigious exhibitions worldwide after he left a tedious postproduction job in TV and founded Wong Ping Animation Lab in 2014.

With his deliberately crude creations, Wong seems determined to spurn the polished world of high-end TV. His characters are built from basic geometric forms. Scenes are rendered in cyans, reds and lime greens that will unleash memories (if you have them, and I do) of ''surfing the web'' on dial-up internet. But even if they look childishly simple, the videos are very adult. Adult because they're obscene. Adult because they're world-weary.

Fate repeatedly washes people to sea and spits them back on shore in these animations. Their rapid-fire plot reversals can make you feel as though you're watching something between a stoner movie and the whirl of pixelated cherries across a video slot-machine screen.

The protagonist in ''Wong Ping's Fables 2'' (2019) is an anthropomorphic bull who accidentally impales a cop to death at a political protest and is then sexually assaulted in prison. He also uses his time behind bars to write a Ph.D. dissertation on the immorality of slow-cooked beef. Later, out of prison and penniless, he sells the jeans off his body. Surprise! They go for good money. Ripped jeans are chic, turns out. Soon, he builds a fashion empire and becomes one of Hong Kong's richest animals. And that's not even the first half of the plot.

Wong's show deserves attention -- and not just because the works are funny. Their NC-17 content is hard to overlook, and may be hard for some to stomach. Still, fixating on their shock value misses the point. With their sly humor, the works, in the end, are tragicomedies. They're full of characters trapped by quirks and perversions, then also buffeted by forces beyond their control.

The videos' somber voice-overs do a lot to set the tone. Wong's first-person male narrators hark back to the lonely, watchful detectives of Hong Kong's neo-noir films, for whom all manner of shock and gore was just another day on the job. Even flat-out helplessness is described with stoicism. In ''Jungle of Desire'' (2015), the narrator, an impotent and badly paid animator, watches as his wife becomes a sex worker who receives her clients at home. He tries to stay outside and give her space, but Hong Kong's public spaces won't cooperate. They're full of hostile architecture (''spiky things'') and people who wake anyone sleeping in a park. So the main character ends up hiding in a closet at home while his wife's clients stop by.

Often, Wong's videos treat women with fascination and revulsion. There's a puerile focus on their body parts: breasts, varicose veins, feet. This might not sound exactly like high-priority viewing to you, especially as #MeToo has renewed scrutiny of the disproportionate airtime and shelf-space given to tales of straight male desire. Perhaps you'll be more inclined to see these works if I add that they're not quite about a power imbalance between a lecherous man and helpless woman. If there's a power imbalance here, it's between people and the realities overwhelming them. Stagnant wages. Corrupt law enforcement. The loneliness of screens and devices.

Political anxieties hover at the show's edge like a ghost barely acknowledged by the living. In ''An Emo Nose'' (2015), a man's nose lengthens when it senses ''negative energy.'' To placate it, the man stops talking politics and gives his nose access to sex and ice cream. (In this scene, the petals of the flower on Hong Kong's flag wilt and fall.) Elsewhere, the main character in ''Who's the Daddy'' (2017) mistakes a dating app for one to help him find friends of a similar political stripe.

At many moments, Wong's videos had me thinking back to the artist Mike Kelley and his friends, whose messy abject work took the art world by storm several decades ago. Kelley, who died in 2012, knew how to walk the line between sadness and provocation, whether he was exhibiting torn stuffed animals or showing an artwork by the serial killer John Wayne Gacy in a project about artists and criminality. Granted, Kelley's art was often set against the backdrop of American ***working-class*** suburbs, while Wong's work unfolds across urban Hong Kong. But as Kelley did to great effect, Wong seems to mine his own sense of inadequacy and depravity to get at something bigger: how sociopolitical realities fuel the disappointments of grown-up boys who can't be men.

Even the exhibition design of ''Wong Ping: Silent Neighbor'' seems to partly channel Kelley, who had a thing for ratty fabric, knitted afghans and plush toys. The main room of Wong's show -- which was organized by Gary Carrion-Murayari with Francesca Altamura, a former curatorial assistant -- has a central mound of beanbag chairs and a shag-carpeted platform. It's where visitors can recline while watching Wong's animations on surrounding screens.

There's no illusion of cool sterility to this seating arrangement, which feels significant given how often Wong's animations allude to hygiene, the body and public space. Take the germ-conscious city dwellers in ''The Other Side'' (2015), who use only their lower bodies to push through turnstiles. They'd surely view beanbag chairs with some hesitation. You might, too, as a visitor to this show. If you stand, you'll have to let the discomfort of your stance compound the discomfort induced by these artworks. Or you'll go for it: You'll hunker down on a soft patch of fabric, and accept a full-body immersion into Wong Ping's weird debased world.

Wong Ping: Your Silent Neighbor

Through Oct. 3 at the New Museum, 235 Bowery, Manhattan. (212) 219-1222, newmuseum.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/arts/design/wong-ping-new-museum.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/25/arts/design/wong-ping-new-museum.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: From top: the main room of ''Wong Ping: Your Silent Neighbor'' at the New Museum

an installation view of ''An Emo Nose'' (2015)

another of ''The Other Side'' (2015)

a still from ''Jungle of Desire'' (2015). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DARIO LASAGNI/NEW MUSEUM

WONG PING

EDOUARD MALINGUE GALLERY AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY)

**Load-Date:** August 27, 2021

**End of Document**



[***'La French Tech' Arrived Under Macron. Will It Resonate With Voters?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6562-1W41-JBG3-63B1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 9, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

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

**Length:** 1714 words

**Byline:** By Liz Alderman and Roger Cohen

**Body**

The president has brought innovation, jobs and growth. Still, resentments fester on the eve of the presidential election.

PARIS -- In full Steve Jobs mode, President Emmanuel Macron of France donned a black turtleneck in January and took to Twitter to celebrate the creation in France of 25 ''unicorn'' start-ups -- companies with a market value of over 1 billion euros, or almost $1.1 billion.

He declared that France's start-up economy was ''changing the lives of French people'' and ''strengthening our sovereignty.'' It was also helping to create jobs: Unemployment has fallen to 7.4 percent, the lowest level in a decade.

The start-up boom was a milestone for a young president elected five years ago as a restless disrupter, promising to pry open the economy and make it competitive in the 21st century.

To some extent, Mr. Macron has succeeded, luring billions of euros in foreign investments and creating hundreds of thousands of new jobs, many in tech start-ups, in a country whose resistance to change is stubborn. But disruption is just that, and the president has at the same time left many French feeling unsettled and unhappy, left behind or ignored.

As Mr. Macron seeks re-election starting on Sunday, it is two countries that will vote -- a mainly urban France that sees the need for change to meet the era's sweeping technological and economic challenges, and a France of the ''periphery,'' wary of innovation, struggling to get by, alarmed by immigration and resentful of a leader seen as embodying the arrogance of the privileged.

Which France shows up at voting booths in greater numbers will determine the outcome.

In many Western societies, the simultaneous spread of technology and inequality has posed acute problems, stirring social tensions, and France has proved no exception. If the disenchanted France prevails, Marine Le Pen, the perennial candidate of the nationalist right, will most likely prevail, too.

Worried that he may have lost the left by favoring start-up entrepreneurship and market reforms, Mr. Macron has in the past week been multiplying appeals to the left, resorting to phrases like ''our lives are worth more than their profits'' to suggest his perceived rightward lurch was not the whole story.

He told France Inter radio that ''fraternity'' was the most important word in the French national motto, and said during a visit to Brittany that ''solidarity'' and ''equality of opportunity'' would be the central themes of an eventual second term.

The pledges looked like signs of growing anxiety about the election's outcome. After several months in which Mr. Macron's re-election had appeared virtually assured, the gap between him and Ms. Le Pen has closed. The leading two candidates in Sunday's vote will go through to a runoff on April 24.

The election will be largely decided by perceptions of the economy. In Mr. Macron's favor, the country has bounced back faster than expected from coronavirus lockdowns, with economic growth reaching 7 percent after a devastating pandemic-induced recession.

The most significant cultural transformation has come in the area of tech, where Mr. Macron's determination to create a start-up culture centered around new technology has brought changes the government considers essential to the future of France.

Cédric O, the secretary of state for the digital sector, wearing jeans and a white dress shirt, no tie, admits to being obsessed. Day after long day, he plots the future of ''la French tech'' from his spacious office at the Finance Ministry.

Five years ago, that may have seemed quixotic, but something has stirred. ''It's vital to be obsessed because the risk France and Europe are facing is to be kicked out of history,'' Mr. O, 39, said, borrowing a line often used by Mr. Macron. ''We have to get back into the international technological race.''

Toward that end, Mr. Macron opened Station F, a mammoth incubator project in Paris representing France's start-up ambitions, and earmarked nearly ?10 billion in tax credits and other inducements to lure research activity and artificial intelligence business. A new bank was created to help finance start-ups.

The president wined and dined multinational chief executives, creating an annual gathering at Versailles called ''Choose France.''

Since 2019, France has become the leading destination for foreign investment in Europe, and more than 70 investment projects worth ?12 billion have been pledged by foreign multinationals at the Versailles gatherings, said Franck Riester, France's foreign trade minister.

In the past four years, IBM, SAP of Germany and DeepMind, the London-based machine learning company owned by Google's parent, Alphabet, have increased investment in France and created thousands of jobs.

Facebook and Google have also bolstered their French presence and their artificial intelligence teams in Paris. Salesforce, the American cloud computing company, is moving ahead with over ?2 billion in pledged investments.

''Macron brought a culture shift where France was suddenly open to the world of funders,'' said Thomas Clozel, a doctor by training and the founder in 2016 of Owkin, a start-up that uses Artificial Intelligence to personalize and improve medical treatment. ''He made everything easy for start-up entrepreneurs and so changed the view of France as an anticapitalist society.''

François Hollande, Mr. Macron's Socialist Party predecessor, had famously declared in 2012: ''My enemy is the world of finance.'' As a result, Mr. Clozel said, securing funds as a French start-up was so problematic that he chose to incorporate in the United States.

No longer.

''Today, I am thinking of reincorporating in France,'' he said. ''The ease of dealing with the government, the consortium of start-ups helping one another, and the new French tech pride are compelling.''

Among the start-ups that have had a significant effect on French life are Doctolib, a website that allows patients to arrange for medical appointments and tests online, and Backmarket, an online market for reconditioned tech gadgets that just became France's most valuable start-up, at $5.7 billion.

They began life before Mr. Macron took office, but have grown exponentially in the past five years.

''I have made 56 investments in the last two years, and 53 of them are in France,'' said Jonathan Benhamou, a French entrepreneur who founded PeopleDoc, a company that simplifies access to information for human resources departments.

Now funding new ventures and focusing on a new start-up called Resilience in the field of personalized cancer care, Mr. Benhamou credits Mr. Macron with ''giving investors confidence in stability and creating a virtuous cycle.''

Talented engineers no longer go elsewhere because there is an ''ecosystem'' for them in France, Mr. O said.

Mr. Macron has insisted that opening the economy is consistent with maintaining protections for French workers and that the arrival of la French tech does not mean the embrace of the no-holds-barred capitalism behind the churn of American creativity.

Despite the president's overhauls, France remains one of the most expensive countries for payroll taxes, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, with hourly labor costs of nearly ?38, close to levels seen in Sweden, Norway and other northern European countries.

''We know that we have to go further,'' Mr. Riester, the foreign trade minister, said in a recent interview. ''We still have some brakes that could be taken off the economy, and we have to cut some red tape in the future.''

''But we are also convinced we will maintain a different system than in the United States,'' he added. ''It's our culture and history, and at the end of the day, we think it could be better for attracting talent from all over the world.''

Before Mr. Macron was elected, unemployment hovered around 10 percent, growth was anemic and a wealth tax, among other fiscal measures, had deterred foreign investment. France was widely perceived as an anti-entrepreneurship nation.

Mr. Macron cut France's corporate tax rate to 25 percent from 33 percent and introduced a 30 percent flat tax on capital gains. He simplified the labyrinthine labor code, making hiring and firing easier. His government channeled billions of dollars into retraining programs and made it tougher to keep receiving unemployment benefits.

These policies have spurred the economy while generating much hostility toward the president in a France still deeply wedded to its system of social solidarity. It is a country that tends to believe that if work has its place, quality of life should hold a greater place. The anger and alienation that set off the Yellow Vest movement in 2018 still lurk just beneath the surface.

Mr. Macron's campaign proposal that the retirement age be raised to 65 from 62 -- rejected by Ms. Le Pen -- has been greeted with widespread outrage.

While entrepreneurs are creating new companies faster than ever, many jobs are precarious. Delivery workers for UberEats, Deliveroo, Amazon and other online shopping portals have little income security and scarce benefits. A number of French industries remain troubled, despite Mr. Macron's vows to forge a manufacturing revival.

The troubles in these parts of the economy are deeply felt, and that is where Mr. Macron is vulnerable.

An abrupt rise in the cost of living, driven in part by Russia's war in Ukraine, has quickly become one of the biggest issues facing candidates.

During a recent visit to a ***working-class*** area of Dijon -- one of very few campaign stops by a president who has often seemed more concerned about discussing the war in Ukraine with President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia than talking about the looming election -- Mr. Macron was hectored by the crowd.

''You don't realize,'' said one man. ''Put yourself in the place of a French family. Shopping, paying for gas, it's horrible!''

Asked by a woman how it was possible to survive on the minimum government handout of about $620 a month, Mr. Macron said, ''I have never thought that giving a check to people in distress was the way to solve their problems.''

Rather, he said, the essential thing was to find ways to help them back into the workplace.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/08/world/europe/france-presidential-election-macron-economy-le-pen.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/08/world/europe/france-presidential-election-macron-economy-le-pen.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: President Emmanuel Macron at a rally this month in Nanterre. As France heads to the polls, there are some festering resentments over Mr. Macron's economic policies. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DMITRY KOSTYUKOV FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

In November 2018, rallies across France called ''yellow vest'' protested the high cost of fuel, above left. Station F, above right, a mammoth incubator project in Paris, is the country's new technical hub and represents the start-up ambitions that France is promoting. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLY TRIBALLEAU/AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE -- GETTY IMAGES

ROBERTO FRANKENBERG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2022

**End of Document**



[***New Haven, Conn.: More Than Just Academics and Mozzarella; Living in***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KB-TX61-DXY4-X11C-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 1, 2022 Wednesday 15:06 EST

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**Section:** REALESTATE

**Length:** 1855 words

**Byline:** C. J. Hughes

**Highlight:** After decades of crime, the city is ‘coming up’ — with the cuisine and culture of a major metropolis, but the laid-back vibe of a smaller place.

**Body**

After decades of crime, the city is ‘coming up’ — with the cuisine and culture of a major metropolis, but the laid-back vibe of a smaller place.

Outsiders often reduce New Haven to two things: pizza and Yale.

It’s somewhat true. Places to eat pizza abound in this midsize city of 135,000 residents, which continues to have a large Italian-American population, even as it diversifies. And the Ivy League university, whose students and staff number about 32,500, exerts an influence that can seem far more gravitational than the school’s real estate footprint — just 8 percent of the city’s land — might suggest.

But that misses the big picture, the city’s boosters say. New Haven pulls off a balancing act, offering the cuisine, culture and architecture of a major metropolis, they contend, with the laid-back vibe of a smaller town. At the same time, decades of efforts to curb crime, clean sidewalks, convert closed factories and boost homeownership amid a 25 percent poverty rate seem to have given New Haven a new lease on life.

“I had a lot of negative feelings about the way it was in the ’80s and ’90s,” said Jim Kenny, 43, who grew up in rural Connecticut and would race through New Haven to catch the train to New York.

But in 2018, Mr. Kenny, who works in scholastic fund-raising, had to reconsider his opinion after accepting a job offer from Yale. Although he was initially tempted by suburban Milford, he took a leap of faith on a two-bedroom, one-bath apartment in a walk-up building in Wooster Square, a rowhouse-lined historic district, for $1,750 a month.

Almost immediately, he was surprised by how wrong he had been about the city. “My decision to live here unlocked a gem of a place,” said Mr. Kenny, whose unexpected treats included plays at Long Wharf Theater and Indian food at Sherkaan. This winter, he and Odie, his French bulldog, moved into a new rental building around the corner, with amenities like a fireplace-lined courtyard; his one-bedroom there costs $2,100 a month.

Large rental developments — which have been mushrooming in recent years in neighborhoods like Wooster Square, East Rock and the Hill — seem to fill up as quickly as they open, although they aren’t universally loved. In a city of Victorians and brick rowhouses, some of the projects are considered too large. But their defenders point out that new buildings are replacing parking lots, helping to reverse the city’s troubled legacy of demolitions in the mid-20th-century.

“I don’t think people are jumping up and down for joy, but I do think some of these buildings are better than having ugly empty lots,” said Charlotte Murphy, 78, a retired communications professional who lives in a two-bedroom, two-bath condominium in a converted 1865 mansion with her husband, Charlie Murphy, 80, a retired librarian. The unit, which has a fireplace, cost $189,000 in 2003, when Ms. Murphy left the suburbs for a place with walkability. “I think a lot of us are ambivalent.”

New Haven’s upswing is not citywide. Blighted blocks endure in neighborhoods like Dixwell and Dwight. But some of the city’s less affluent areas are also improving.

“It’s better here, by buckets,” said Monika Mittelholzer, 61, a seven-year resident of Newhallville, a ***working-class*** enclave. One reason is that renters, including low-income ones, are taking advantage of programs designed to help them buy, said Ms. Mittelholzer, an immigrant from Guyana who works as an administrative assistant at Yale’s medical school and lives with her sister, Sonja, 54.

Home for her is a three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath house that she bought for $140,000 in 2015 from Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, a nonprofit that rehabs and sells distressed properties at low prices to buyers with qualifying incomes. The group, which has turned around some 300 houses since 1979, can seem to be reshaping whole blocks. It restored eight houses on Ms. Mittelholzer’s section of Lilac Street alone.

But Yale also helped Ms. Mittelholzer with her down payment and mortgage through its Homebuyer Program, which typically offers employees $30,000 to buy in struggling areas. Since 1994, 1,370 properties have benefited, said Karen Peart, a Yale spokeswoman.

In 2002, when Ms. Mittelholzer moved to the area, “I thought New Haven was depressed,” she said. “But it’s coming up.”

What You’ll Find

Hugging a harbor between a pair of stone ridges known as East and West Rocks, New Haven is mostly flat, which explains its popularity with walkers and cyclists, residents say.

Many buyers start hunting in East Rock, where colorful houses in late-19th-century Queen Anne and Mediterranean styles relax in shaded yards. Mansion-lined Saint Ronan and Livingston Streets are among the top addresses, but elegant porch-fronted two-family houses, whose mortgages are offset by rents from Yale students, are abundant off Orange Street, a cafe-dotted strip.

With inventory low, there has been renewed attention on Westville, whose retail hub, at Whalley Avenue and Fountain Street, next to Edgewood Park, offers Camacho Garage, an outdoor restaurant. Farther out is East Shore, which mixes beachy and suburban vibes, with colonials on small lots by a sea wall. Neighborhoods now popular with investors include Fair Haven, a one-time oystering area on the Quinnipiac River.

Over the past 30 years, as office buildings near the New Haven Green have shed tenants, developers have grabbed the sites for housing. The Center Court Apartments, at 116 Court Street, for example, are now condos. But downtown is mostly rentals, a trend ignited by the 2010 construction of 360 State Street, a 32-story, 500-unit tower that is among the tallest in the city.

Corsair, a 238-unit project with a pool in its courtyard, occupies a spot where airplane propellers were once manufactured; a second, 75-unit complex will rise across the street. A sprawling former Winchester gun plant, targeted for redevelopment for decades, has added 158 apartments and was approved this spring for 287 more, which will join biotech offices. And Audubon Square, a phased project adding 464 rentals to several large parking lots, is being built by Spinnaker Real Estate Partners, which is also helming the 500-apartment redevelopment of the windswept site where the New Haven Coliseum once stood, with plans to break ground this year.

What You’ll Pay

Inventory is scarce. In late May, buyers could choose among 86 homes, according to Zillow. The priciest was a stone-detailed house with seven bedrooms and seven fireplaces in the 185-acre Prospect Hill Historic District, built in 1908 for the owner of a trolley company, and listed for $2.295 million. The least expensive was a Cape Cod-style fixer-upper on 0.12 acres in East Shore, listed for $119,000. There were also 19 condominium units for sale, from $39,900 to $470,000.

As inventory has tightened, sales have slowed, sending prices skyward. New Haven saw 61 single-family houses sell in the first quarter of 2022, according to data from William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty, down from 71 during the same quarter in 2021. The median sale price for a single-family home in the first quarter of 2022 was $278,000, up from $231,000 during the same period the year before, a 20 percent jump.

Multifamily homes — a big part of the city’s housing stock — also saw values soar. Two- to four-family houses had a first-quarter median sale price of $325,000, up from $285,000 a year ago, according to Sotheby’s data. The median sale price of condos increased as well, to $158,000 in the first quarter of 2022 from $135,000 a year ago.

Jack Hill, an agent with Seabury Hill Realtors, who sold about 100 properties in New Haven last year, said the market is resetting. “I think it’s poised to come down a little bit,” he said. “Though not anything unusual.”

The Vibe

For years, relations between Yale and New Haven were chilly, largely because the private university kept taking buildings off tax rolls by snapping them up. But a thaw began around 1990, city officials say, as Yale began making voluntary payments to offset those losses. Last year, the school agreed to pay $135 million over six years, a large increase over past rates.

Many residents admit that Yale brings a flood of culture that a former factory town might not enjoy otherwise. Highlights include two world-class art museums; a natural-history museum, the Peabody, which is beloved by children; and Woolsey Hall, a venue for classical music. In recent years, improvements to Yale-owned properties along Broadway have turned a strip once rowdy with nightclubs and diners into a more upscale shopping destination.

Elsewhere, College Street Music Hall holds rock, funk and pop shows; across the street, the Shubert Theater is a destination for ballets and musicals. And while many of the city’s green spaces are variations on the quad or the square, looping paths along Mill River, at the base of East Rock, offer space to jog and walk.

The Schools

New Haven’s 41 public schools — 32 of them magnet schools — enroll about 19,500 students.

On 2019 Smarter Balanced assessment exams, given in third through eighth grades, 55 percent of students met standards in English, compared with 60 percent statewide; 54 percent met standards in math, versus 63 percent statewide.

The high schools’ four-year graduation rate last year was 79 percent, versus 90 percent statewide, according to a state report that also found that New Haven spends slightly less per student — $16,929 annually — than the $17,838 state average.

The Commute

Metro-North’s New Haven line has two stops in New Haven and offers eight trains from Union Station to Grand Central on weekdays between 6 a.m. and 8 a.m. The shortest takes an hour and 50 minutes; the longest is just over two hours. Monthly passes are $450.

Amtrak and local Shore Line East trains also serve Union Station. New York-bound trains run a few times a day from New Haven’s other station, on State Street, closer to downtown.

Bus service is provided by CT Transit and Yale to those who commute within the city.

The History

From 1701 to 1875, Connecticut enjoyed the unusual distinction of having two state capitals, Hartford and New Haven. The capitol in New Haven — a Greek temple-type structure on the upper green, between Center Church and Phelps Gate, the entrance to the oldest surviving part of Yale’s campus — was designed by Ithiel Town, the architect behind the similar-looking Federal Hall National Memorial, on Wall Street in Manhattan.

The power-sharing arrangement, which had lawmakers meeting in each city once a year, eventually became too costly, and in 1885, after Hartford became the sole capital, Mr. Town’s temple was razed. The marble remains ended up in basement walls around the city, while its mortar was used to fill potholes, according to the New Haven Museum.

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PHOTO: The view down Sachem Street toward Yale University in New Haven, Conn. Blighted areas of the city endure, but there are programs meant to help less affluent areas. (PHOTOGRAPH BY TONY CENICOLA/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Naples, a City of Contradictions, Is Once Again a Home for Cinema***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64B0-TKW1-DXY4-X25M-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 17, 2021 Friday 16:25 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 1297 words

**Byline:** Elisabetta Povoledo

**Highlight:** For “The Hand of God,” the director Paolo Sorrentino has returned to his hometown, whose cultural profile has been lifted in recent years by the Elena Ferrante novels and films like “Gomorrah.”

**Body**

For “The Hand of God,” the director Paolo Sorrentino has returned to his hometown, whose cultural profile has been lifted in recent years by the Elena Ferrante novels and films like “Gomorrah.”

NAPLES, Italy — Paolo Sorrentino’s latest film “[*The Hand of God*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/movies/the-hand-of-god-review.html)” begins with a bird’s-eye view of Naples, his hometown, at dawn, with a lone vintage car traveling along a seafront road while the rest of the city uncharacteristically sleeps.

As a backdrop to this autobiographical coming-of-age story, Naples is at turns fantastical and decadent, sunny and unpredictable, comfortably familiar and ultimately confining.

Off camera, it is even more.

In the 20 years since Sorrentino last made a film here — his directorial debut “One Man Up” — the city has also matured as a center of movie making in Italy. These days, [*film and television crews*](https://www.imdb.com/search/title/?locations=Naples,%20Campania,%20Italy&amp;sort=year,desc&amp;page=13&amp;ref_=adv_nxt) are a common sight on Neapolitan streets, both downtown but also in its rougher hinterlands. These productions have nurtured the formation of a local industry, including actors, specialized technicians and cinematographers.

“There’s been enormous growth,” said Maurizio Gemma, the director of the local [*Film Commission of the Campania Region*](https://fcrc.it/en/), which has focused on attracting and facilitating the work of film and television productions since 2005.

Back then, Gemma said, there were 10 or 12 projects shooting in the area. Today, “we are shooting nearly 150 projects a year,” he said, including big-budget television shows like HBO’s “My Brilliant Friend,” based on the best-selling Elena Ferrante novels.

“Our greatest satisfaction is that inside these important titles there’s the work of many professionals in our region,” Gemma said. But then, he added, “we’ve always had a propensity toward show business, culture; it’s part of our history, it’s in our DNA.”

Naples is a city of contradictions, of ornate Baroque palazzos alongside derelict housing, of unrelenting and unruly traffic and an official unemployment rate [*of 21.5 percent*](http://dati.istat.it/Index.aspx?QueryId=25524), twice the national average. But it is also a city of culture, both highbrow and popular, and the birthplace of songs like “O sole mio” and “Santa Lucia.”

Its shabby grandeur, narrow alleys and sweeping views of the Bay of Naples with Vesuvius as a backdrop make the city a natural open air film set.

In recent years, production sets have been drawn to the suburbs of Naples, and its less salubrious underbelly. The bleak 2009 film “[*Gomorrah*](https://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/08/movies/08dona.html?_r=1)” by Matteo Garrone, who is Roman, and the [*popular TV series*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/29/arts/television/gomorrah-naples.html) of the same name brought these derelict areas to a wider international audience.

The director Antonio Capuano, who features prominently in “The Hand of God,” said at a recent screening of his 1998 film “Polvere di Napoli” — which he wrote with Sorrentino — that “Gomorrah” had become a “the postcard of Naples, and this is horrible.”

Pasquale Iaccio, the author of several books about Neapolitan cinema, said that “Gomorrah” was merely one “aspect of Naples among many other” clichés about the city that still held court.

He offered as proof an anecdote from the Neapolitan shoot for the film “Eat Pray Love,” where producers paid the residents of a downtown Naples alley to hang clothes and sheets from their windows, because an alley without them “just wouldn’t be Naples for the American script,” he said.

The cinematic attraction of Naples is keeping the city busy. “Let’s just say there’s a lot to do,” said Gea Vaccaro, a Naples city official overseeing [*the office*](https://www.comune.napoli.it/flex/cm/pages/ServeBLOB.php/L/IT/IDPagina/32565) that helps production companies navigate city bureaucracy and permits. “Naples is a complex city,” she said.

One of the ways the city helps visiting productions is to provide them with office space, setting aside rooms in a massive palazzo in the city center — Sorrentino’s team for “The Hand of God” occupied an airy room with ceiling frescoes.

Mayor Gaetano Manfredi, who was elected in October, said in an interview that the fertile cinematographic season “reinforced the international brand of Naples,” and permitted the considerable diaspora of Neapolitans living abroad to maintain a connection with their city.

“The economic angle should also not be discounted,” Manfredi said.

Last year, Italian regions set aside some 50 million euros ($57 million) to attract television and film productions, supplemented by other government funds and tax credits, according to Tina Bianchi, the secretary general of the [*Italian Film Commissions*](https://www.italianfilmcommissions.it/), the umbrella group for regional cinematic commissions.

The industry’s rapid growth has been some time in the making, according to Francesco Nardella, the deputy director of the arm of Italy’s national broadcaster that co-produces “[*Un Posto al Sole*](https://www.facebook.com/unpostoalsoleRai3/),” (“A Place in the Sun”) a wildly popular Italian weeknight drama set in Naples, as well as other series here.

“Un Posto al Sole,” which celebrated 25 years on the air last October, has been — and continues to be — “a fundamental motor” for movie making in Naples, Nardella said.

“Training” new generations of actors and technicians “is the key word,” he said. “And the seeds have grown.”

Alongside shows like “Un Posto al Sole” and “La Squadra,” another Naples-based series that ended a 10-season run in 2010, starting in the ’90s, film directors like Antonio Capuano, Pappi Corsicato, Stefano Incerti and [*Mario Martone*](https://www.nytimes.com/1995/06/23/style/IHT-the-movie-guide-lamore-molesto.html?searchResultPosition=1) brought [*Naples to the big screen*](https://www.nytimes.com/1997/05/26/arts/a-cultural-renaissance-fights-crime-in-naples.html?searchResultPosition=2).

“We draw on a reservoir filled with the most extraordinary actors that exists in Italy,” Martone said in an interview this week. His latest film, “[*Qui Rido Io*](https://www.labiennale.org/en/cinema/2021/lineup/venezia-78-competition/qui-rido-io),” (“The King of Laughter”) stars Toni Servillo, best known to American audiences as the lead in Sorrentino’s Oscar-winning “The Great Beauty.” Servillo was born in Afragola, a Neapolitan suburb, and acted onstage in the city for many years.

“Naples has returned to being the capital of Italian cinema, as it was at its origins,” said Martone, who opens “Qui Rido Io” with [*footage of the city*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a1NRSXbBSoQ) shot by the Lumière brothers in 1898.

In the early years of cinema, Naples vied with Turin as the center of Italian movie making, and more than 350 films were made there during the silent era, according to Alex Marlow-Mann, a professor at the University of Kent in England who has written a book about Neapolitan cinema.

That all came to an end in the 1920s, when the local film industry ground to a halt during the fascist regime. Not only did Benito Mussolini centralize the industry in Rome, founding [*Cinecittà Film Studios*](https://cinecittastudios.it/en/) in 1937, but he objected to the Neapolitan penchant for melodramas, often set in ***working-class*** environments, and spoken in dialect. “That was not the image of Italy Mussolini wanted to promote, so censorship set in,” Marlow-Mann said.

Movies continued to be made there after World War II, Marlow-Mann said, but they were mostly formulaic genre films that fell flat with critics, with the exception of films that followed in the long tradition of Neapolitan comedy, and it was only in the 1990s that Neapolitan cinema began to find its footing again.

At the end of “The Hand of God,” the character based on a young Sorrentino leaves Naples for Rome. Actually, Sorrentino only permanently left Naples when he was 37, living in his family home until that time, he said in a recent interview with an [*Italian newspaper*](https://video.repubblica.it/spettacoli-e-cultura/and-8216e-stata-la-mano-di-dio-and-8217-sorrentino-torna-nei-luoghi-del-film-e-della-sua-giovinezza-video-in-anteprima/403358/404070?ref=RHTP-BH-I329541896-P1-S2-T1).

In the film, Capuano (Ciro Capano) chides the young man for wanting to leave his hometown.

“No one gets outta this city,” the director tells him. “Do you know how many stories there are in this city. Look!,” he says peering out at a wide view of the Bay of Naples, as dusk sets.

PHOTOS: Top, the Naples seafront. The director Paolo Sorrentino has set his new film, “The Hand of God,” in his home city. Above, in Naples, ornate buildings sit alongside derelict housing. Above right, the popular Italian show “A Place in the Sun” is set in the city (PHOTOGRAPHS BY GIANNI CIPRIANO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; GIUSEPPE D’ANNA/FREMANTLE)

**Load-Date:** December 21, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Transcript: Ezra Klein Interviews Sheila Liming; The Ezra Klein Show***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:681W-78G1-DXY4-X1W3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 18, 2023 Tuesday 15:41 EST

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**Section:** PODCASTS

**Length:** 12835 words

**Highlight:** The April 18, 2023, episode of “The Ezra Klein Show.”

**Body**

Every Tuesday and Friday, Ezra Klein invites you into a conversation about something that matters, like today’s episode with Sheila Liming. Listen [*wherever you get your podcasts*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/19/opinion/how-to-listen-ezra-klein-show-nyt.html).

Transcripts of our episodes are made available as soon as possible. They are not fully edited for grammar or spelling.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: I’m Ezra Klein. This is “The Ezra Klein Show.”

So it’s cliché at this point to say Americans are getting lonelier. And you’ve heard numbers like these. Between 1990 and 2021, there was a decrease of 25 percentage points in the number of Americans who say they have five or more close friends. 25 percentage points. And that can just collapse into common wisdom. But, man, that’s a big drop. Young adults feel lonelier than the elderly. You should look at data like that and not just say, well, that’s too bad. It should make us say, where did we go wrong? As a country, we got richer, and we got much more lonely?

There’s been this effort to get us to take loneliness seriously. And so get a lot of conversation about loneliness as a malady, as a public health problem, a look at its neuroscience, what it does to our bodies. But it’s also an outcome. It is the result of a structure. It is imposed, in some ways, by culture. We make choices as a society about what we value. We chase our jobs. We live far from our families. Who move away from our friends. We spread out into suburbs and into single-family homes set back behind fences and lawns. We sprawl out with automobiles. We design for atomization and isolation. And so no wonder we get lonely.

But that raises this deeper question of, why did we choose that? And what would it then look like to choose otherwise? Not just as individuals but as a society, what would it mean to structure for community? Sheila Liming is the author of the new book “Hanging Out” which diagnoses what she calls a quiet catastrophe. Her view — we’re just having a lot of trouble hanging out being in the presence of others. And that might sound small, but to lose the skill, to have so much difficulty just spending open time with people we love or even like, that’s actually a profound problem. And so the book is kind of a manifesto for hanging out, a recollection of what hanging out is like.

But I wanted to go upstream of it a bit because I don’t want to just say that hanging on to something you should solve by doing more hanging out — though, maybe. But we are losing these capacities as a consequence of the structure. And so I want to think about the structure of social isolation. I wanted to have a conversation about what would make hanging out easy. What would make it so we never lost that skill because we were doing it all the time? What would make that kind of community the default, rather than a complicated dance of free time and synced Google calendars?

As always, my email: [*ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com*](mailto:ezrakleinshow@nytimes.com)

Sheila Liming, welcome to the show.

SHEILA LIMING: Hi.

EZRA KLEIN: So you write that, quote, “It’s no secret that modern life is isolating and that if anything, it looks to be headed in the direction of increased, not decreased, isolation.” Why do you think that’s the case?

SHEILA LIMING: Well, there’s a number of factors, I think, that affect the increasing circumstances of our isolation — factors such as time, decreased amounts of time that can be spent freely, especially freely in social scenarios where we are just hanging out with other people, interacting with them, having conversation with no set agenda or real sort of goal that’s supposed to guide that.

Another factor is space — both the diminishment of public space, which is something I talk about a lot in the book, but also the way that spaces themselves or the spaces that we occupy and frequent seem to grow more and more spread out. This is the American phenomenon of the suburbs, of space and sprawl. But it’s also something that I think increasingly creates these divides between us, as these spaces open up between us. And it’s just harder to put ourselves in proximity to each other, especially in public shared space.

EZRA KLEIN: One of the things I understand your book is doing is exploring this downstream consequence of isolation, of loneliness, of atomization, which I think is pretty underexplored, which is that we lose the skill of simply being around one another. So tell me a bit about how you define hanging out and what it means to lose it not as an activity but as a capacity?

SHEILA LIMING: That’s exactly it. Those downstream consequences that you mentioned are exactly what I’m interested in tracing. I define hanging out in the book as daring to do not much and daring to do it in the company of other people. Another way to think of this is spending time with others without trying to put too many expectations upon what that time has to do, or what it has to result in, or what it has to produce.

Yet, I would say that hanging out itself is not necessarily a skill. You don’t necessarily excel at hanging out. You either do it, or you don’t do it. But I think there are certain skills that are built into the work of hanging out itself.

So I’m thinking of it in the book as a kind of social musculature that we have to expose ourselves to these sort of repeated scenarios with relative frequency, just like exercise, in order to keep those muscles active and in order to prevent them from effectively atrophying.

EZRA KLEIN: One thing I found myself thinking about a lot reading the book is the difference between the kind of time I spent with people when I was a teenager, when I lived in a group house in my 20s, and the kind of time I spend with them now when we G-Cal a dinner invitation 3 and \xC2 weeks in advance and maybe break it two or three times before we ever actually make the match.

And this doesn’t seem to me to be part of your definition, but it does seem to me to be part of a bunch of the stories you tell, which is a sort of formlessness, a space for spontaneity, a way in which hanging out speaks to having the time and the autonomy over your time to just allow things to unfold with another person, as opposed to both being at the tyranny of a tight schedule and a fairly narrowly defined activity. Is there something to that for you?

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah, absolutely. I think a key part of hanging out is improvisation — like social improvisation, just making things up in the moment with another person or a group of people. And also in terms of music because I do have a background as a musician, and I think about what musicians try to do when they’re hanging out and improvising in a similar kind of way.

But yeah, it involves both time and space. You have to have that free, open, shared space in which to improvise. You also have to be able to get together with people in a room, and that is something that’s difficult. Like you were saying, reflecting on earlier periods of your life where maybe that was easy because you already kind of lived in shared spaces or in very, very close proximity to other people. And then as you age, those spaces get more isolating. They get more contained. And they also get further apart.

I was just thinking as you were talking, Ezra, about how I have a friend here in Vermont — and Vermont is not that big — who I’ve been trying to hang out with for over a year. It’s like we keep making these plans, and we keep breaking them or something comes and gets in the way. And we don’t even live that far apart — maybe 30 miles. It’s just something we haven’t been able to achieve, but we keep trying at it over and over again.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to pick up on something that was in that answer, which is the 30 miles away. And broadly, structure. You can talk about it as space. It can be a spatial structure, a temporal structure. When I talk about the group house, the point of the group house for me — which I loved that period of my life — is that I lived in, truly, a filthy house with three friends. And atmospheric hanging out — that they were just around, and their friends were around, and their partners were around, and sometimes my friends were around, and my partners were around — it just happened. It wasn’t something I had to do. It wasn’t something I had to put a bunch of effort into.

For most of human history, we lived more with extended family. We lived with clans. The atomization of this era is pretty unusual. I have a friend, Zarinah Agnew, who’s both a neuroscientist and works on community living arrangements. And something she talks about is whether you have set the default of your life towards community — and you take the problems that may come with that — the sink is dirty. Or you set the default of your life towards isolation, towards space.

And we’re in an era — and it’s an unusual era in human history — that we’ve really — a lot of us, at least — have really set the default against community towards the values of isolation, of having our own space. How do you think about that structural dimension? Do you think we’re in an era of a profound social mistake?

SHEILA LIMING: That is an interesting way to approach this subject, and it’s one I’m going to have to mull on a little bit here. But I think a lot of it stems from the expectation of private property and the expectation of what comes with private property, in terms of pride and privacy and distance and isolation that you get to choose when you want to be alone and when you want to shield yourself from society.

As I was researching for the book, I stumbled upon this Reddit thread. And it’s where people talk and post photos of these houses that they found on the internet that are amazing looking. And look, there’s no neighbors within like 40 miles or something like that. And I was really, really interested in that about what is that impulse towards thinking about that the dream is actually to achieve some sort of isolation where you would not have to interact with or even see other people if you didn’t want to.

And I think a lot of what it comes down to is fantasies of control — that it feels like we are more in control when we can say yes or no to certain kinds of interactions, whereas if we are living in close proximity with other people, we have to cede control. We have to cede control about whether the dishes are dirty in the sink and what things look like and how messy everything is. But that itself comes with its own rewards. So like you were saying, it reorients us towards other priorities — community, having those people in our lives, social situations and, yes, hanging out as well.

EZRA KLEIN: Anne Helen Petersen, who is a writer on Substack, had this really interesting post recently where she was writing about the dream a lot of us have of living near our friends. And this hit me really hard because for the past eight-ish years, both in D.C. and in S.F., I’ve lived near my closest friend, my best friend from my teenage years. And now I’m going to be moving away, which is a heartbreak.

But one thing she was getting at or looking at as people talk about the normalcy of this isolation is that it does have a pretty interesting and unusual class dimension. She spoke to a sociologist, Jess Calarco, who said that the average adult in the US lives only 18 miles from their mother, that 80 percent of US adults live less than a two-hour drive away. But if you have a college degree, or you have a graduate degree, you’re much more likely to live further away from home. If you’re a dual couple with advanced degrees, you’re very, very likely to live far from your family.

So there’s this way that as people get richer, they seem to get more mobile. They seem to atomize more. And in my experience knowing a lot of people like that, I think there’s a pretty complicated relationship with it — a feeling that you optimize for life in your 20s, and then you have kids, and you’re like, oh, hell. I have no help. I’m losing touch with people.

I’m curious how you thought about the class dimension of it. A lot of your book is also about the academic experience, which is distinctive here but is very itinerant. How did that play in?

SHEILA LIMING: Well, first, I’m a big fan of Anne Helen Petersen. And I saw that same Substack and read it as well because obviously I was interested in the issue. And I was interested in thinking about that as I was writing the book as well about how we prioritize or arrange our lives in such a way so as to prioritize or deprioritize the kinds of social arrangements that I’m talking about, and that includes you being able to get together with friends and hang out in relatively easy and accessible ways.

And I’m an academic, as you mentioned. And in the book, I talk a lot about the experience of being sort of forced to move all around the United States as I was working on building up towards that occupation and towards that job trajectory for myself. And I sort of didn’t realize that aspect of the job at the time. I think I’d still had this idea in my head that I was going to get my Ph.D., move back to the West Coast, and be located near my family, which did not happen. I now live about 2,300 miles away from my family.

And in thinking about the itinerant life that comes with academia, I think part of that relates to what you were just saying about the average American living within 18 miles, I think you said, to their families’ residences but the average American with a college degree living much further away. And I think part of that has to do with this sense of making the experience of a college education and the fruits of that college education, in terms of degrees or credentials — making it feel worth it by continuously chasing what we were told to expect was supposed to come out of that degree in the first place. And for some people, that’s just ever higher-paying jobs. And that means that you have to relocate far away from where you were raised to cities or to centers of industry where you can find those jobs.

But for other people, I think it’s more about continuing to move along this trail of residence after residence, and city after city, and place after place to see if you can get that thing that you once dreamed about when you were in a college class at 18 or 19 years old. And so for me, I talk in the book about having lived in a lot of different states over the past roughly 15 years of my life and how, for me, that has actually required me to develop certain social habits in order to reorient myself or adapt to a new place every time I get there because without that, I would tend towards the opposite, which is isolation and loneliness. And I know that about myself. And I know that about my own tendencies. So something I’ve really had to work on very conscientiously.

EZRA KLEIN: Something I’ve come to believe about that tracking kind of person you’re describing there is that it is optimized in a strange way for life in your 20s. Life right when you graduate college when you’re pretty free, you probably don’t have kids. You’re probably not married. Maybe you have a good amount of disposable income because your expenses aren’t that high. And the ability to live pretty autonomously and move around is really great.

And then, depending on what your life looks like — and this isn’t true for everybody. But at least for me and many people I know, get into your 30s, you have kids, and all of a sudden, you’re locked in to a certain degree to a lot of decisions you made at other points — your career, maybe the place in which you live, which is near your job. But it’s not set up for you to have a family at all. You do have a lot of responsibilities now.

You do need help. You do need thicker kinds of relationships that are there even when you don’t have a lot to give them, which I think is a very common experience for young parents. All of a sudden, you can’t give to your community and your friendships and your social life the way you once did. And when you stop doing that, a lot of things begin to, not evaporate, but it’s just not there. It’s not built for this phase of your life.

Kids and family weren’t a huge part of the book, even though I think of them as a pretty big part of hanging out. A lot of the true hanging out I’ve done is with family. So I’m curious how you think about that distinction between those phases of life.

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah, I think about it quite a lot, actually. So even though it’s not something that I deal with directly in the book, I would say it’s something that was humming along in the background for me as I was writing it. And one of the reasons perhaps why I don’t talk about family as much, even though I thank the members of my own family in the acknowledgments, is that I live very far away from mine.

The other thing that I was thinking about in terms of family is actually the sort of, I would say, porous nature of the way that we understand family relationships and the increasingly dynamic nature of the way that we look at family relationships because we tend sometimes to have narrow views of what constitutes a family. We think maybe first off in terms of the nuclear family units, which itself does feel or can feel a bit isolating, a bit small, a bit narrow. And that’s how we get that phenomenon, I think you were talking about, with parents in their 30s feeling like they’re locked into these little boxes that they created for themselves out of decisions that were made earlier along the way.

But I’m also interested in thinking about families in a larger, more dynamic sense. And I’m very grateful that when I moved here to Vermont, my partner Dave discovered that he had some family members who were living here. We didn’t think we knew anybody in Vermont. And all of a sudden, he found these people who are, I mean, barely related to him, technically speaking. They’re his second cousins. But they live close to us, and now I spend all my holidays with these people.

I was just hanging out with them on Sunday morning, watching their kids hunt eggs in the park. And they’re wonderful people. And how quickly they invited me into their life, even though I’m not related to them at all, and how quickly they brought my partner into their life too, even though their life up to this point had not included him. It was very generous and very gracious and very automatic. And now I really owe a lot of the hanging out that I do to them. So I’m very grateful for having them in my life.

EZRA KLEIN: I think there’s something really deep there. There’s very, very beautiful ideas around chosen family. And I know people who live in chosen families that are really beautiful, and I have elements of that around me myself. But there’s also something I think very important about social structures and family, where the element of choice is somewhat removed.

Something that you talk about quite a bit in the book — it’s one of my favorite threads — is how hanging out in this kind of deep occupation of time with others, it’s not always great. Sometimes you have conflicts. Sometimes you’re bored. And one of the things about family is that even when it’s not great, you do it again tomorrow, and you do it again next month.

The question of whether or not you had a great hang is not that important. It’s not that it doesn’t matter at all — and if it gets really bad, obviously things can change — but it exists a little bit separate to the point of distant family inviting you in, in a way maybe brand new friend acquaintances wouldn’t. It exists sort of separate from the almost tyranny of choice. Like, what is the best social interaction I could be having at this moment? If I’m not having it, how do I find a better one tomorrow?

How do you think about that question of choice and the structures that aren’t so much about choice in our social webs?

SHEILA LIMING: That’s a really important distinction you’re making. Families do have this kind of cyclicality and this longevity built into them, this idea that even if things aren’t perfect this time around, well, it’s OK. We’ll get another shot later on. We’ll come back together, and we’ll try again. And I think that’s really important. It is, as you say, very beautiful, too, and very generous because it does allow for this idea of second chances and third chances and chances maybe that even that exist beyond that.

And that’s not something that we always extend to our friendships. But one of the things I try to argue in the book is that I think we actually should. And I do talk a lot about experiences that I’ve had hanging out that are not ideal, that are uncomfortable, that are tense, that are problematic, that are sometimes even verging on what feels like threatening or scary or something like that. But I also talk about recovering from these situations and trying to find that cyclicality and that longevity, even in friendship, to keep things going.

Now, of course, what all this requires is time. And that’s the hardest thing about hanging out is that it does require time. We have to invest in relationships in order to make it work. And the more we invest, the easier the hanging out gets. But of course, that all has to start with having and taking time.

EZRA KLEIN: It also requires space. So we talked a few minutes ago about the common experience that I’ve had — I think a lot of people have had — of living in a group house when you’re younger. Obviously, families live together less intergenerationally in America than in many other places, although there are many, many intergenerational families, and at the very least, you often have parents and kids.

But then you get into your late 20s, your 30s, your 40s, and we really have a lot of single-family homes. We really have a lot of single-family zoning, for that matter. I know in the Bay Area of a good number of community houses or co-ops or things like that but not that many. So I’m curious about your reflections on that spatial question. It never comes up in your book as a choice for you — I doubt it really is in Vermont — to say, you know, I’d like hanging out to be just a more constant part of my life, so I’m going to move into a community that has 60 people in it and the houses are loosely connected, or there are eight people per house.

There’s a lot less choice in the kinds of living arrangements, spatially, than you might imagine a rich society built almost entirely around the idea of consumer choice and individual autonomy would have. And honestly, I find it puzzling because what we have doesn’t work that well. But there are very little options to try something else. I’m curious why you think that is.

SHEILA LIMING: Yes, I agree. There is very little choice. And when you see the alternatives when they come along, they are sometimes treated with derision in society, viewed as being strange or alternative or just not right in one way or another, which I think is extremely unfortunate.

I grew up in Seattle, which has a very big housing crisis these days where real estate is just astronomically expensive. And these are debates that are going on within the city of Seattle, especially with regards to old neighborhoods that are zoned for these small, quaint, charming single-family homes but could maybe be put to better use if there was a higher density of people being able to live in those neighborhoods.

And here in Vermont, there’s a similar situation. We have a housing crisis here in Vermont as well. So when I first moved here, and I was trying to find a place to live, and I started out living in a really, really dingy apartment while I was trying to figure out a more permanent situation for myself and my partner. And one of the things I looked into, actually, was cohousing. There are cohousing places here in Vermont. I was looking at a co-housing community in Bristol, Vermont for a while, which I was really attracted to for all of the reasons that you just cited and for all of the reasons that I talk about in the book, in “Hanging Out.”

EZRA KLEIN: What is a cohousing community?

SHEILA LIMING: A cohousing community is sort of like — you can imagine it’s kind of like condos. So there’s these structures or these condos that are built. Many of them are physically attached to each other. And you own your condo, but your condo itself is sort of small. And then within the community, there are shared resources like gardens. And there’s a social hall, and there’s a community kitchen, and things like that. So you sort of trade having a lot of private space for having access to these other shared public spaces that are then part of your living arrangement.

So I was interested in the idea. The problem, for me, was that it was just too far of a commute for me. And so now we’re back into the problem of distance again because I have to report to my job, which is in Burlington, and this was just too far for me to drive, unfortunately. I am grateful that where I ended up in Vermont, I do have really wonderful neighbors. And in building relationships with my neighbors, I feel like I’m getting closer to the kind of hanging out that I had envisioned when I started to look into those kinds of housing options.

EZRA KLEIN: Something that jogs for me as a memory: I remember when I was late in high school — probably a senior in high school — and was going to go to college next year. And I remember being told by enough older people in my life that I found it genuinely unnerving — I thought about it a lot — to enjoy these next four years. They’re going to be the best of your life. The best of your life.

I heard this so many times, it actually began to freak me out that I was about to have — this was going to be the peak. The peak was coming. It had a defined window and an end. I didn’t find college to be the best years of my life, by any means. But I have wondered quite a bit if one of the reasons people feel that way about it — one, there’s a lot of space and time for you. You don’t have that many responsibilities, and you have a lot of autonomy over your time. But also, there’s a lot of constant community. Some of it’s annoying. You don’t always like the people. The dorms are dirty. You can hear people in the next room.

But there is this way in which we have a tremendous cultural pressure on home ownership. I mean, the number of people I’ve known who are obsessed with buying a home, even though it’s clear to me that economically and in terms of their life, they don’t know where they want to be. They shouldn’t get a home, but they feel like that is a marker of adulthood.

If we have created a cultural pressure towards atomization that, in quiet ways, has just made a lot of people very unhappy, makes them look back on periods of their life that were more in community much more fondly. But at the same time, if you suggested to them they should live in a group house now in their 40s, they would look at you like you’re crazy. If you suggested to them they should be in a dormitory-style arrangement, even if they’re single, I mean, that would be a huge step back. That would be a regression, an immaturity.

There’s something about the way our cultural stories interact but also the way the unbelievably rich literature on social unhappiness and loneliness shows up that just seems like an obvious problem but that is not treated as one. We treat loneliness as a problem, but we don’t really treat the social conditions that give rise to it as worthy of any real revision.

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah, that’s exactly it. I think, in American culture in particular, privacy and private space are synonymous with pride. They are viewed as the basic ingredients for pride and that it’s difficult for you to achieve dignity or to feel proud of yourself if you lack them, which is problematic, of course, on many levels, and one being the epidemic of loneliness that you just talked about and which I talk about in the book, too.

And it makes me think of interactions that I have with the college students that I work at. I’m a college professor here in Burlington, Vermont. When new students show up on the campus in the fall, there’s often a period of discomfort and adjustment. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve had a new student, a freshman, in my office in the first week or second week of school crying because they’re struggling to make this adjustment to a more communal style of living that is less private than what they’re used to, maybe less luxurious as well, and also just has some new challenges associated with it.

I’ve coached a number of students through that change a bit, just of course telling them the things you tell them, which is like, don’t worry. It gets better. You’re going to get used to it. You’re going to discover fun people and things to do and stuff. And nine times out of 10, that’s exactly what happens. And the next time I see them again a month later, they have all these new friends, and they’re happy, and they’re excited, and they’re doing things, and the world is opening up to them.

So that period of adjustment usually resolves itself and goes away. And things end up being OK for them most times. But I’m interested in the discomfort that they experience there right away because I think you’re right. There is something about it that feels just anathema to the way we live in American culture.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: There’s a David Brooks essay — my colleague David Brooks — from The Atlantic from a couple of years ago that has been on my mind here. It’s called “The Nuclear Family Was a Mistake”.

SHEILA LIMING: Ah, yes.

EZRA KLEIN: And one of the things he says in that piece is that the nuclear family — this idea of the family with two parents, and 2.5 kids, and a white picket fence, and the house and the suburbs — that the period in which that was a norm, and a successful norm in particular, was very limited. He writes, “This wasn’t the way most humans lived during the tens of thousands of years before 1950, and it isn’t the way most humans have lived during the 55 years since 1965”.

So since 1965, mostly we’re not in nuclear families. Before 1950, we mostly were not. There’s been a kind of breakdown of the nuclear family that’s consistently treated as a policy problem and may be. But he writes, “Today, only a minority of American households are traditional two-parent nuclear families, and only one third of American individuals live in this kind of family. That 1950 to ’65 window was not normal. It was a freakish historical moment when all of society conspired, wittingly and not, to obscure the essential fragility of the nuclear family”.

And his argument in this piece is that we’ve become mentally committed and have built a lot of policy and a lot of culture around a norm that was, if it was ever normal, normal for a very, very short period of time. And that seems clearly true from the data he offers but also just incredibly weird. And so I wonder what you think of then as the norm we should have. When we talk about what people should be expecting in their own lives or understanding in their own lives, what would be a more realistic way to understand a baseline social existence?

SHEILA LIMING: I remember that essay by David Brooks, and it makes me think of a book on a similar topic by a colleague of mine, Sophie Lewis, which is called “Full Surrogacy Now”. In that book, Lewis talks about the family unit as a hostage situation, that there are certain compulsions and expectations that come with our life as part of a nuclear family unit that are actually impossible to satisfy. And part of what results from that is pressure, is strain, is anxiety, is these relationships that become, themselves, hard to maintain because the standards under which the relationships formed in the first place were not, themselves, very realistic and not sustainable.

So in that book and building off of Sophie Lewis’s arguments in it, I think that something comes closer to an ideal is something where the family structure is seen as a little bit more porous and open, as inviting to outsiders and to people beyond, of course, the immediate like structure of the home itself. And that’s part of what I really try to argue for in the book, which is hanging out with people outside of that immediate family cluster as a kind of release from the claustrophobia of the family environment.

I think we think back to the Covid pandemic, many of us will recall how difficult it became to live in relationships that we had even chosen or relationships that we really put a lot of love and care into when that was the only relationship that was available to us or the only people that we were able to actually interact with. And it became really, really hard. So if we continue to sort of enforce that as the standard of society — that kind of small-minded claustrophobic type relationship — then we are going to see similar sources of stress and strain.

And I think as a sort of antidote to that, hanging out can be used to open up the sphere of the family a little bit and put less pressure on everybody. One of the ideas that I talk about in the book for that reason is even hanging out with strangers, being able to exist in public space and talk to people who you don’t already know or don’t have an immediate relationship with.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to keep a class dimension to this. I haven’t read the Lewis book, which sounds very, very interesting. But a point Brooks makes, and a point I see, and something that when we talk about the nuclear family seems unambiguously true is that we have this ideal, as you just said, it creates stresses and expectations that are unrealistic. And richer people buy their way out of it. The way David puts it is, richer people basically buy extended family. They buy child care. They buy cleaning. They buy, to some degree, even friendship and activity.

And during the pandemic, we saw also a very intense version of that, as you had a lot of richer remote workers who could be at home and a lot of, quote, unquote “essential workers” who could be paid to take risks that others were not taking. So I’m curious about, for you, class and community and hanging out — how those things interact.

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah. In the book in the chapter where I talk about third spaces — borrowing this concept from the sociologist Ray Oldenburg — I talk about how third spaces, which are supposed to be those spaces that exist between home and work, are something that becomes increasingly difficult for one particular class, I think, to access. And I think that’s really the middle class. The middle class in America is particularly prone to some of the pressures that come with family life, in part because maybe perhaps they’re trying to emulate what they see from more privileged members of society.

Because you’re right, and Brooks is right here, too, that the rich find a way out of this by basically extending their family structures with the help of money. So they pay for child care, and they pay for cleaning help, and they pay for other people who become attached to the family unit and help the whole family unit run. But if you don’t have that money, then you are left with the expectations of what a family is supposed to look like without all the extra resources and all the extra help. And I think that’s a burden that falls very uniquely upon the middle class.

And then, of course, down at the bottom among ***working-class*** populations the United States, we actually see, I think, some of those more proximate family structures staying intact, where we see people living with or living closer to extended members of their family than perhaps we would among middle-class and upper-class people in the United States, too.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to talk to you about the age structure of this. I was pretty surprised by this recent study by Cigna that found that about almost twice as many adults aged 18 to 24 reported feeling lonely versus seniors aged 66 and older. So 79 percent of young adults and 41 percent of seniors. And by the way, 79 percent of young adults feeling lonely — I mean, that’s really bad. And you can attribute some of this to the pandemic. But this structure of young adults feeling lonelier than the elderly was consistent in pre-pandemic research, too.

So you teach college students, as you mentioned. I’m curious what you observe about how people in that age group, which I think are canonically and stereotypically understood as the most social, what kind of trouble they’re having socializing, not socializing — how you understand the particular loneliness epidemic among young adults.

SHEILA LIMING: Oh, they’re having a ton of trouble. And I think it’s, of course, partially related to the pandemic and the fact that the pandemic is not completely gone. But I think it’s also related to optics because we have far more ways now and many more mechanisms by which to see what hanging out and social life is supposed to look like for other people, which means we have far many more ways and tools for comparison with ourselves against those models that we see, whether that is on social media, when it’s on Instagram or Facebook or something like that, or whether it’s on television. I talk about reality TV in the book as being one way that we kind of eavesdrop on other people’s social lives. Or various mechanisms or whatever it happens to be, most of them which are attached to a digital interface.

And I think this is partially what makes hanging out hard for younger people. But at the same time, I also think it’s part of what makes the optics of hanging out just look more impossible — that even when it’s happening or even when you have access to it, it’s just more difficult to find your way into it.

And as an example, I think about what an average college classroom is like these days when I walk into the room before the start of class. And generally, when I walk into the room at the start of class, and there’s a lot of young people, and they’re getting ready to start class, it’s dead silent. And everybody’s staring at their phones. And I don’t blame them. And what they’re doing is they’re talking to people most of the time. They’re talking to someone who is somewhere else who is going to have a conversation with them, who’s going to talk with them about their day, who’s going to help them process whatever’s going on in their life.

And I don’t think it’s a lack of a realization that they could have the same conversation with the person sitting next to them. I think it’s more about a fear of the risk that comes from doing that — that there’s this kind of public exposure that’s going to happen, or you’re going to be judged in the act of trying to start a conversation with somebody you don’t already know yet.

EZRA KLEIN: Well, I think there’s a lot of places to go here. Let me pick this one, which is, do you buy the view that it is a substitution — digital social relationships? In some ways, social media was built off of the social graph. Originally, Facebook rolls out on college campuses. It’s your friends. Early Twitter takes office people, use it to make plans with each other. Because I feel like people forget this. And a lot of people are too young to remember it. But it used to be hard to text a lot of people at once. That was not an easy thing to do. Early texting didn’t really have that quality.

And I think the expectation was this was going to make socializing easier, bigger. You bring up the advent of Facebook parties at your own college where parties became more open to more people. You could go as long as you had Facebook. This was all supposed to make it easier to find your people and to be together in real life. And we don’t really seem to see that. So is your view that the issue is substitution, that people are doing it online instead of in real life? Or is your view that there’s been some kind of other atrophying or friction that has emerged?

SHEILA LIMING: I think part of it has to do with substitution, but I don’t think that’s the end of the story. We are certainly spending more time online than we used to, and we’re also becoming more comfortable with the tools that allow us to form relationships within those online spheres or within those channels. But it’s not simply about the substitution itself. I think it also has to do with the kinds of behaviors that we cultivate when we’re interacting online versus when we’re interacting in person.

And one of the behaviors I’m thinking about in particular is the power to curate who and how we interact, socially. So I’m thinking about the way that on the internet if you encounter someone who makes you feel uncomfortable, or if you encounter somebody who does not hold the same opinions as you or somebody who is acting in a way don’t approve of, it’s very easy to find a way to not have to interact with them. You can close the browser tab. You can exit the text message stream. You can block them, if we’re talking about social media, so that you don’t have to interact with them anymore.

But we don’t have the ability to do that when we are confronting each other face to face. And in fact, if we do try to do those things, sometimes there are real social consequences that happen. And I think that’s another level of how this is working. So it’s not purely about substitution, but it’s also about the way that we train our habits and our behaviors in virtual spaces in a way that doesn’t necessarily carry over to real life.

EZRA KLEIN: It reminds me of a distinction that Arthur Brooks, who has made this very unusual — in my lifetime — turn from head of a large right-wing think tank to happiness researcher and guru — but that he made to me that I also was quite wise between anger and contempt. And he said that anger is a constructive emotion often. It’s an emotion that wants resolution that — it’s going too far to say it brings people together. But when I’m angry with you, what I want to do is have some kind of interaction around that anger. Anger is relational.

And contempt is the opposite. Contempt is, I just can’t even. I’m just not going to deal with you. You’re beneath notice. You’re not part of my circle anymore. You’re not worth engaging with. And something I’ve thought many times in the years since he said that to me is that the dominant negative emotion online is contempt. And the dominant negative emotion in real interactions is anger. In real life, you get pissed off at a person. Then maybe you have a fight. I don’t mean a fist fight, hopefully.

But those things bring some kind of healing oftentimes or some kind of new space the two of you can occupy together, whereas online, I think you get used to saying, well, I’m done with you. I can’t with you. And I wonder how much, if you get more and more used to that online, it becomes your reaction to conflict in real life.

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah, I also think that we are quicker to get to the sort of precipice of contempt in online relationships than we are in person. Things develop faster in part because a lot of our guards are down and sometimes, we don’t feel like we have to be as careful about what we’re saying. And so we let it fly a little bit more. And then we arrive at that precipice that you were mentioning with contempt just a little bit more quickly. And then it does feel like the only route or the only way forward from that is to shut things down entirely. I think that’s behavior that we see quite a lot of online.

And in the book, I do try to talk about tension and conflict in relationships, especially in the context of friendships. And I think that that’s actually a sort of inevitable component of friendships. If you are friends with somebody long enough, you will eventually get into a fight with them. With me, it’ll be pretty quickly because I sometimes enjoy that sort of thing anyway.

But I talk in the conclusion of the book about a friend who I’ve had for a really long time — since I was in college. And I fight with this friend almost every time I see him, and yet we always come back. We always get back to a sort of base level. We always go back to caring about each other, to being close with each other and being still very present for each other in our lives, which reminds me, actually, of an idea from the essayist, Susan Sontag.

In her book, “Regarding the Pain of Others”, a long essay that she wrote, she talks about how compassion is an unstable emotion, meaning that it’s something that actually has to be exercised and trained over and over again because it fluctuates. You can feel compassion towards someone, and then it sort of ebbs away in the moment of anger. And then you have to kind of come back and find a way to reclaim it again.

So I guess in response to what you were mentioning about the divide between anger and contempt, I would think about compassion as something that helps to mitigate that divide.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to talk about another dimension of digital life, which isn’t social media but actually operates in the real world, which is the rise of wireless headphones, basically. And look, you can go back to the advent of the Walkman, which is, for people who don’t know, the original tape player produced by Sony. So walking around with headphones, which people worried would be antisocial even at the beginning, it’s a pretty recent invention in human history. For most of the time that human beings walked around, they didn’t have anything else they were listening to, and so it’s fairly easy to talk to people.

But even when I moved to D.C. in 2005 — and I was in my early 20s, I was single — I remember there being or feeling like there was much more open space to just talk to somebody who might be sitting at the table next to you. Or maybe there still is at bars. I’m not exactly sure. I’m not a big bar goer now. But it felt to me like the idea that you would walk up and talk to somebody you didn’t know in what you’re calling a third space, in a coffee shop, in a park, that kind of thing, it was live. And even if they wouldn’t want to talk to you, it wouldn’t be a particularly unusual thing that you did it.

And now — and I don’t exactly know — but I think it’s sort of the opposite. I mean, the idea that you would bother somebody while they have their AirPods in, it’s such a larger social ask, and it is overwhelming, so much clearer a signal. Now, maybe it’s better. I’m sure a lot of people got bothered when they didn’t want to. But the reduction in just normal neighborly interaction, just talking to somebody while you’re in the checkout line instead of listening to this podcast — which I hope is what you’re actually listening to in the checkout line — there’s got to be a pretty high cost. And it feels like a change that has happened, even in my lifetime.

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah, I think that the omnipresence of headphones has turned casual conversation into something of an intrusion, almost like the way that phone calls now work in our text-heavy culture as well. They feel like an intrusion sometimes.

I do think that there are certainly problematic sides to that behavior. And I just mention briefly in the book about a couple of friends that I have here in Vermont who I met while I was hiking. My partner and I were on top of a mountain and just struck up a conversation with them. And what’s interesting is in that moment, there was actually another couple that was there on that summit with us, and we had seen the other couple hiking before, but they were wearing earbuds while they were hiking together. And I thought that was really interesting because they were hiking side by side but not talking, each in their own world listening to their own headphone thing, despite the fact that, of course, they were together, and they were passing other people, and there were opportunities for conversation that would have sprung up.

But anyway, the people who didn’t have their headphones in became friends that me and my partner now hang out with. And I think that largely has to do with the fact that we took advantage of that moment when it was open. But headphones make that harder. They make that act of taking advantage feel like a risk, like something that might result in social censure of one kind or another.

I think of this often when I’m at the gym because the gym is now a sphere, of course, that is completely ruled by headphones. And every now and then, there’s a moment where I will try to have a conversation with someone because I’ll notice something. Or maybe I want to ask them a question about the machine they’ve been using or something like that. And there’s this whole song and dance that we have to go through where we like first realize we’re trying to communicate with each other and then take out our headphones and turn off what we’re listening to and then have the bit of conversation then go back to normal. And it’s really awkward.

So I know that headphone use developed in part as a response to the awkwardness of living in the modern world, where we are just assailed by sounds all the time that we don’t get to curate or control. I know that it developed in response to that. What’s interesting is that it also makes social interaction more awkward, too, because it makes it so that you have to take a step back in order to start that whole thing again once it starts running, and you realize that somebody’s wearing headphones.

EZRA KLEIN: I want to talk a bit about the changing attitude towards social risk and particularly for children because the kids getting to you in college, they were kids before that, and they were younger, and their parents had more control. And my producer, Annie Galvin, who was working with me on this episode, she made me aware of something that made me feel that either I have gone crazy or the world has gone crazy.

So there’s this conflict over sleepovers in social media apparently. And this hashtag, #NoSleepovers, started by a psychiatrist on TikTok caught on. And he says in this video, sleepovers often provide the right opportunity for kids to get into things that are way over their head, whether they want to or not. And I don’t know. I’m not saying every sleepover is great. But the level of trying to protect kids from any kind of socially awkward scenario, whereas I got into tons of stuff I shouldn’t have gotten into at sleepovers, including TP-ing houses which was probably not my finest moment as a person. But that was important for those relationships and for being a kid.

And a lot of parents seem to have defaulted into an almost terror of social awkwardness or misbehavior or danger for their children, which at least seems, to me, to be contributing to this much larger danger of terrible teen mental health and self harm. But I guess to hold this on the sleepovers thing, I’m curious as to what you think when you hear that — this fight over sleepovers.

SHEILA LIMING: Well, first of all, I was not privy to this conflict, so this is the first time I’m hearing of it. And I do find it kind of interesting. Awkwardness is part of our emotional landscape. There’s no real way to avoid it. It’s just something you were going to run into at various points in your life anyway. So I think the idea of shielding anybody — a kid or anybody else — from awkwardness is, itself, sort of silly because that awkwardness is just going to take place all the same under different circumstances.

But yeah, like you, you made me think back to childhood sleepovers briefly. You made me think back to summers when I was a kid when I would go to a sleepover at a friend’s house that would end up lasting, like, three days or something like that when we didn’t have school, and I would just continue to exist in this other family’s life for a few days. And my parents knew where I were, and they were OK with it. And vise versa. It would happen at our house, too.

But I do think of these sort of improvisational behavior that resulted at those sleepovers, none of which was dangerous enough, I think, to really count against us in the long run, but a lot of which I think was formative for the relationships that I had with my friends at that age and also for the person that I was working on becoming, which is a slightly more autonomous individual as I was growing up and aging and everything. So the risks of sleepovers, that’s an interesting subject to me, and it’s not one I had been exposed to until now.

EZRA KLEIN: But risk is interestingly a big part of your book. I would say that an unusual number of the stories, given what I would have expected, involve some level of risk. There’s a story on a New Year’s Eve where you fall in with a bunch of strangers, and you’re going bar to bar and then eventually to a house party. And you realize at the end, you’re somewhere maybe you shouldn’t be, or at least you don’t know how it’s going to turn out. And it turns out OK, but there is a real element of fear there.

You talk about an academic conference where a more established academic puts you — let’s put it this way — in a situation he shouldn’t have and tries to do you some, I think, reputational harm. There’s a story about almost falling off a mountain and dying. And even when we talked about AirPods — and a lot of people didn’t want random guys coming and hitting on them or random people coming and talking to them.

So there is this interesting way in which the downside of a more openly social and spontaneous life is a fair amount of risk and even sometimes real harm. I’m curious how you think about that.

SHEILA LIMING: Well, I’m not sure about the real harm part. And that’s something that I do try to explore in the book is thinking about what do we fear when we are afraid of these types of risks? What are what are we concerned is going to happen?

And what I conclude, at least in many cases, is that the risks themselves are pretty minimal. Now, sometimes we’re talking about real bodily harm or risks, but I think those are in pretty extreme examples and cases. And they’re probably more linked to the fears that we have partially developed from the stories we’ve heard and maybe even from the media we’ve consumed than they are from personal experience.

I think when we’re really talking about social risks, what we’re talking about are pretty minimal things like momentary rejection or feeling like we’re not included in something, or feeling like we don’t get to participate or come along with something. And those are things that can certainly hurt in the moment, but they are also things that we get over if we simply just try again and put ourselves out there once again. They’re experiences that I would say don’t necessarily need to last all the time or to do us permanent harm. I think sometimes what we’re afraid of is that they might, but in the long run, that happens pretty rarely, I think.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

EZRA KLEIN: One of the chapters is about hanging out at work. And I think that the story of that chapter is both really important for the book and a little bit distinctive to your kind of work. It’s about academic conferences. So I wanted to talk a bit more about the workplace because for a lot of people, that is the majority of hanging out they do, the place where they most often see the same people repeatedly in an atmospheric way, work together on tasks, have some small talk, occasionally go out for a drink after work. A lot of that was disrupted profoundly by the pandemic in ways that many people like having remote work. And also, there does seem to be a cost in loneliness and not building the kind of deep and collaborative and friendly relationships people have at work.

I think it’s interesting that a lot of the major media representations of hanging out, they take place in workplaces like “The Office” or “Parks and Rec.”

How do you think about the workplace and the good and the bad of that being such a central site of socializing?

SHEILA LIMING: Gosh I miss small talk at work. It’s not something I get to experience very often these days anymore because of the constraints that were introduced to office work during the pandemic have not really left us. We’re still living with the residue of a lot of that, I think. So during the pandemic, obviously, workplace culture — the ability to just kind of like gather informally and talk to people around a coffee maker, around a printer or something like that — was certainly curtailed. We didn’t have those same opportunities. Many of us were working remotely, and we couldn’t have that casual small talk that helps to sustain relationships in the workplace.

But recently, I was in Pittsburgh, where I was visiting with a friend who’s also a former student of mine, somebody I taught when I worked at the University of North Dakota where I was before I moved out here to Vermont. And this student, who’s now in her late 20s and has a job and everything, last time I’d been talking to her, she had been mentioning that she didn’t love the job. She loved the work but was sort of finding her way into the job. It was a little hard.

And so this time when I was talking to her — this is about two years later — and I asked her how the job was going. She’s still in the same place. And she said, oh, it’s so great because I made friends at work. And now I have these people that I know I can go in and I’ll see pretty regularly. And I’ll talk to them. And that has enhanced the quality of the work that I’m doing on a daily basis. And I think that’s true for so many of us.

But what makes it difficult is that the arrangements of work have really shifted. They shifted during the pandemic, of course, and then they never really shifted back, at least not entirely. There’s been that ongoing debate over getting workers back into the physical workplace and having them use the space of the office versus those who would like more autonomy and the ability to work from home. But at the same time, too, one thing that has happened as a result of that debate and that ongoing discussion about working conditions is that hours and schedules have shifted. So some people use their physical workspace, but they don’t use it all the time, or they don’t use it consistently, or they use it for a few hours and then they leave, or only on certain days of the week.

And with all that inconsistency, it’s really difficult to develop work relationships. It’s hard to have that small talk and those casual interactions. And it’s hard to just run into people in the hallway. That’s something that I’m still experiencing at my workplace, even though we are back to full instruction on campus, and things are sort of back to normal in that sense.

EZRA KLEIN: I do wonder how big the cost of that is. So when we talk about work relationships, it’s easy to hold to that conceptual box. But when I think about my own life — I moved to D.C. when I was 21 — the people I got to know were my, functionally, cubicle mates at The American Prospect. We used to go out to the Black Rooster, which was a nearby bar, almost every day, which I’m not saying was the healthiest behavior. They became my good friends. And through them, I became friends with their friends who did not work with me. I then had this sort of sprawling network of friends in D.C. who I loved and who I love. It’s through them that I met my now wife. And so things that begin as work friendships don’t always stay there. I mean, that is really porous. You get to know somebody at work, and then you get to know their friends when you come to watch a football game at their house on the weekend.

And there’s a lot that is good about remote work. I work remotely now, and I actually like it quite a bit. But I worry that given how bad isolation and how many decisions — to go back to the points we were talking about at the beginning of the conversation — we’ve made towards atomization, to atomize our work lives too, is in a world where we’re already seeing really, really profound consequences of lonesomeness. I mean, that might be a bigger trauma or a bigger social cost than I wonder if we realize.

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah. In this way, I would say that’s the issue of working in offices or on site. Actually compares to the issue we were talking about earlier with headphones. There are certain pros, and the pros include more autonomy, a little bit more control, the ability to curate what one experiences in certain situations. But then there are cons. And the cons are loneliness, lack of attachment to the social world around you. And sometimes I think that can manifest, too, as a lack of attachment to one’s own job or feeling that they’re not connected to something bigger, that they’re merely just kind of toiling away by themselves in isolation. And that is a very alienating feeling.

And I think about that a lot, too. My partner these days is full remote and works from home. And when I come home from campus, and I talk to him, I see what his workday has been like in his energy level when he sees me come in the door, and he’s sort of like an excited puppy, and he wants to talk about everything that’s happened during the day because he hasn’t had the ability to do that with anybody.

And I worry about the social consequences of that, too. And I also worry about our ongoing connection and investment in our jobs, particularly in the companies that we’re working for, as a result of that.

EZRA KLEIN: I think across a lot of the domains we’re talking about, what you’re describing is a choice we often make away from short-term annoyances. In the short term, your family and living with other people can be kind of annoying. In the short term, having a lot of people around you at work can be kind of annoying. In the short term, there’s all kinds of things about social relationships that are annoying. In the short term, having strangers interrupt you while you’re on the street or in the checkout line can be kind of annoying.

And one of the great things about a society with a lot of choice and technological possibility is we’re really good at getting rid of annoyances. And when somebody gives you an opportunity to get rid of something that is routinely annoying, you typically take it. But when you begin to remove so much of the friction of life, you end up robbing yourself of experiences that require a fair amount of annoyance to get to something deeper. I think family is probably the best example. That’s not that I find my family annoying. You’re all wonderful.

But there’s a lot in our social lives that does work like that, a lot in every relationship that works like that. I guess I’d like to hear you talk about that tradeoff a bit more because it is present in your book. I mean, it’s something that was unexpectedly there, at least for me. And I wonder how much you understand the underlying dynamic of this as being about we keep trading off short-term comfort for long-term meaninglessness or emptiness.

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah, that’s a big part of it. I think you’re right in thinking or in describing it as a kind of tradeoff that we opt for short-term — or we might even think of it as instant or close-to-instant gratification — at the cost of what we can achieve in the long term. And I would argue that hanging out is all about the long term. It is about crafting relationships, putting time and energy and investment into relationships so that that kind of social interaction can come to us more easily and without that kind of burden that, well, we have to make this right because this might be our only chance that we get to try to do this for a year or multiple years or whatever it happens to be.

So it’s about developing that musculature so that it’s easier to get back into the moment and back into the behavior itself, which is a long-term process. And it’s not something that can be accomplished instantly or in the short term. Psychological studies have taught us over the years that when people are very, very distracted, they tend to make less good decisions. They tend to opt for short-term rewards instead of long-term rewards. And I think that’s part of what we see in contemporary society is that with a lot of distraction and stimulus and constant inputs, we are often driven to opt for those short-term rewards, even sometimes at the cost of what we might achieve in the long run.

EZRA KLEIN: I wanted to prompt you to tell a story that you tell in the book that moved me quite a bit, which is a little bit of a strange story because it isn’t about hanging out with another person in person. But can you talk a bit about the letters the Finnish author, Tove Jansson, wrote to her friend during World War II — what the context for them was, what they were like, and what they did?

SHEILA LIMING: Absolutely. I’m quite obsessed with Tove Jansson, with her writing, with her art. I’ve never read a book by her that didn’t completely change my worldview or my life, and I’m just really impressed by her intellect. But I talk in the book about her letters that she wrote to a friend named Eva Konikova over a period of really about eight years while the two had been separated as the result of incidents relating to World War II.

So Eva Konikova was of Jewish extraction. She and her family ended up fleeing Finland, which was sort of experiencing a lot of the turmoil of World War II during that moment. And Konikova and her family relocated to the United States. Tove Jansson, who had known Eva Konikova through their mutual art and creativity, was forced to keep in contact with her friend through letters.

And about two years ago or maybe about a year and a half ago — I can’t even recall — I started reading this collection of letters which is just really, really stirring and beautiful. Wonderful writing from Tove Jansson. But just shockingly intimate the way their relationship forms on the page but also the way their relationship sort of stays in motion and stays current through the act of letter writing.

Now, what’s especially interesting about this whole thing is that on both sides, Tove Jansson and Eva Konikova were often not receiving each other’s letters. So they were writing them to each other constantly. Sometimes Tove was writing to Eva Konikova in the United States about every single day, but she wasn’t always receiving replies back. And so the letters are not necessarily current in the way where they’re like updating each other on changes on their lives and things like that. They’re sort of more like these diary entries from the letter writer who’s sort of speaking into a vacuum. They don’t know when they’re going to hear back from the other person, and they don’t know what’s going on with the other person.

There’s a while when Tove Jansson doesn’t even know if Eva Konikova is still alive, but she keeps writing these letters to her. And she has these very, very intimate ways of keeping her memory with her, of talking about walking through the streets of Helsinki and imagining that her friend is by her side. And then eventually, after years and years of correspondence and a very, very long separation, they did eventually reunite and got to see each other again after that long period.

EZRA KLEIN: One of the things that story made me think about is the possibility or the experience, perhaps, of hanging out with another person alone. So I’ve always been jealous of people who were in more letter-writing cultures. When you go back and read old books about any figure, you read these beautiful letters, these amazing acts of self processing. Writing a letter to somebody else does, in this weird way, seem like hanging out alone because you have this imagined audience, and so you talk as if to them, but you have this focus of attention for yourself.

And I always wonder what biographies of figures from our era are going to be like. It’s going to be this endless, ‘And Elon Musk put a poop emoji in the text thread’ to so and so. But a couple months ago or over the summer, I broke my hand. And all of a sudden, I couldn’t really text. And so I started communicating with some friends and family through voice notes. And they got long. And it turned out lots of people are doing this before me. And I’m an elder millennial and only figured this out very late.

But I was really struck by how intimate that experience was because you’d sit there and record for 5 or 10 or 15 or 20 minutes, something about your life and your thoughts. And it is this weirdly deep experience. And then you would give the other person the attention when they brought that back to you. And it was solitary, but it was also communal. So I’m curious for your thoughts about what are the structures or mediums in which we hang out productively or intimately with another person alone? What kinds of things give rise to that? And then what kinds maybe don’t?

SHEILA LIMING: Yeah, writing is certainly one of those channels. Writing is the act of trying to create a record of your understanding of something. And that is true of a letter as much as it’s true of a book, or a poem, or any other form of writing. The difference, of course, with the letter is that you presume you have some kind of very specific audience that you’re writing for.

But with the example that I brought up with Tove Jansson, that audience was very, very far removed, and she had no idea when the audience was even going to receive and read the letters. So it did become, I think, this kind of act of record keeping, of thinking about what was going on with her personally, of responding to what was going on with the war, processing those events, processing a lot of trauma and struggle that came out of the war, too, and then doing it for the sake that, well, eventually, somebody else may be able to read this and join in the processing with me so that we can do that together.

And I think that’s part of what we do when we hang out in these more intimate scenarios, one on one, as we try to process things together and we bring someone in to that work with us. I grew up in the 1990s, which was really the telephone generation for teenagers my age at that time. And I think about how much time I used to spend on the telephone at that age. I was lucky enough that I had my private line that my parents got me, which was like a rite of passage for teenagers at the time period because we didn’t have cell phones. So I had my private house line, and I used to have four, five, six-hour-long conversations with people on the telephone back then, which was all about getting to know somebody and having them help me process something, whether that was related to relationship turmoil or friendship issues or stress at school or whatever it was.

And I think there’s some real value in that, but it’s increasingly more difficult to achieve. I think when we interact in those intimate scenarios now, we do so through shorter little bursts. We take little bites of that intimacy, but we’re not necessarily doing it in long sprints maybe like we did back in the day when I was having five-hour telephone conversations.

EZRA KLEIN: I really feel that too. I really like the telephone. It seems to be something that marks you as older now. And I was struck when the pandemic happened and so much moved to Zoom that a lot of things that would have once been telephone calls moved to Zoom, too. And maybe this was just me, but I found it was harder to achieve intimacy there. Something about seeing the other person a little bit blurry, their reactions a little bit delayed. People talk about Zoom fatigue. Eventually, I just stopped doing that, stopped having the camera on.

And it’s interesting because I see a version of it in the podcast, too. If we could be in person today, that would be the best thing. There is a channel of information and intimacy and connection you get in person with somebody. But if I can’t be, I won’t put on the camera because I think it’s actually deeper to not have that distraction. Somehow, seeing somebody digitally is worse than not seeing them, even if seeing them in person is better than seeing them digitally or being on the phone.

One, I’m curious if any of that connects for you, but two, why you think maybe the phone gives rise to an intimacy that maybe texting doesn’t or some other mediums don’t.

SHEILA LIMING: Well, I think there’s a lot of intimacy contained in voice itself. We hear these fluctuations in somebody’s emotional state as we listen to their voice and we hear them doing that work of processing that I was talking about in one way or another when we talk to them on the phone. So I think that’s part of it. But you’re right. There is a kind of distraction that comes with the visual elements.

And at the beginning of the pandemic, I, like you and so many people, I was excited about being able to use the Zoom technology to maybe check in with people I didn’t get to talk to too often and see how they were doing and see things about their life. But there was, often, I noticed, a kind of stilted quality to that kind of interaction along with the sort of expectation about how much time it was supposed to take.

Zoom meetings — I don’t know if you guys recall. If you had the free version, it came with a sort of timer where you couldn’t meet for — I think it was 40 minutes that it would cut off at. And then if you had the version that you were paying for, of course you could go longer. But I remember that affecting some of those interactions that I had with people in the early days of the pandemic, thinking about that timer counting down but also, on the reverse side, the expectation that the whole time had to be filled as well because it’s like, well, if we signed up after 32 minutes, then that means it wasn’t as good of a hangout or something as some kind of commentary on the relationship.

So I think the visual element combined with the digital infrastructure that created the visual element in the first place did put some added pressure on that form of interaction and the intimacy that would come from it. By contrast, the phone still feels so long form — is a way to think of it in writing terminology. It feels so open ended, that there’s less structure to how a call has to work, how long it has to last. And of course, now that we have the ability to move around while we’re talking on the phone too, there’s this more like free-form and free-range quality to it that gives it that added dimension of intimacy.

EZRA KLEIN: I think it’s a good place to end. As always, a final question. What are three books you would recommend to the audience?

SHEILA LIMING: OK, I’m prepared. I have three, and they’re all relatively recent but very different in terms of contents.

So my first recommendation is a book by Teju Cole. It’s called “Black Paper”, and it’s actually a collection of articles and essays by Teju Cole, combined with some lectures. But it’s the lectures I’m really into. The book was published in 2021. And the lectures that are adapted and included in it are from 2019. That’s when he gave these lectures publicly. But they’re really wonderful. They’re quite beautiful. And in a number of lectures, he’s thinking about concepts like ethics in the modern world. And there was a moment in one of the lectures where I noticed him talking about ethical sensibilities, which he argues require periodic exercise. And that just reminded me of thinking about hanging out. So that’s my first recommendation from Teju Cole.

My second recommendation is a very difficult book but worth it if you have the stamina. It is a book by Lauren Berlant, the famous critic and theorist who unfortunately passed away just recently. And this was published posthumously in 2022 . The title of it is “On the Inconvenience of Other People”. And in that book, Lauren Berlant, from a philosophical angle, basically tries to unpack the phrase from Sarte that hell is other people — and thinking about that phrase through the lens of inconvenience. And one of the things that Berlant argues very eloquently is that inconvenience is, itself, political because it registers along this spectrum of political affects and feelings. But it also invites an awareness of political expectations, rights, privileges, freedoms, et cetera.

And then the third book is lighter reading but still very wonderful and very fun, which is a novel called “The Hare” by Melanie Finn, a Vermont writer. Published in 2021 by the wonderful small press out of Columbus, Ohio called Two Dollar Radio. And this book is basically a feminist Gothic thriller. It is super fun. It’s very dark. It’s gorgeously written, and it was on my mind because I’m actually teaching it in a class this week. So I get to reread it. I read it a couple of years ago when it came out. Now I’m rereading it again.

EZRA KLEIN: Sheila Liming, thank you very much.

SHEILA LIMING: Thank you, Ezra.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

This episode of “The Ezra Klein Show” is produced by Annie Galvin with Jeff Geld, Roge Karma 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 is by Shannon Busta. The executive producer of New York Times Opinion Audio is Annie-Rose Strasser. And special thanks to Sonia Herrero and Kristina Samulewski.

**Load-Date:** April 18, 2023

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[***Wong Ping’s Candy-Colored, Taboo-Smashing World; Art Review***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63FP-RWK1-DXY4-X3R4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 25, 2021 Wednesday 11:29 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1063 words

**Byline:** Dawn Chan

**Highlight:** His animations make for uncomfortable viewing in an exhibition at the New Museum. But fixating on their shock value misses the point.

**Body**

His animations make for uncomfortable viewing in an exhibition at the New Museum. But fixating on their shock value misses the point.

Wong Ping’s animations give us a glimpse into a strange inner world — a world of hapless and depraved characters caught in a sequence of surreal plot twists.

The New Museum show “[*Wong Ping: Your Silent Neighbor*](https://www.newmuseum.org/exhibitions/view/wong-ping-your-silent-neighbor),” through Oct. 3, features six of this Hong Kong artist’s engaging animated works, which started turning up in prestigious exhibitions worldwide after he left a tedious postproduction job in TV and founded Wong Ping Animation Lab in 2014.

With his deliberately crude creations, Wong seems determined to spurn the polished world of high-end TV. His characters are built from basic geometric forms. Scenes are rendered in cyans, reds and lime greens that will unleash memories (if you have them, and I do) of “surfing the web” on dial-up internet. But even if they look childishly simple, the videos are very adult. Adult because they’re obscene. Adult because they’re world-weary.

Fate repeatedly washes people to sea and spits them back on shore in these animations. Their rapid-fire plot reversals can make you feel as though you’re watching something between a stoner movie and the whirl of pixelated cherries across a video slot-machine screen.

The protagonist in “Wong Ping’s Fables 2” (2019) is an anthropomorphic bull who accidentally impales a cop to death at a political protest and is then sexually assaulted in prison. He also uses his time behind bars to write a Ph.D. dissertation on the immorality of slow-cooked beef. Later, out of prison and penniless, he sells the jeans off his body. Surprise! They go for good money. Ripped jeans are chic, turns out. Soon, he builds a fashion empire and becomes one of Hong Kong’s richest animals. And that’s not even the first half of the plot.

Wong’s show deserves attention — and not just because the works are funny. Their NC-17 content is hard to overlook, and may be hard for some to stomach. Still, fixating on their shock value misses the point. With their sly humor, the works, in the end, are tragicomedies. They’re full of characters trapped by quirks and perversions, then also buffeted by forces beyond their control.

The videos’ somber voice-overs do a lot to set the tone. Wong’s first-person male narrators hark back to the lonely, watchful detectives of Hong Kong’s neo-noir films, for whom all manner of shock and gore was just another day on the job. Even flat-out helplessness is described with stoicism. In “Jungle of Desire” (2015), the narrator, an impotent and badly paid animator, watches as his wife becomes a sex worker who receives her clients at home. He tries to stay outside and give her space, but Hong Kong’s public spaces won’t cooperate. They’re full of hostile architecture (“spiky things”) and people who wake anyone sleeping in a park. So the main character ends up hiding in a closet at home while his wife’s clients stop by.

Often, Wong’s videos treat women with fascination and revulsion. There’s a puerile focus on their body parts: breasts, varicose veins, feet. This might not sound exactly like high-priority viewing to you, especially as #MeToo has renewed scrutiny of the disproportionate airtime and shelf-space given to tales of straight male desire. Perhaps you’ll be more inclined to see these works if I add that they’re not quite about a power imbalance between a lecherous man and helpless woman. If there’s a power imbalance here, it’s between people and the realities overwhelming them. Stagnant wages. Corrupt law enforcement. The loneliness of screens and devices.

Political anxieties hover at the show’s edge like a ghost barely acknowledged by the living. In “An Emo Nose” (2015), a man’s nose lengthens when it senses “negative energy.” To placate it, the man stops talking politics and gives his nose access to sex and ice cream. (In this scene, the petals of the flower on Hong Kong’s flag wilt and fall.) Elsewhere, the main character in “Who’s the Daddy” (2017) mistakes a dating app for one to help him find friends of a similar political stripe.

At many moments, Wong’s videos had me thinking back to the artist Mike Kelley and his friends, whose messy abject work took the art world by storm several decades ago. Kelley, [*who died in 2012*](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/02/arts/design/mike-kelley-influential-american-artist-dies-at-57.html), knew how to walk the line between sadness and provocation, whether he was exhibiting torn stuffed animals or showing an artwork by the serial killer John Wayne Gacy in a project about artists and criminality. Granted, Kelley’s art was often set against the backdrop of American ***working-class*** suburbs, while Wong’s work unfolds across urban Hong Kong. But as Kelley did to great effect, Wong seems to mine his own sense of inadequacy and depravity to get at something bigger: how sociopolitical realities fuel the disappointments of grown-up boys who can’t be men.

Even the exhibition design of “Wong Ping: Silent Neighbor” seems to partly channel Kelley, who had a thing for ratty fabric, knitted afghans and plush toys. The main room of Wong’s show — which was organized by Gary Carrion-Murayari with Francesca Altamura, a former curatorial assistant — has a central mound of beanbag chairs and a shag-carpeted platform. It’s where visitors can recline while watching Wong’s animations on surrounding screens.

There’s no illusion of cool sterility to this seating arrangement, which feels significant given how often Wong’s animations allude to hygiene, the body and public space. Take the germ-conscious city dwellers in “The Other Side” (2015), who use only their lower bodies to push through turnstiles. They’d surely view beanbag chairs with some hesitation. You might, too, as a visitor to this show. If you stand, you’ll have to let the discomfort of your stance compound the discomfort induced by these artworks. Or you’ll go for it: You’ll hunker down on a soft patch of fabric, and accept a full-body immersion into Wong Ping’s weird debased world.

Wong Ping: Your Silent Neighbor

Through Oct. 3 at the New Museum, 235 Bowery, Manhattan. (212) 219-1222, [*newmuseum.org*](https://www.newmuseum.org/).

PHOTOS: From top: the main room of “Wong Ping: Your Silent Neighbor” at the New Museum; an installation view of “An Emo Nose” (2015); another of “The Other Side” (2015); a still from “Jungle of Desire” (2015). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY DARIO LASAGNI/NEW MUSEUM; WONG PING; EDOUARD MALINGUE GALLERY AND TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY)

**Load-Date:** August 27, 2021

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[***Unloading On Trump, To a Point***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y1-59T1-JBG3-64XP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 7, 2022 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1685 words

**Byline:** By Jennifer Szalai

**Body**

In ''One Damn Thing After Another,'' the former attorney general suggests that Republicans move past Donald Trump and his ''madcap rhetoric,'' but saves his harshest words for the former president's critics.

ONE DAMN THING AFTER ANOTHERMemoirs of an Attorney GeneralBy William P. BarrIllustrated. 595 pages. William Morrow/HarperCollins Publishers. $35.

''It was a lie,'' the former attorney general William P. Barr writes early on in his new book -- a ''fabrication'' that ''was repeated and amplified in media coverage throughout the election and is still repeated.'' Barr isn't referring in this instance to Donald Trump's insistent lie about ''massive election fraud'' in 2020, but to an event that happened nearly 30 years earlier, when Barr was doing his first tour as the attorney general, for President George H.W. Bush. The media misleadingly described Bush marveling at a supermarket scanner as if he had never encountered the technology before.

The suggestion that the first President Bush was some elitist patrician who didn't know his way around a modern grocery store continues to rankle Barr three decades later. He parses the event in minute detail in ''One Damn Thing After Another,'' letting loose an extravagant pique that makes sense when you realize that being seen as out of touch is the kiss of death for establishment conservatives, especially now, when right-wing populism is ascendant.

Barr takes care in this book to present his childhood as more hardscrabble than a rarefied prep school education and an apartment on New York City's Riverside Drive would have anyone believe. In Barr's telling, it's Democrats who are invariably the ''smug elites,'' while Republicans are the true defenders of ''ordinary middle- and ***working-class*** Americans.''

''One Damn Thing After Another'' is an intemperate culture-war treatise smuggled into a lawyer's memoir: a seemingly sober recitation of events that's periodically interrupted by seething tirades about ''militant secularism'' and a ''Maoist'' American left. He compares Trump's opponents to ''guerrillas engaged in a war to cripple a duly elected government'' and calls the pandemic restrictions adopted by some states the most ''onerous denial of civil liberties'' in American history, second only to slavery.

Barr famously resigned as attorney general in December 2020, after he failed to find any evidence of substantial voter fraud, despite what he chronicles here as his assiduous efforts to ''look into it.'' (He calls allegations about voting machines ''an idiotic theory that had no basis in reality.'') He ends his book by describing Trump's postelection behavior as ''puerile,'' perhaps even ''dangerous.'' Still, as much as Barr was ''disgusted'' by the rampage on the Capitol, he's ''under no illusion about who is responsible for dividing the country, embittering our politics and weakening and demoralizing our nation,'' he writes. ''It is the progressive Left and their increasingly totalitarian ideals.''

Such eruptions go a long way toward explaining why he was willing to join the Trump administration in the first place, when the buttoned-up Barr, comfortably ensconced in retirement and the Republican old guard, didn't quite fit the mold of those upstarts hoping to gain some capital (political or otherwise) by hitching themselves to the Trump train. (Barr had initially supported his former boss's son, Jeb ''please clap'' Bush, in the primaries.) You might also wonder how Trump, an ostentatious, thrice-married reality television star who bragged about grabbing women's genitals, could have been anything but repellent to Barr, a staunch Roman Catholic whose idea of a good time is playing the bagpipes.

But the two men happened to share one thing in common: a maximalist view of presidential power. ''I agreed to join the besieged Trump administration as it careened toward a constitutional crisis,'' Barr writes. He had already written an unsolicited memo voicing his skepticism about the Mueller investigation into the 2016 election, which Barr believed was consuming President Trump's attention and distracting him from all the important work he would otherwise be eager to do.

Barr doesn't make much of an effort in this book to counter assertions by his critics that even before reading the Mueller report he had mostly made up his mind. Barr says the investigation was ''not so different from a witch hunt,'' and the question of whether the Trump campaign sought to benefit from Russian interference in the election was ''manufactured,'' ''phony,'' ''bogus'': ''Russiagate specifically, and the resistance generally,'' he writes, ''were mendacious and fraudulent attempts to invalidate the legitimate election of an American President.''

A number of chapters are devoted to issues that Barr says are crucial to him, including ''taking on big tech'' and ''securing religious liberty'' (''the civil rights issue of our time''). A chapter titled ''Bringing Justice to Violent Predators'' offers Barr's thoughts on the death penalty -- he thinks it's good, and his Justice Department rushed to execute 13 federal inmates in the seven months before Trump left office. As a point of comparison, the federal government had executed a total of four people in the preceding 60 years.

Barr offers an extended apologia that tries to square his position on putting people to death with his religious faith. Pope Francis's revision of the Catholic Church's Catechism, denouncing the death penalty as ''inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person,'' sends Barr into a paroxysm of hairsplitting: ''The term inadmissible has no established meaning in moral theology, and is certainly too vague and indirect to be read as an attempt to extinguish this vast body of established teaching, even assuming it could be.''

This is a pattern in Barr's book: He nitpicks his way to desired conclusions by carefully navigating a lawyerly path around finely drawn distinctions, all the while lobbing bomblets at anyone he defines as an enemy. ''For all his urbane affect, Obama was still the left-wing agitator who had patiently steered the Democratic Party toward an illiberal, identity-obsessed progressivism,'' Barr writes; no doubt actual ''left-wing agitators,'' who have regularly denounced Obama for centrism, would like to have a word.

Barr's version of Trump, meanwhile, contains multitudes: The former president may have ''an imprecise and discursive speaking style,'' even a tendency for ''madcap rhetoric,'' but Barr also believes Trump has ''a deep intuitive appreciation of the importance of religion to the health of our nation.'' Barr muses that ''the country would have benefited and likely seen more of the constructive, problem-solving style of government that President Trump previewed on election night,'' if only he ''had been met by a modicum of good faith on the other side.''

By ''good faith'' Barr is perhaps imagining something like his own generous interpretations of Trump's behavior, which he goes to great and often tortuous lengths to rationalize in his book. When Barr learned about the consequential phone call between Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky, who was then Ukraine's President-elect, Barr said he argued for the swift release of the transcript -- largely because it showed that Trump, according to Barr, had ultimately done nothing wrong on the call.

Yes, Barr allows, telling Zelensky that American military aid was conditional on a Ukrainian investigation of the Bidens was ''foolish,'' but ''a quid pro quo is inherent in almost all diplomacy.'' Besides, even if such an investigation into the president's opponent would have yielded ''political benefits'' for Trump, it ''would also arguably advance America's anticorruption agenda,'' Barr says. Making room for such intricate rhetorical contortions is partly why this book is nearly 600 pages long.

There are also numerous places where Barr offers what looks at first to be a blizzard of detail but nevertheless makes some strange omissions. He devotes page upon page to the question of voter fraud, which he repeatedly declares to be a real threat, with nary a word about voter suppression. He characterizes the inspector general's report on the Mueller investigation as ''damning'' while neglecting to discuss that the same inspector general's report declared that the F.B.I. had adequate reason to investigate ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. Barr also stays mum on the fact that a bipartisan report from the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee concluded the same thing.

By the end of ''One Damn Thing After Another,'' it's clear that Barr has something else in common with Trump -- a shrewd ability to recognize when certain people are no longer useful for his purposes, and a willingness to dispense with them accordingly. Barr slips in a description of Robert Mueller's ''trembling'' hands and ''tremulous'' voice, wondering if Mueller ''might have an illness'' -- a striking (and expedient) bit of gossip for Barr to float about an old friend. The last chapter has Barr throwing Trump under the bus, albeit gently and with the utmost decorum. Barr laments Trump's stubborn problems of ''tone,'' faulting him for ''needlessly'' alienating ''a large group of white-collar suburbanites,'' and declares that it's time to move on from the loser of the 2020 election by recovering ''something like the old Reagan coalition.''

But Barr faces a quandary, which is to explain how Republicans can ditch Trump while keeping his fervent base. The result is like the deus ex machina moment in an ancient Greek play, when a hopeless situation is resolved by the sudden appearance of a god on a crane. ''The Republicans have an impressive array of younger candidates fully capable of driving forward with MAGA's positive agenda and cultivating greater national unity,'' a wistful Barr insists. ''MAGA's positive agenda'' combined with ''national unity''? Until I got to that point in his book, I wouldn't have pegged Barr as someone so thirsty for a fairy-tale ending.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/books/review-william-barr-memoir-one-damn-thing-after-another.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/books/review-william-barr-memoir-one-damn-thing-after-another.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (C8)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Here You'll Find Picasso, Dalí, and Hopes for a Scarred Nation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655V-2N41-DXY4-X4VF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 8, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 1699 words

**Byline:** By Anatoly Kurmanaev, Isayen Herrera and Adriana Loureiro Fernandez

**Body**

CARACAS, Venezuela -- In a decaying housing complex filled with garbage-strewn hallways, shuttered shops and barren gardens lies one of Latin America's greatest art treasures.

The vaults above inundated basements contain the region's largest public collection of Pablo Picasso's works, as well as hundreds of millions of dollars worth of paintings and drawings by masters such as Joan Miró, Marc Chagall and Lucian Freud.

Nearby, 700 sculptures by iconic artists, including Salvador Dalí and Fernando Botero, are crammed in a large room to protect them against encroaching humidity.

This is Venezuela's Caracas Museum of Modern Art, or MACC, once a regional reference for cultural education, that has fallen victim to economic collapse and authoritarianism.

Buoyed by Venezuelan oil wealth, the museum hosted exhibitions by internationally renowned artists, bought masterpieces and fostered groundbreaking local artists, projecting an image of a confident nation speeding toward modernity and prosperity. Now, the museum's underpaid workers and cultural officials are working to preserve and exhibit the collection after years of deterioration, technical closures and official indifference.

The museum's decline illustrates the long-lasting effect of political polarization on national culture. A ''cultural revolution'' launched by Venezuela's Socialist Government in 2001 turned every institution into a political battleground and divided citizens along ideological lines, tearing apart the shared cultural heritage over the last two decades.

''The culture, like everything else, became divided,'' said Álvaro González, a Venezuelan art conservation expert working in the museum. ''We have lost the moorings of who we are as a nation.''

Thanks to the work of Mr. González's team and the Culture Ministry, as well as pressure from Venezuela's civil society and local media, the museum partially reopened in February to the public after a two-year closure, reflecting the country's recent modest, uneven economic recovery.

Workers have repainted five of the museum's showrooms, sealed the leaking ceiling and replaced burned light bulbs with modern fixtures. Museum officials says repairs are underway in the remaining eight rooms.

The renovated space showcases 86 selected masterpieces from the museum's 4,500 collected works. A visit by The New York Times to the main storage vault in February found the museum's most important works in apparently good condition.

Some officials believe MACC's partial reopening will presage a wider recovery of the art scene, as the authoritarian government of President Nicolás Maduro abandons radical socialist economic and social policies in favor of a more moderate approach designed to attract private investment.

''The collection of our museums is the heritage of all of Venezuelan people, and that's why it's so important that the spaces are in optimal condition for its preservation,'' said Clemente Martínez, president of the National Museums Foundation, which oversees Venezuela's public museums.

However, several prominent Venezuelan art experts say the museum's partial renovation masks deeper problems that continue to threaten its collection. They warn that the museum will not recover without major new investments and a profound change in how the Venezuelan state views culture.

Most of the museum remains shut. The experienced technical staff is mostly gone, having fallen victim to the political purges of the former Socialist leader, Hugo Chávez, or having escaped the economic downfall under his successor, Mr. Maduro.

Years of hyperinflation gutted the institution's budgets, forcing most of the staff to emigrate or move to the private sector, which pays in U.S. dollars. Top MACC officials last year earned an equivalent of $12 a month and the museum received a daily budget of $1.50 to maintain its 100,000 square feet of facilities, according to a former employee who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

The Ministry of Culture and MACC's director, Robert Cárdenas, both declined to comment.

''People can't work indefinitely just for the love of art,'' said María Rengifo, a former director of Venezuela's Fine Arts Museum, MACC's sister institution. ''It's very hard seeing everyone who had dedicated their lives to the museums leave.''

The economic hardships have pushed some employees to theft.

In November 2020, Venezuelan police officials detained MACC's head of security and a curator for participating in the theft of two works by the renowned Venezuelan artists Gertrud Goldschmidt and Carlos Cruz-Diez from the vaults.

Art experts say the collection will remain at risk until the state starts paying living wages, installs basic security systems and buys an insurance policy.

The museum's main works were worth a combined $61 million in 1991, the last time it carried out an evaluation. Today, art dealers say parts of its collection, such as the 190 paintings and engravings by Picasso and 29 paintings by Miró, are worth around 30 times more, putting the combined value at hundreds of millions of dollars and making it a target for crime.

The economic crisis has also devastated the museum's building, which forms part of a social housing project called Central Park. Built during Venezuela's oil boom in the early 1970s, Central Park adopted the slogan ''a new way of living'' to symbolize the country's rapid modernization.

The 25-acre complex included schools, swimming pools, restaurants, office blocks, a metro station, a church and a theater, along with hundreds of luxury apartments in what were the tallest buildings in Latin America until 2003. Many of the apartments were offered to ***working-class*** residents under heavily subsidized mortgages.

Today, Central Park's hallways and passages are spattered with garbage, leaking water, used condoms and the remains of dead animals. The once lush gardens are barren grounds punctuated with mosquito-riddled puddles. The underground parking has been abandoned to the rising groundwaters.

Central Park's decline has affected the MACC, which relied on the complex's central air conditioning and maintenance budget to protect its collection from humidity.

Yet, art experts believe the greatest blow to the museum came not from the economic downturn but the Socialist Party's policies.

After winning the presidency in 1998, Mr. Chávez, a former paratrooper born into a poor provincial family, sought a radical break from the discredited traditional parties, who had alternated power since the 1950s.

Mirroring the slogans of his mentor, Fidel Castro, the Cuban leader, Mr. Chávez proclaimed a ''cultural revolution,'' seeking to elevate Venezuela's traditional music, dance and painting styles at the expense of what he called the elitist culture of his predecessors.

One of his first targets was the MACC, which was founded and managed since its inception by the seminal Venezuelan art patron Sofía Ímber. To Mr. Chávez, Ms. Ímber represented everything that was wrong with the country: a member of a closed elite circle who had monopolized Venezuelan oil wealth.

Two years after taking power, Mr. Chávez fired Ms. Ímber from the MACC on live television.

It was the first time in 42 years that a Venezuelan president had intervened in the cultural centers, presaging Mr. Chávez's wider dismantling of democratic institutions.

''The museum represented a vision of the country, a space where artistic excellence reinforced democracy and the free exchange of ideas,'' said María Luz Cárdenas, who was the MACC's chief curator under Ms. Ímber. ''It clashed with Chávez's government project.''

Mr. Chávez's ''cultural inclusion'' policies ended abruptly after oil prices and the country's economy collapsed soon after his death in 2013. His successor, Mr. Maduro showed little interest in high culture, focusing his shrinking economic resources on keeping power by force amid mass protests and American sanctions.

''When crude prices fell, the entire economic system that supported cultural policy had collapsed,'' said Jacques Leenhardt, an art expert at the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences in Paris. ''The Maduro populist government, now penniless, did nothing to protect this cultural heritage.''

Mr. Maduro's crisis management differed greatly from that of his allies, Cuba and Russia, who have largely shielded their artistic treasures during the worst years of their downturns.

Today, the neat premises of Havana's Fine Arts Museum contrast with the MACC's dilapidation. Havana itself has become an international art destination, as Cuba's Communist government mounts exhibitions and festivals to earn hard currency and boost its reputation.

In contrast, Mr. Maduro never followed Cuba's cultural example.

Yet, paradoxically, Venezuela's economic collapse could now help revive the country's cultural institutions, said Oscar Sotillo, who directed the MACC last year.

To survive the sanctions, Mr. Maduro has over the last two years quietly started courting private investors and returned some expropriated businesses to their previous owners.

The forced moderation is spreading into the art world. Adriana Meneses, the daughter of Ms. Ímber, said the government had recently contacted her about collecting financing support for cultural projects from Venezuela's traditionally anti-government diaspora, a development that was unthinkable a few years ago.

The government also recently began repairing Caracas's iconic Teresa Carreño Theater and the Central University of Venezuela, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Venezuela's lauded state-run network of children's orchestras is negotiating private sponsorships.

Caracas's private galleries are booming, as oligarchs and Western-educated officials invest wealth in art, mimicking the lifestyles of Venezuela's traditional moneyed elites.

''Art has this possibility to transcend politics,'' Mr. Sotillo said. ''And what is a country if not its culture? Heritage doesn't have a price.''

Ed Augustin contributed reporting from Havana, and Robin Pogrebin from New York.Ed Augustin contributed reporting from Havana, and Robin Pogrebin from New York.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/americas/venezuela-art-museum.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/world/americas/venezuela-art-museum.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Shattered windows at Central Park, a social housing project that contains the Museum of Modern Art in Caracas. A sculpture by James Mathison, right, is among the 4,500 collected works.

Clockwise from top: sculptures outside the museum, a card catalog of artworks and a sculpture by Alejandro Plaza of Venezuela. The museum was a victim of the Socialist government's ''cultural revolution.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

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[***Jackson's Successors Reflect On Her Barrier-Breaking Path***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655V-2N41-DXY4-X4WT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 8, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1657 words

**Byline:** By Linda Qiu and Lelanie Foster

**Body**

'We Belong in These Spaces': Jackson's Successors Reflect on Her Nomination

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. -- To many of the women who belong to the Harvard Black Law Students Association, the nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court has felt deeply personal.

Judge Jackson, an alumna of both Harvard Law School and the association, was confirmed by the Senate on Thursday and will become the first Black female justice in the court's 233-year history.

Many of the women in the association have followed the nomination process closely, inspired by Judge Jackson's selection and identifying with the barriers in her way. They spoke of walking through the same halls of power that have traditionally been dominated by white Americans, feeling the same pressures of having to be ''near perfect'' and wearing the same natural hairstyles that have been discriminated against.

The hostile questioning Judge Jackson faced at her confirmation hearings was all too familiar, some women said, reminiscent of their own experiences in classrooms and workplaces.

Her nomination also highlighted the relative rarity of Black women in the legal profession. Only 4.7 percent of lawyers are Black and just 70 Black women have ever served as a federal judge, representing fewer than 2 percent of all such judges. As of October, about 4.8 percent of those enrolled in the law program at Harvard, or 84 people, identified as Black women, compared with just 33 Black women in 1996, when Judge Jackson graduated.

Those statistics are ''isolating,'' said Mariah K. Watson, the president of the association. ''But there's a comfort in community. There's a comfort in shared experience. And now we have a role model who's shown us what it's going to take.''

We spoke to some of the women in the association. Here's what they had to say about Judge Jackson's nomination.

Abigail Hall

Abigail Hall, 23, had always wanted to be the first Black woman on the Supreme Court, but she conceded that ''if I have to be second, I'm fine being second to K.B.J.''

''She's had to meet every single mark and she hasn't been able to drop the ball,'' Ms. Hall said. ''And that's something that's ingrained in us, in terms of checking every box, in order to be a Black woman and to get to a place like Harvard Law School.''

She likened Judge Jackson's career path to the Marvel supervillain Thanos collecting Infinity Stones: ''It's inspiring for me because I'm at the beginning of my career. I've had to work to get here, but there's so much work to do and that's just motivating me to continue to break down those barriers, to meet my marks and get my Infinity Stones.''

Catherine Crevecoeur

When Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey, praised Judge Jackson after hours of intense questioning and told her ''you are worthy,'' Catherine Crevecoeur, 25, felt that he had articulated the discomfort she had experienced during the hearings.

''They were trying to plant seeds of distrust,'' she said. ''It's not new. It's very common, I think, to a lot of people of color in these spaces.''

Those doubts, Ms. Crevecoeur said, can manifest in a lot of ways, such as when a new acquaintance expresses surprise that she attends one of the most prestigious schools in the country, or grappling with impostor syndrome in her first year at law school. ''That's why it's extra imperative for people to be represented and to see ourselves and to know that we belong in these spaces,'' she said.

Mariah K. Watson

Mariah K. Watson said she was ''brought to immediate tears'' upon hearing of Judge Jackson's nomination because ''if there is going to be somebody who can test where America truly is and our acceptance in wanting to be reflective of what this nation is and can be in many different ways, breaking the mold, then she is the person to do that.''

Judge Jackson has carved out a path for Black women in law, Ms. Watson said, and for that, ''I'm grateful for the hard steps and all of the chipping away that she's doing right now so that the path is cleared or at least a little clearer for those who seek to come after her.''

Christina Coleburn

For Christina Coleburn, Judge Jackson's nomination was a moment to consider legacy. As she listened to the judge recount her family history -- of her grandmother's dinners and her mother's career in education -- Ms. Coleburn, 27, thought of her own grandmother and mother.

''We're our ancestors' wildest dreams, some you've never gotten to meet,'' she said. ''I'm so lucky to still know mine, but to consider how their work made our lives possible, the things sometimes that people take for granted.''

''I'm glad that Judge Jackson brought all those things up,'' she said, ''because I think those are concepts on everyone's at least in our community's minds or almost everyone's minds.''

Regina Fairfax

Regina Fairfax watched the confirmation hearings with an eye on not just one, but two, Black women she considers role models: her ''Aunt Ketanji'' and her mother, Lisa Fairfax, who roomed with Judge Jackson at Harvard decades earlier and introduced her on the second day of the proceedings.

''It was amazing just to see their love for each other and their friendship and their sisterhood,'' Ms. Fairfax, 24, said. ''I think that's inspiring to everyone just listening to see a Black female relationship, but to me personally, just seeing how far they've come together and also that they really relied on each other, leaned on each other throughout the entire experience.''

Virginia Thomas

Virginia Thomas helped pass guidelines in New York banning hair discrimination three years earlier, so seeing Judge Jackson ''with sisterlocks, standing up there in her glory and her professionalism,'' was particularly satisfying.

''It's an opportunity for people to really visualize and see Black women doing what they do, which is being unapologetically successful, unapologetically confident in who they are,'' Ms. Thomas, 31, said.

As a vice president for the Black Law Students Association, Ms. Thomas organized screenings of Judge Jackson's confirmation hearings. The highlight, she said, was attracting the attention of security guards, cafeteria workers and custodians who work at the law school.

''Watching with the staff in the morning before students started trickling in after classes and realizing that this moment is bigger than just for law school nerds who love the Supreme Court,'' she said. ''It also matters for everyday people.''

She added, ''Everyday people who look at this woman and think to themselves, 'Wow, she did it.'''

Aiyanna Sanders

Aiyanna Sanders, 24, described her mixed emotions upon hearing of Judge Jackson's nomination, celebrating the historic moment but lamenting how long it took to reach.

''This is a Black woman who went to Harvard undergrad, who went to Harvard Law School,'' she said. ''We are literally walking in her shoes as we walk through this hallway. And so it's so close to home. Wow, these things are attainable. But also dang, why hasn't it happened yet? Or why is it that in 2022 is the first time this has occurred?''

She added, ''I think a nomination of a Supreme Court justice -- a Black woman, an excellent Black woman who has surpassed all expectations -- I think it just shows that you still have to fight hard, but you can get these things, you can obtain them.''

Gwendolyn Gissendanner

From her time growing up in a ***working-class*** community outside Detroit and working for Harvard's student-run Legal Aid Bureau, Gwendolyn Gissendanner, 25, is acutely aware of how race and identity can affect a courtroom's proceedings.

''We always have to think about what we need to do to make my often Black low-income clients appeal to a white judge who doesn't understand their experience,'' she said. ''But someone who you don't have to take the extra leap to prove to them that race interacts with every aspect of your life makes a giant difference in what types of decisions can be made.''

She added, ''I think of the Supreme Court as such an inaccessible beacon, and the idea that someone who reflects my own identity is going to be in that space is kind of -- I don't even know if I've fully processed that yet.''

Brianna Banks

While watching President Biden announce Judge Jackson as his nominee to the Supreme Court, Brianna Banks, 26, started to cry ''in what I thought at first was a cheesy way -- this is such a cliché,'' she recalled. But upon reflection, she realized the moment illuminated why she had never considered a career as judge or imagined herself as a justice.

''By the numbers, we have a lot of Supreme Court justices from Harvard Law School,'' she said. ''And I am one of the few students that I knew that could never be me, no matter what, because there had never been one that looked like me before. So it brought up this emotion because people tell you, you come from Harvard Law School, you can do whatever you want, there's no job that isn't open to you. But for Black women, that's not always true, because there are a lot of spaces or jobs that we still have not occupied.''

''Now,'' she added, ''the sky is the limit.''

Zarinah Mustafa

As a first-generation college student who has had family members put behind bars, Zarinah Mustafa, 27, said she was particularly excited about Judge Jackson's background as a public defender.

''I just feel like that perspective is so underrepresented and it doesn't make sense why, in a country where we say that everyone deserves a vigorous defense,'' she said.

''I care about defending the little folk, little people and I definitely see myself in her,'' Ms. Mustafa added. ''Maybe I'll wear my Harvard sweatshirt to the airport now -- I normally don't -- because she went here and she was part of the Harvard Black Law Students Association.''

Above all, Ms. Mustafa said, she was proud of and excited by Judge Jackson's record: ''This Black woman is just killing it.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/us/politics/ketanji-brown-jackson-harvard.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/07/us/politics/ketanji-brown-jackson-harvard.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LELANIE FOSTER) (A12-A13)

**Load-Date:** April 8, 2022

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[***Two ‘Leftist Bros’ Dive Into Conservatism to ‘Know Your Enemy’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64Y2-9N71-JBG3-60BT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 7, 2022 Monday 23:25 EST

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**Section:** ARTS

**Length:** 1551 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Schuessler

**Highlight:** The podcast hosted by Matthew Sitman and Sam Adler-Bell offers history lessons that middle-aged liberals, young socialists and even some conservatives can love.

**Body**

The podcast hosted by Matthew Sitman and Sam Adler-Bell offers history lessons that middle-aged liberals, young socialists and even some conservatives can love.

When Matthew Sitman and Sam Adler-Bell sat down in the spring of 2019 to start the podcast “Know Your Enemy,” all they had was a microphone, a cheeky title and the vague hope that “yet another podcast where two leftist bros guide you through the swampy morass of the American right,” as they put it, might be something other people would actually listen to.

“We had no idea what we were doing,” Adler-Bell, 31, said during an interview last month in Sitman’s apartment in Manhattan, groaning at the mention of that first episode, which featured plenty of awkward fumbling and jokes about Sitman’s Leo Strauss tattoos.

Sitman, 40, a self-described “recovered conservative” (with no tattoos), offered a somewhat more charitable take.

“We just love talking to each other,” he said.

Nearly three years and 100 episodes later, [*“Know Your Enemy”*](https://know-your-enemy-1682b684.simplecast.com/) has moved from being a cult favorite to something of a must-listen for the sort of person who is as interested in the internal politics of National Review, circa 1957, as in the current jousting on Capitol Hill.

The podcast contextualizes today’s hot-button debates like the battles over critical race theory in schools. But it mostly offers deep dives into conservative intellectual history, going into the weeds of the weeds armed with reading lists, reams of footnotes and archival documents.

Its audience of roughly 25,000 to 50,000 listeners per episode (according to the hosts) may be tiny by the standards of Joe Rogan, or even the socialist podcast [*“Chapo Trap House*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/29/us/politics/bernie-sanders-chapo-trap-house.html).” But in our hyper-polarized times, “Know Your Enemy” has emerged as something middle-aged liberals, young democratic socialists and Gen Z conservatives hungry for deeper perspective on the tumult of the Trump era can all love.

“They really do their homework,” said Nate Hochman, a 23-year-old writer for National Review who described himself as a fan “before it was cool.” “They’ve read more conservative political theory than most conservatives.”

While “enemy” may give the title its juice, the operative word is “know” — and, possibly, emulate?

Young progressives “don’t understand why the right keeps winning,” said Sam Tanenhaus, a former editor of The New York Times Book Review who is working on [*a biography of William F. Buckley*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/blog/know-your-enemy-buckley-for-mayor-with-sam-tanenhaus).

“What Sam and Matt say is, look at it a different way,” Tanenhaus continued. “Don’t just see the right as the enemy, pure and simple. See them as brilliant — and maybe smarter than you are.”

The podcast began at a fortuitous moment in 2019. Early salvos in the fractious (and [*hard-to-decipher*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/04/opinion/conservatives-david-french-trump.html)) debate between the conservative writers David French and Sohrab Ahmari had started lighting up the conservative pundit-sphere, and the first [*National Conservatism Conference*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/07/19/arts/trump-nationalism-tucker-carlson.html), where a Who’s Who of the right tried to hash out an ideologically coherent version of Trumpism, was just a few months away.

“By that point, most of the magazines and think-tanks and funders on the right had started making the Trump pivot,” said Sitman, who is leaving his job at the liberal Roman Catholic magazine Commonweal later this month to write and podcast full time. “As the dust was settling, you could see where things were at.”

A few months in, the democratic socialist magazine Dissent became sponsors, as listenership steadily grew. (The podcast currently takes in about $17,000 a month from subscribers, who sign up for tiers, ranging from “Young American for Freedom” to “Unreconstructed Monarchist.”) The “breakthrough,” Sitman said, came in January 2021, with an episode on the [*roiling debate*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/blog/know-your-enemy-did-it-happen-here-fascism-debate-trump) over whether President Trump is a fascist.

The Jan. 6 insurrection, Sitman said, felt “very vindicating” of “the penchant for authoritarian minority rule” on the right, which the podcast had been noting from the beginning.

The (relative) calm of the first year of the Biden presidency created more room for scholarly explorations, like episodes on [*the friendship between Allan Bloom and Saul Bellow*](https://know-your-enemy-1682b684.simplecast.com/episodes/unraveling-allan-bloom-and-saul-bellow-0qFkAwcT), and on [*Frank Meyer*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/blog/know-your-enemy-frank-meyer-the-father-of-fusionism), the ex-Communist National Review editor and creator of “fusionism,” the marriage of free-market economics and social traditionalism that defined postwar conservatism.

And in a particularly head-snapping installment, the hosts, joined by Tanenhaus, examined [*the conservatism of Joan Didion*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/blog/know-your-enemy-joan-didion), who [*contributed regularly*](https://www.nationalreview.com/2021/12/joan-didion-the-national-review-years/) to National Review early in her career (and who [*in 2001*](https://post45.org/2020/01/writers-for-goldwater/) wrote that she would have voted for Barry Goldwater in every election after 1964, if she’d had the chance).

Those biographical dives explore favorite “Know Your Enemy” themes of mentorship and friendship, conversions and trajectories, with a rich sense of psychology and literary surprise. Sitman likes to quote a former professor: “The relationship between gossip and philosophy is tenuous but real.”

As for his own trajectory, Sitman grew up in a ***working-class***, fundamentalist Baptist family in central Pennsylvania, steeped in “God and guns conservatism,” as he put it in a [*2016 essay*](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/leaving-conservatism-behind-blue-collar-republican-progressive). He graduated from a small Christian college, and after an internship at the Heritage Foundation, enrolled in graduate school at Georgetown, studying political theory with the conservative scholar [*George W. Carey*](https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/farewell-to-a-constitutional-conservative/).

What peeled him away from conservatism, starting in his mid-20s, he said, was disgust at conservatives’ support for torture, as well as growing embrace of class politics, which pulled him toward democratic socialism.

He converted to Catholicism in 2015. His faith, and the way he sees [*human vulnerability*](https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/muddling-through) as central to politics, is a touchstone on the podcast.

“I feel guilty about making Sam learn so much about the Catholic Church,” Sitman said. Adler-Bell shot back: “I’m going to make you read Freud at some point.”

Adler-Bell grew up in a progressive, secular Jewish family in Connecticut. He was active in a student-labor alliance while an undergraduate at Brown, and later worked at the advocacy group Demand Progress and interned at The Nation.

He said his immersion in conservative thought “defamiliarized the left,” forcing him to think harder about why he believed what he believed.

“A lot of people on the left only come into contact with the stupidest versions of right-wing arguments — the least sophisticated, the least interesting, the least literary,” he said.

On the podcast, and in person, Sitman has a genial professorial vibe, spiking his learned explications with anecdotes about prominent figures, some of whom he knew personally. Adler-Bell is saltier, always eager, as he half-jokingly puts it, to highlight the more “lurid and prurient” aspects of the right.

Sitman said the podcast has damaged some “already frayed” relationships with former mentors and friends. But he emphasized that, unlike some other apostates from the right, he wasn’t “embittered.”

“I am!” Adler-Bell interjected, slapping his knee. “That’s why it’s good to have me, an argumentative Jew.”

Not all conservative listeners are unqualified fans. Matthew Schmitz, 34, a columnist at The American Conservative and former senior editor at [*First Things*](https://www.firstthings.com/featured-author/matthew-schmitz), said Sitman and Adler-Bell were “extremely good at their jobs,” calling the podcast “better than almost anything on public radio.” That wasn’t entirely a compliment.

“‘Know Your Enemy’ falls into a kind of ideological orientalism, presenting right-wing ideas as a mélange of the backward, regressive and decadent,” he said.

Which brings up a still-unsettled question for the hosts: How much to talk with conservatives, as opposed to just talking about them?

So far, only a handful of “enemies” have appeared as guests, including Ross Douthat, an opinion columnist for The Times. All the conservative guests are “a little bit heterodox,” Sitman conceded. Adler-Bell added: “We have a ‘no hacks’ policy.”

Still, after an episode with Hochman (one of the young conservative radicals featured in a [*much-discussed recent article*](https://newrepublic.com/article/164408/young-intellectuals-illiberal-revolution-conservatism) by Adler-Bell in The New Republic), some listeners wrote in with concerns the hosts had “platformed” him without pushing back hard enough.

The hosts say they thought they were tough, pressing him, for example, on the role of white racial backlash in fueling postwar conservatism. “We trust the intelligence of our listeners,” Sitman said. But they also acknowledged that, “as two white guys,” they are less likely to experience some things conservatives say as “deeply offensive or dehumanizing.”

Their goal isn’t any squishy mutual understanding or bipartisan compromise, but clarification — and the sheer pleasure of conversation. “It’s great to have a chance to talk to people you disagree with, without thinking the project is to find common ground,” Adler- Bell said.

Sitman, again hitting the more professorial note, paraphrased the British philosopher Michael Oakeshott, from his essay [*“On Being Conservative.”*](https://bbs.pku.edu.cn/attach/85/e2/85e2c8b439bfb4da/On)

“The point of going fishing isn’t to catch fish,” he said. “It’s to be out on the water.”

PHOTOS: Sam Adler-Bell, near right, and Matthew Sitman are the hosts of the podcast “Know Your Enemy,” which bills itself as “the leftist’s guide to the conservative movement.” (C1); A collection of books in Matthew Sitman’s apartment. His podcast with Sam Adler-Bell takes an unabashedly literary and intellectual approach. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ZACK DEZON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (C6)

**Load-Date:** March 7, 2022

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[***The Doctrine of the Irreligious Right***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65M7-8GC1-DXY4-X0M4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 5, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 4

**Length:** 4508 words

**Byline:** By Nate Hochman

**Body**

Even for an insider like me, the whirlwind of energy and debate within today's conservative movement can be bewildering. But what's clear is that the Republican Party is changing. A new kind of conservatism, represented by right-wing elites like Ron DeSantis, Christopher Rufo and Tucker Carlson, is making itself known. We are just beginning to see its impact. The anti-critical-race-theory laws, anti-transgender laws and parental rights bills that have swept the country in recent years are the movement's opening shots. They have made today's culture wars as fierce as they have been in decades. But this new campaign is also distinctly different from the culture wars of the late 20th century, and it reflects a broad shift in conservatism's priorities and worldview.

The conservative political project is no longer specifically Christian. That may seem strange to say at a moment when a mostly Catholic conservative majority on the Supreme Court appears poised to overturn Roe v. Wade. But a reversal of the landmark 1973 ruling would be more of a last gasp than a sign of strength for the religious right. It's hard to imagine today's culture warriors taking any interest in the 1950s push for a Christian amendment to the Constitution, for example. Instead of an explicitly biblical focus on issues like school prayer, no-fault divorce and homosexuality, the new coalition is focused on questions of national identity, social integrity and political alienation. Although it enjoys the support of most Republican Christians who formed the electoral backbone of the old Moral Majority, it is a social conservatism rather than a religious one, revolving around race relations, identity politics, immigration and the teaching of American history.

Today's culture war is being waged not between religion and secularism but between groups that the Catholic writer Matthew Schmitz has described as ''the woke and the unwoke.'' ''Catholic traditionalists, Orthodox Jews, Middle American small-business owners and skeptical liberal atheists may not seem to have much in common,'' he wrote in 2020. But all of those demographics are uncomfortable with the progressive social agenda of the post-Obama years.

Rather than invocations of Scripture, the right's appeal is a defense of a broader, beleaguered American way of life. For example, the language of parental rights is rarely, if ever, religious, but it speaks to the pervasive sense that American families are fighting back against progressive ideologues over control of the classroom. That framing has been effective: According to a March Politico poll, for example, American voters favored the key provision of Florida's hotly debated Parental Rights in Education law, known by its critics as the Don't Say Gay law, by a margin of 16 percentage points. Support for the initiative crosses racial lines. In a May poll of likely general election voters in six Senate battleground states -- Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin -- the conservative American Principles Project found that Hispanics supported the Florida law by a margin of 11 percentage points and African Americans by a margin of four points.

The upshot is that this new politics has the capacity to dramatically expand the Republican tent. It appeals to a wide range of Americans, many of whom had been put off by the old conservatism's explicitly religious sheen and don't quite see themselves as Republicans yet. As the terms of the culture war shift, Barack Obama's ''coalition of the ascendant'' -- the mix of millennials, racial minorities and college-educated white voters whose collective electoral power was supposed to establish a sustainable progressive majority -- is fraying, undermining the decades-long conventional wisdom that America's increasing racial diversity would inevitably push the country left.

That thesis was prominently advanced by the progressive political scientists John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira, but both of them have grown alarmed about the rightward movement among nonwhite voters in recent years. ''If Hispanic voting trends continue to move steadily against the Democrats, the pro-Democratic effect of nonwhite population growth will be blunted, if not canceled out entirely,'' Mr. Teixeira wrote in December. ''That could -- or should -- provoke quite a sea change in Democratic thinking.'' In the absence of that sea change, however, it is likely that disaffected people of all races will continue to move into the Republican coalition.

But is all this good for American conservatism? Particularly for social conservatives older than I am, who have sustained a long string of losses in the culture war, the potential for a new Republican majority is nothing to sniff at. But some have already expressed misgivings about this coalition. ''We must not allow evangelical political priorities to be co-opted by functional pagans simply because we share a limited set of political objectives,'' wrote Andrew T. Walker, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. Pushing back on ''woke lunacy'' is valuable, he said, but it may not be worth embracing a politics that ''causes Christians to adopt or excuse the disposition of cruelty and licentiousness.'' As of now, the new secular conservatives and the old religious right are bound together in an uneasy partnership to fight the cultural left. But they may yet find themselves at odds about the country's future.

The Rise and Fall of the Religious Right

The Republican Party hasn't always been the natural home for conservative Christians. In the years leading up to Roe v. Wade, some Republican governors -- including Ronald Reagan of California -- helped liberalize state abortion laws. In 1970, Nelson Rockefeller, New York's liberal Republican governor, signed what Planned Parenthood's president at the time, Dr. Alan Guttmacher, approvingly called ''the most liberal abortion law in the world.'' Democrats, on the other hand, were hardly all social liberals. In 1976, Jimmy Carter's presidential bid was backed by Pat Robertson, a leading voice on the emerging religious right and the son of a Democratic senator. Mr. Robertson's ally Lou Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition declared that ''God has his hand upon Jimmy Carter to run for president.''

All of that began to change with the inflammation of the culture wars in the final decades of the 20th century: Roe, the rise of mass-produced pornography, the Supreme Court's ban on school-sponsored prayer, the gay rights movement and the push for an Equal Rights Amendment all drove the religious right to organize as a political force. As Democrats moved left on these issues, the G.O.P. pivoted right. In 1980 the Democratic Party platform added its first plank on gay rights, prompting the conservative columnist Pat Buchanan to remark bitterly that Mr. Carter was ''not the sort of simpleton to allow biblical beliefs to get in the way of carrying San Francisco.''

When Mr. Reagan ran for president, he disavowed the abortion bill he signed in California as a ''mistake'' and courted the Moral Majority. In 1983 he published ''Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation'' -- the first book written by a sitting president. By the time George W. Bush was elected on the backs of evangelicals and born-again Christians in 2000, the culture war battle lines were clear. He went on to carry 80 percent of voters who ranked ''moral values'' as their top issue in 2004.

But American church attendance was declining. The share of self-identified Christians in the United States dropped from 75 percent in 2011 to 63 percent in 2021 while the share of religious ''nones'' -- i.e., those who identified as atheist, agnostic or ''nothing in particular'' -- jumped from 19 percent to 29 percent, according to the Pew Research Center. The G.O.P. has not been immune to this trend. The share of Republicans who belong to a church dropped from 75 percent in 2010 to 65 percent in 2020, according to Gallup. Although the sharp drop-off in religiosity began in the liberal mainline Protestant denominations, it has spread to their conservative counterparts as well. Fewer than half of Republicans said ''being Christian'' was an important part of being American in 2020, according to Pew -- a 15 percentage point drop from 2016. Across the ideological and theological spectrum, organized religion is waning.

As a result, the religious right's influence in the G.O.P. has been declining since the Bush era. The party's 2008 presidential nominee, John McCain, repeatedly flip-flopped on Roe, voted against a proposed constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman and decried Jerry Falwell as one of several ''agents of intolerance.'' Mitt Romney, who sat atop the G.O.P. presidential ticket in 2012, had a similarly spotty track record on social issues.

While President Donald Trump delivered on a number of religious conservative priorities -- most notably, appointing enough conservative justices to the Supreme Court to cobble together a likely majority of anti-Roe votes -- he is a lifelong pro-choicer and sexual libertine who made explicit appeals to gay and lesbian voters on the 2016 campaign trail and was the first openly pro-same-sex-marriage candidate to win the presidency. ''It is hardly surprising that the religious right is no longer even perceived as a relevant force in U.S. politics,'' George Hawley concluded in The American Conservative. ''Far from a kingmaker in the political arena, the Christian right is now mostly ignored.''

Revolution From the Middle

The decline in Republican church membership directly coincides with the rise of Mr. Trump. As Timothy P. Carney found in 2019, the voters who went for Mr. Trump in the 2016 primary were far more secular than the religious right: In the 2016 G.O.P. primaries, Mr. Trump won only about 32 percent of voters who went to church more than once a week. In contrast, he secured about half of those who went ''a few times a year,'' 55 percent of those who ''seldom'' attend and 62 percent of Republicans who never go to church. In other words, Mr. Carney wrote, ''every step down in church attendance brought a step up in Trump support, and vice versa.''

The right's new culture war represents the worldview of people the sociologist Donald Warren called ''Middle American radicals,'' or M.A.Rs. This demographic, which makes up the heart of Mr. Trump's electoral base, is composed primarily of non-college-educated middle- and lower-middle-class white people, and it is characterized by a populist hostility to elite pieties that often converges with the old social conservatism. But M.A.Rs do not share the same religious moral commitments as their devoutly Christian counterparts, both in their political views and in their lifestyles. As Ross Douthat noted, nonchurchgoing Trump voters are ''less likely to be married and more likely to be divorced'' than those who regularly attend religious services. No coincidence, then, that a 2021 Gallup poll showed 55 percent of Republicans now support gay marriage -- up from just 28 percent in 2011.

These voters are more nationalistic and less amenable to multiculturalism than their religious peers, and they profess a skepticism of the cosmopolitan open-society arguments for free trade and mass immigration that have been made by neoliberals and neoconservatives alike. ''M.A.Rs feel they are members of an exploited class -- excluded from real political representation, harmed by conventional tax and trade policies, victimized by crime and social deviance and denigrated by popular culture and elite institutions,'' Matthew Rose wrote in ''First Things.'' They ''unapologetically place citizens over foreigners, majorities over minorities, the native-born over recent immigrants, the normal over the transgressive and fidelity to a homeland over cosmopolitan ideals.''

In this sense, the fierceness of today's culture wars is actually tied to the decline in organized religion. Frequent church attendance is correlated with more negative attitudes toward gay men, lesbians and feminists, but as the pollster Emily Ekins noted in 2018, it softened respondents' views of culture war issues such as race, immigration and identity. Nonchurchgoing Trump voters are more likely to support a border wall, tighter restrictions on legal immigration and a ban on immigration to the United States from some Muslim-majority countries. They are less inclined to agree that ''acceptance of racial and religious diversity is at the core of American identity.'' While the majority of religious conservatives eventually fell in line behind Mr. Trump, the political and cultural energy he represented was primarily a reflection of the nonreligious right.

What is occurring on the right, then, is a partial realization of the program that the hard-right writer Sam Francis championed in his 1994 essay ''Religious Wrong.'' He argued that cultural, ethnic and social identities ''are the principal lines of conflict'' between Middle Americans and progressive elites and that the ''religious orientation of the Christian right serves to create what Marxists like to call a 'false consciousness' for Middle Americans.'' In other words, political Christianity prevented the right-wing base from fully understanding the culture war as a class war -- a power struggle between Middle America and a hostile federal regime. He saw Christianity's universalist ideals as at odds with the defense of the American nation, which was being dispossessed by mass immigration and multiculturalism. ''Organized Christianity today,'' he wrote in 2001, ''is the enemy of the West and the race that created it.''

Mr. Francis' position, of course, has always been far outside the mainstream of conservative opinion. Conservatives have traditionally viewed religion as foundational to Western heritage, and they have seen its moderating influence on identitarian conflicts as a crucial component of civic harmony. But as a description of recent trends, his assessment holds some weight: The decline of organized religion on the right has, in fact, supercharged the culture war.

Many observers -- including Mr. Francis, whose writing became more openly white nationalist toward the end of his career -- have been quick to suggest that this new energy is, in essence, white identity politics. It's true that the decline of religion as an organizing force on the right has made other forms of identity more prominent -- and in the absence of a humanizing Christian ethic, white racial consciousness could fill the void. There are and always have been strains of white-supremacist politics that reject Christianity for that reason. (The American eugenicist Madison Grant, for example, echoed Friedrich Nietzsche in denouncing Christianity as ''the religion of the slave, the meek and the lowly.'' Christianity tends ''to break down class and race distinctions,'' Mr. Grant wrote in 1916. ''Such distinctions are absolutely essential to the maintenance of race purity in any community when two or more races live side by side.'')

But it would be wrong to reduce these developments to racial animus. In a speech at the 2021 National Conservatism Conference, Mr. Rufo, a leading conservative activist, described the New Right's project as a counterrevolution: ''The goal is to protect these people, Middle Americans of all racial backgrounds -- ***working class*** and middle class -- to protect them against what I think is a hostile and nihilistic elite that is seeking to impose its values onto the working and middle classes to bolster their own power, prestige, status and achievement.''

Mr. Rufo, like many of his contemporaries, rarely discusses matters of faith. Today's right-wing culture warriors think in distinctly Marxian terms: a class struggle between a proletarian base of traditionalists and a powerful public-private bureaucracy that is actively hostile to the American way of life. In lieu of Mr. Buchanan and Phyllis Schlafly, the conservative avatars of today's culture war look more like Mr. Rufo or -- at the level of elected office -- Governor DeSantis of Florida. A hero of the new cultural right and a prospective 2024 presidential front-runner, the governor is nominally Catholic and is politically friendly to conservative Christians. But he rarely discusses his religion publicly and almost never in the context of politics. (He did cite his ''faith in God'' and ''in the power of prayer'' when discussing his wife's breast cancer diagnosis last November.)

Overthrowing the New Left

Whereas the old Christian conservatism was about defending an old order, the new social conservatism is about overthrowing a new one. The transformation of the right is a direct response to a shift on the left. In the years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, when the G.O.P. was the party of the traditional moral order, many individualists, rebels and eccentrics found themselves aligned with progressives. Today the reverse is true. The left is now widely seen as the schoolmarm of American public life, and the right is associated with the gleeful violation of convention. Contemporary social pieties are distinctly left wing, and progressives enforce them with at least as much moral ardor as the most zealous members of the religious right.

In recent years, American progressivism has departed from its traditional live-and-let-live philosophy on social issues, graduating from a push for rights (e.g., same-sex marriage) to a demand for affirmation (e.g., mandates that religious bakers custom-make cakes celebrating same-sex marriage). Progressives and religious conservatives alike have argued that this was the inevitable conclusion of the gay rights movement -- that the logic of civil rights law required the transformation of the public square to accommodate L.G.B.T.Q. Americans once they were recognized as a distinct class.

The left's program is now not so much securing equal rights for certain groups as punishing those who hold views toward those groups that -- while well within the mainstream just a decade or two ago -- are now deemed unacceptable. Religious conservatives, for their part, have increasingly retreated from a battle for the public view of sexuality and marriage to the defensive crouch of ''religious liberty.''

Today's left-wing cultural program represents the tastes and worldview of an insular class of often white progressive elites, who now sit to the left of nonwhite Democrats on any number of social issues, including race. (A 2017 Pew survey, for example, found that 79.2 percent of white liberals agreed that ''racial discrimination is the main reason why many Black people can't get ahead these days,'' whereas 59.9 percent of Black Americans said the same.) Though a group Pew calls the 'progressive left' -- which is 68 percent white -- makes up just 12 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents, its members are more likely to donate to campaigns and turn out to vote than other Democratic constituencies.

As a result, they exercise an outsize influence over the social agenda of the Democratic Party. Moderate Democrats in Congress have regularly broken with progressives on economic issues like regulation and spending, but the entire party is generally in lock step on most social issues. All but one of the 225 House Democrats elected in 2018 are co-sponsors of the Equality Act, which would write gender identity and sexual orientation into federal civil rights law, and House Democrats have rarely, if ever, publicly acknowledged that ideas central to critical race theory are being taught in public schools, let alone criticized that fact.

As Democratic elites have embraced a more aggressive form of social liberalism, the party has alienated a swath of its traditional ***working-class*** base. Many Americans of all racial backgrounds are deeply uncomfortable with at least some aspects of post-Obama cultural progressivism. A recent poll from the American Principles Project, for example, found that Hispanics and African Americans in six battleground states supported ''laws that prohibit biological males who identify as transgender women from participating in girls' sports programs both in K-12 and at the collegiate level.'' When it came to ''banning puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and physical sex-change surgeries for children under the age of 18 who identify as transgender,'' Hispanics supported such measures by a margin of nine percentage points and African Americans by a margin of 15 points.

All this challenges the conventional wisdom among Republican elites. The G.O.P.'s post-2012 ''autopsy,'' for example, argued for a strategy of moderation on cultural issues -- paired with a recommitment to low taxes and deregulation -- to make inroads with nonwhite voters. In fact, the opposite strategy seems to have been successful. In 2020, Mr. Trump won more votes from nonwhite people and Hispanics than any other Republican presidential candidate in modern American history and a higher percentage of nonwhite and Hispanic votes than any other since Mr. Bush in 2004, running on an aggressive culture-war platform that simultaneously eschewed several tenets of Republican economic orthodoxy, from welfare cuts and government spending to immigration and free trade. To rephrase James Carville's famous adage on the 1992 campaign trail: It's the culture war, stupid.

Conservatism in a Secular America

The future of the emergent, not-so-silent majority remains uncertain. If Roe is overturned, it may well heighten the contradictions within the uneasy alliance of the new and old forms of social conservatism. In the days after the leak of the Supreme Court draft opinion, the Barstool Sports founder Dave Portnoy -- perhaps the most prominent representative of M.A.R.s -- declared that if Republicans tried to ban abortion, he would become a Democrat. Just let a ''woman do what she wants with her body,'' he said, with an expletive for emphasis.

A controversy at last year's Turning Point USA, a conservative youth conference, was instructive in showing the potential cracks within the new coalition. Brandi Love, a pornographic actress who describes herself as a ''sex, drink and rock 'n' roll conservative,'' purchased tickets to the event, but after a backlash online, she was barred from attending. She slammed the move, describing it as ''a worst-case example of cancel culture'' to a writer for The Daily Caller. She added that if Turning Point USA ''is the future, then the future is run by puritanical, fanatically devout Christians who will demand compliance or else.'' A number of prominent conservatives echoed the claim: ''I couldn't care less who bangs who, and I missed the part of the Constitution that addresses threesomes,'' tweeted the TV commentator John Cardillo. The Federalist's Ben Domenech concurred: ''The right has an opportunity to be the big tent party. Don't be a bunch of prudes.''

At the time, I voiced my own objections to Ms. Love's presence at the conference. I rejected her argument that she had been canceled by free speech hypocrites because, I wrote, it assumes that ''the only valid alternative to political correctness and left-wing cultural orthodoxy is the absence of any social or cultural standards whatsoever.'' This is the heart of the distinction between anti-woke liberals and traditional social conservatives: The disaffected recent converts in the conservative coalition often object to the new left-wing puritanism for the same reason that they objected to its old right-wing counterpart: It prevents them from doing and saying whatever they please, free of social repercussions. That is its own kind of libertinism. Social conservatives, in contrast, do not oppose the enforcement of social norms as such; they oppose the enforcement of left-wing social norms on the grounds that they are the wrong norms.

A resolution of these contradictions will not be necessary for the new conservatism to succeed. Every political coalition contains its fair share of internal tensions. But old social conservatives will need to decide how much they are willing to concede in exchange for a political future, and secular converts will need to decide if they are more alienated by the left's cultural authoritarianism than they are by the G.O.P.'s positions on issues like abortion.

If it can be sustained, however, the secular right may be able to deliver on the old religious right's priorities. Indeed, if Roe is overturned, it will have been due to the election of a president who exemplified the new conservatism. In many ways, the new conservatism is winning where the old conservatism could not. The parental backlash against progressive pedagogy, for example, has inspired a wave of states and localities to crack down on obscenity and sexually explicit content in school libraries. Whereas the religious right failed on gay marriage, school prayer and a number of other social issues, the new conservatism -- which has yet to even fully take shape -- has already notched a wave of important victories. At least 17 states have passed laws aimed at restricting the teaching of critical race theory, and 14 have barred transgender athletes from competing in single-sex sports corresponding to the gender they were not assigned at birth.

Where religious conservatives fit in all this remains uncertain. Some have pointed to a new strain of Catholic thought known as postliberalism, championed primarily by Catholic academics such as Patrick Deneen and Adrian Vermeule, as one promising alternative path for the New Right. Thinkers in this tradition want to implement a specifically -- and sometimes explicitly -- Catholic political order. But the relationship between these intellectuals and the grass-roots energy has always been uneasy. Insofar as there is crossover between the two forms of conservatism, the Catholic postliberals could be understood as intellectual fellow travelers in the Trumpian culture war. But they do not define its ethos, and in some ways, they are at odds with it.

While the old religious right will see much to like in the new cultural conservatism, they are partners, rather than leaders, in the coalition. That may be the best thing they can hope for in a rapidly secularizing country. The new cultural conservatism may protect the embattled minority of traditionalist Christians; it will not restore them to their pre-eminent place in public life, as the old religious conservatism hoped to do. But it may have an actual chance at winning. And that, from the conservative perspective, is worth a great deal.

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**Graphic**

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY No Ideas FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 5, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Home Is Where Her Story Was. Leaving Helped Her Find It.; Inside the List***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YRC-7P31-DXY4-X3YM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 30, 2020 Thursday 01:09 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 451 words

**Byline:** Elisabeth Egan

**Highlight:** Elizabeth Wetmore’s debut novel, “Valentine,” is a love letter to Texas.

**Body**

LONE STAR “I’m 52 and this is my first novel,” says Elizabeth Wetmore, the author of “Valentine,” which is now at No. 10 on the hardcover fiction list. She worked on the book for years, taking frequent breaks to teach, pursue freelance editing projects and raise her son. Going without a paycheck was not an option: “In the end, I think I was finally able to finish because my husband took on a second job. And one of the promises I made to myself was that, if I ever was able to sell a book, I would be mindful about talking about what this looks like for ***working-class*** writers, writers who don’t come from families or communities where people are saying, ‘Yay, write full time.’”

“Valentine” takes place in Odessa, Texas, where Wetmore grew up. She says, “There was a time when I was a teenager when I came to believe — falsely, of course — that there were girls who stayed and girls who left. I wanted very much to be one who left.” She struck out on her own at 18, becoming one of the first of her family to attend college. She also waited tables, tended bar, drove a cab and painted silos and cooling towers at a petrochemical plant.

Wetmore never moved back to Texas but went back as often as she could afford to, taking long drives to get reacquainted with her hometown. Wetmore says, “It took me a long time to be able to see the place clearly. I had to fall back in love with the land and the people in a way that made it possible to write with nuance and sympathy.”

“Valentine” grew out of two questions: What do you do when a stranger comes to your door, and how can the fallout from that encounter affect a whole town? Wetmore’s stranger is a 14-year-old girl who has been brutally attacked in a nearby oil field. Readers learn what happens next through the eyes of four women whose individual chapters read like fully developed short stories. This was by design, says Wetmore, who prefers to work in that form. She toggled between perspectives as she wrote, eventually plastering her bedroom walls with notes on butcher paper that helped her keep track of the action.

Of course the publication of the book has not been without its challenges. Wetmore’s author tour was canceled before it started. But she says she has enjoyed virtual events, and especially receiving messages from her readers. One of her favorites was from a woman in Texas. It said, “I live here, you nailed it, thank you so much for writing this book.”

Elisabeth Egan is an editor at the Book Review and the author of “A Window Opens.”

PHOTO

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**Load-Date:** July 14, 2020

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[***From Dalí to Picasso, a Museum With a Masterpiece Collection Partially Reopens***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655M-3P21-JBG3-61BP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 7, 2022 Thursday 22:59 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; americas

**Length:** 1757 words

**Byline:** Anatoly Kurmanaev, Isayen Herrera and Adriana Loureiro Fernandez

**Highlight:** Caracas’s Museum of Modern Art, a symbol of a westernized Venezuela, was dismantled by the Socialist governments. Its modest recovery offers hope to the troubled nation.

**Body**

CARACAS, Venezuela — In a decaying housing complex filled with garbage-strewn hallways, shuttered shops and barren gardens lies one of Latin America’s greatest art treasures.

The vaults above inundated basements contain the region’s largest public collection of Pablo Picasso’s works, as well as hundreds of millions of dollars worth of paintings and drawings by masters such as Joan Miró, Marc Chagall and Lucian Freud.

Nearby, 700 sculptures by iconic artists, including Salvador Dalí and Fernando Botero, are crammed in a large room to protect them against encroaching humidity.

This is Venezuela’s Caracas Museum of Modern Art, or MACC, once a regional reference for cultural education, that has fallen victim to economic collapse and authoritarianism.

Buoyed by Venezuelan oil wealth, the museum hosted exhibitions by internationally renowned artists, bought masterpieces and fostered groundbreaking local artists, projecting an image of a confident nation speeding toward modernity and prosperity. Now, the museum’s underpaid workers and cultural officials are working to preserve and exhibit the collection after years of deterioration, technical closures and official indifference.

The museum’s decline illustrates the long-lasting effect of political polarization on national culture. A “cultural revolution” launched by Venezuela’s Socialist Government in 2001 turned every institution into a political battleground and divided citizens along ideological lines, tearing apart the shared cultural heritage over the last two decades.

“The culture, like everything else, became divided,” said Álvaro González, a Venezuelan art conservation expert working in the museum. “We have lost the moorings of who we are as a nation.”

Thanks to the work of Mr. González’s team and the Culture Ministry, as well as [*pressure from Venezuela’s civil society and local media*](https://elestimulo.com/museo-de-arte-contemporaneo-toda-la-verdad-sobre-su-cierre-caracas/), the museum partially reopened in February to the public after a two-year closure, reflecting the country’s recent modest, uneven economic recovery.

Workers have repainted five of the museum’s showrooms, sealed the leaking ceiling and replaced burned light bulbs with modern fixtures. Museum officials says repairs are underway in the remaining eight rooms.

The renovated space showcases 86 selected masterpieces from the museum’s 4,500 collected works. A visit by The New York Times to the main storage vault in February found the museum’s most important works in apparently good condition.

Some officials believe MACC’s partial reopening will presage a wider recovery of the art scene, as the authoritarian government of President Nicolás Maduro abandons radical socialist economic and social policies in favor of a more moderate [*approach designed to attract private investment*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/02/world/americas/venezuela-maduro-chavez.html).

“The collection of our museums is the heritage of all of Venezuelan people, and that’s why it’s so important that the spaces are in optimal condition for its preservation,” said Clemente Martínez, president of the National Museums Foundation, which oversees Venezuela’s public museums.

However, several prominent Venezuelan art experts say the museum’s partial renovation masks deeper problems that continue to threaten its collection. They warn that the museum will not recover without major new investments and a profound change in how the Venezuelan state views culture.

Most of the museum remains shut. The experienced technical staff is mostly gone, having fallen victim to the political purges of the former Socialist leader, Hugo Chávez, or having escaped the economic downfall under his successor, Mr. Maduro.

Years of hyperinflation gutted the institution’s budgets, forcing most of the staff to emigrate or move to the private sector, which pays in U.S. dollars. Top MACC officials last year earned an equivalent of $12 a month and the museum received a daily budget of $1.50 to maintain its 100,000 square feet of facilities, according to a former employee who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

The Ministry of Culture and MACC’s director, Robert Cárdenas, both declined to comment.

“People can’t work indefinitely just for the love of art,” said María Rengifo, a former director of Venezuela’s Fine Arts Museum, MACC’s sister institution. “It’s very hard seeing everyone who had dedicated their lives to the museums leave.”

The economic hardships have pushed some employees to theft.

In November 2020, Venezuelan police officials detained MACC’s head of security and a curator for participating in the theft of two works by the renowned Venezuelan artists Gertrud Goldschmidt and Carlos Cruz-Diez from the vaults.

Art experts say the collection will remain at risk until the state starts paying living wages, installs basic security systems and buys an insurance policy.

The museum’s main works were worth a combined $61 million in 1991, the last time it carried out an evaluation. Today, art dealers say parts of its collection, such as the 190 paintings and engravings by Picasso and 29 paintings by Miró, are worth around 30 times more, putting the combined value at hundreds of millions of dollars and making it a target for crime.

The economic crisis has also devastated the museum’s building, which forms part of a social housing project called Central Park. Built during Venezuela’s oil boom in the early 1970s, Central Park adopted the slogan “a new way of living” to symbolize the country’s rapid modernization.

The 25-acre complex included schools, swimming pools, restaurants, office blocks, a metro station, a church and a theater, along with hundreds of luxury apartments in what were the tallest buildings in Latin America until 2003. Many of the apartments were offered to ***working-class*** residents under heavily subsidized mortgages.

Today, Central Park’s hallways and passages are spattered with garbage, leaking water, used condoms and the remains of dead animals. The once lush gardens are barren grounds punctuated with mosquito-riddled puddles. The underground parking has been abandoned to the rising groundwaters.

Central Park’s decline has affected the MACC, which relied on the complex’s central air conditioning and maintenance budget to protect its collection from humidity.

Yet, art experts believe the greatest blow to the museum came not from the economic downturn but the Socialist Party’s policies.

After winning the presidency in 1998, Mr. Chávez, a former paratrooper born into a poor provincial family, sought a radical break from the discredited traditional parties, who had alternated power since the 1950s.

Mirroring the slogans of his mentor, Fidel Castro, the Cuban leader, Mr. Chávez proclaimed a “cultural revolution,” seeking to elevate Venezuela’s traditional music, dance and painting styles at the expense of what he called the elitist culture of his predecessors.

One of his first targets was the MACC, which was founded and managed since its inception by the seminal Venezuelan art patron Sofía Ímber. To Mr. Chávez, Ms. Ímber represented everything that was wrong with the country: a member of a closed elite circle who had monopolized Venezuelan oil wealth.

Two years after taking power, Mr. Chávez fired Ms. Ímber from the MACC on live television.

It was the first time in 42 years that a Venezuelan president had intervened in the cultural centers, presaging Mr. Chávez’s wider dismantling of democratic institutions.

“The museum represented a vision of the country, a space where artistic excellence reinforced democracy and the free exchange of ideas,” said María Luz Cárdenas, who was the MACC’s chief curator under Ms. Ímber. “It clashed with Chávez’s government project.”

Mr. Chávez’s “cultural inclusion” policies ended abruptly after oil prices and the country’s economy collapsed soon after his death in 2013. His successor, Mr. Maduro showed little interest in high culture, focusing his shrinking economic resources on keeping power by force amid mass protests and American sanctions.

“When crude prices fell, the entire economic system that supported cultural policy had collapsed,” said Jacques Leenhardt, an art expert at the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences in Paris. “The Maduro populist government, now penniless, did nothing to protect this cultural heritage.”

Mr. Maduro’s crisis management differed greatly from that of his allies, Cuba and Russia, who have largely shielded their artistic treasures during the worst years of their downturns.

Today, the neat premises of Havana’s Fine Arts Museum contrast with the MACC’s dilapidation. Havana itself has become an international art destination, as Cuba’s Communist government mounts exhibitions and festivals to earn hard currency and boost its reputation.

In contrast, Mr. Maduro never followed Cuba’s cultural example.

Yet, paradoxically, Venezuela’s economic collapse could now help revive the country’s cultural institutions, said Oscar Sotillo, who directed the MACC last year.

To survive the sanctions, Mr. Maduro has over the last two years quietly started courting private investors and returned some expropriated businesses to their previous owners.

The forced moderation is spreading into the art world. Adriana Meneses, the daughter of Ms. Ímber, said the government had recently contacted her about collecting financing support for cultural projects from Venezuela’s traditionally anti-government diaspora, a development that was unthinkable a few years ago.

The government also recently began repairing Caracas’s iconic Teresa Carreño Theater and the Central University of Venezuela, a UNESCO World Heritage site. Venezuela’s [*lauded state-run network of children’s orchestras*](https://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/wireStory/venezuelan-musicians-pursue-worlds-largest-orchestra-record-81156738) is negotiating private sponsorships.

Caracas’s private galleries are booming, as oligarchs and Western-educated officials invest wealth in art, mimicking the lifestyles of Venezuela’s traditional moneyed elites.

“Art has this possibility to transcend politics,” Mr. Sotillo said. “And what is a country if not its culture? Heritage doesn’t have a price.”

Ed Augustin contributed reporting from Havana, and Robin Pogrebin from New York.

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PHOTOS: Shattered windows at Central Park, a social housing project that contains the Museum of Modern Art in Caracas. A sculpture by James Mathison, right, is among the 4,500 collected works.; Clockwise from top: sculptures outside the museum, a card catalog of artworks and a sculpture by Alejandro Plaza of Venezuela. The museum was a victim of the Socialist government’s “cultural revolution.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

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[***‘We Belong in These Spaces’: Jackson’s Successors Reflect on Her Nomination***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655M-DTC1-DXY4-X304-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 7, 2022 Thursday 13:25 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1634 words

**Byline:** Linda Qiu and Lelanie Foster

**Highlight:** Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, who was confirmed to the Supreme Court on Thursday, will be the first Black woman to serve as a justice. Here’s what that means to Black women at her alma mater.

**Body**

‘We Belong in These Spaces’: Jackson’s Successors Reflect on Her Nomination

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — To many of the women who belong to the Harvard Black Law Students Association, the nomination of [*Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson*](https://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/ketanji-brown-jackson) to the Supreme Court has felt deeply personal.

Judge Jackson, an alumna of both Harvard Law School and the association, was confirmed by the Senate on Thursday and will become the first Black female justice in the court’s 233-year history.

Many of the women in the association have followed the nomination process closely, inspired by Judge Jackson’s selection and identifying with the barriers in her way. They spoke of walking through the same halls of power that have traditionally been dominated by white Americans, feeling the same pressures of having to be “near perfect” and wearing the same natural hairstyles that have been discriminated against.

The hostile questioning Judge Jackson faced at her confirmation hearings was all too familiar, some women said, reminiscent of their own experiences in classrooms and workplaces.

Her nomination also highlighted the relative rarity of Black women in the legal profession. Only [*4.7 percent of lawyers*](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/news/2021/0721/polp.pdf#page=18) are Black and [*just 70 Black women*](https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/02/02/black-women-account-for-a-small-fraction-of-the-federal-judges-who-have-served-to-date/) have ever served as a federal judge, representing fewer than 2 percent of all such judges. As of October, [*about 4.8 percent of those enrolled*](https://hls.harvard.edu/content/uploads/2019/03/Standard-509-Information-Report.pdf#page=2) in the law program at Harvard, or 84 people, identified as Black women, compared with just [*33 Black women in 1996*](https://clp.law.harvard.edu/assets/Report-on-the-State-of-Black-Alumni-I-1869-2000.pdf#page=29), when Judge Jackson graduated.

Those statistics are “isolating,” said Mariah K. Watson, the president of the association. “But there’s a comfort in community. There’s a comfort in shared experience. And now we have a role model who’s shown us what it’s going to take.”

We spoke to some of the women in the association. Here’s what they had to say about Judge Jackson’s nomination.

Abigail Hall

Abigail Hall, 23, had always wanted to be the first Black woman on the Supreme Court, but she conceded that “if I have to be second, I’m fine being second to K.B.J.”

“She’s had to meet every single mark and she hasn’t been able to drop the ball,” Ms. Hall said. “And that’s something that’s ingrained in us, in terms of checking every box, in order to be a Black woman and to get to a place like Harvard Law School.”

She likened Judge Jackson’s career path to the Marvel supervillain Thanos collecting Infinity Stones: “It’s inspiring for me because I’m at the beginning of my career. I’ve had to work to get here, but there’s so much work to do and that’s just motivating me to continue to break down those barriers, to meet my marks and get my Infinity Stones.”

Catherine Crevecoeur

When Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey, praised Judge Jackson after hours of intense questioning and told her “you are worthy,” Catherine Crevecoeur, 25, felt that he had articulated the discomfort she had experienced during the hearings.

“They were trying to plant seeds of distrust,” she said. “It’s not new. It’s very common, I think, to a lot of people of color in these spaces.”

Those doubts, Ms. Crevecoeur said, can manifest in a lot of ways, such as when a new acquaintance expresses surprise that she attends one of the most prestigious schools in the country, or grappling with impostor syndrome in her first year at law school. “That’s why it’s extra imperative for people to be represented and to see ourselves and to know that we belong in these spaces,” she said.

Mariah K. Watson

Mariah K. Watson said she was “brought to immediate tears” upon hearing of Judge Jackson’s nomination because “if there is going to be somebody who can test where America truly is and our acceptance in wanting to be reflective of what this nation is and can be in many different ways, breaking the mold, then she is the person to do that.”

Judge Jackson has carved out a path for Black women in law, Ms. Watson said, and for that, “I’m grateful for the hard steps and all of the chipping away that she’s doing right now so that the path is cleared or at least a little clearer for those who seek to come after her.”

Christina Coleburn

For Christina Coleburn, Judge Jackson’s nomination was a moment to consider legacy. As she listened to the judge recount her family history — of her grandmother’s dinners and her mother’s career in education — Ms. Coleburn, 27, thought of her own grandmother and mother.

“We’re our ancestors’ wildest dreams, some you’ve never gotten to meet,” she said. “I’m so lucky to still know mine, but to consider how their work made our lives possible, the things sometimes that people take for granted.”

“I’m glad that Judge Jackson brought all those things up,” she said, “because I think those are concepts on everyone’s at least in our community’s minds or almost everyone’s minds.”

Regina Fairfax

Regina Fairfax watched the confirmation hearings with an eye on not just one, but two, Black women she considers role models: her “Aunt Ketanji” and her mother, Lisa Fairfax, who roomed with Judge Jackson at Harvard decades earlier and introduced her on the second day of the proceedings.

“It was amazing just to see their love for each other and their friendship and their sisterhood,” Ms. Fairfax, 24, said. “I think that’s inspiring to everyone just listening to see a Black female relationship, but to me personally, just seeing how far they’ve come together and also that they really relied on each other, leaned on each other throughout the entire experience.”

Virginia Thomas

Virginia Thomas helped pass guidelines in New York [*banning hair discrimination*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/18/style/hair-discrimination-new-york-city.html) three years earlier, so seeing Judge Jackson “with sisterlocks, standing up there in her glory and her professionalism,” was particularly satisfying.

“It’s an opportunity for people to really visualize and see Black women doing what they do, which is being unapologetically successful, unapologetically confident in who they are,” Ms. Thomas, 31, said.

As a vice president for the Black Law Students Association, Ms. Thomas organized screenings of Judge Jackson’s confirmation hearings. The highlight, she said, was attracting the attention of security guards, cafeteria workers and custodians who work at the law school.

“Watching with the staff in the morning before students started trickling in after classes and realizing that this moment is bigger than just for law school nerds who love the Supreme Court,” she said. “It also matters for everyday people.”

She added, “Everyday people who look at this woman and think to themselves, ‘Wow, she did it.’”

Aiyanna Sanders

Aiyanna Sanders, 24, described her mixed emotions upon hearing of Judge Jackson’s nomination, celebrating the historic moment but lamenting how long it took to reach.

“This is a Black woman who went to Harvard undergrad, who went to Harvard Law School,” she said. “We are literally walking in her shoes as we walk through this hallway. And so it’s so close to home. Wow, these things are attainable. But also dang, why hasn’t it happened yet? Or why is it that in 2022 is the first time this has occurred?”

She added, “I think a nomination of a Supreme Court justice — a Black woman, an excellent Black woman who has surpassed all expectations — I think it just shows that you still have to fight hard, but you can get these things, you can obtain them.”

Gwendolyn Gissendanner

From her time growing up in a ***working-class*** community outside Detroit and working for Harvard’s student-run Legal Aid Bureau, Gwendolyn Gissendanner, 25, is acutely aware of how race and identity can affect a courtroom’s proceedings.

“We always have to think about what we need to do to make my often Black low-income clients appeal to a white judge who doesn’t understand their experience,” she said. “But someone who you don’t have to take the extra leap to prove to them that race interacts with every aspect of your life makes a giant difference in what types of decisions can be made.”

She added, “I think of the Supreme Court as such an inaccessible beacon, and the idea that someone who reflects my own identity is going to be in that space is kind of — I don’t even know if I’ve fully processed that yet.”

Brianna Banks

While watching President Biden announce Judge Jackson as his nominee to the Supreme Court, Brianna Banks, 26, started to cry “in what I thought at first was a cheesy way — this is such a cliché,” she recalled. But upon reflection, she realized the moment illuminated why she had never considered a career as judge or imagined herself as a justice.

“By the numbers, we have a lot of Supreme Court justices from Harvard Law School,” she said. “And I am one of the few students that I knew that could never be me, no matter what, because there had never been one that looked like me before. So it brought up this emotion because people tell you, you come from Harvard Law School, you can do whatever you want, there’s no job that isn’t open to you. But for Black women, that’s not always true, because there are a lot of spaces or jobs that we still have not occupied.”

“Now,” she added, “the sky is the limit.”

Zarinah Mustafa

As a first-generation college student who has had family members put behind bars, Zarinah Mustafa, 27, said she was particularly excited about Judge Jackson’s background as a public defender.

“I just feel like that perspective is so underrepresented and it doesn’t make sense why, in a country where we say that everyone deserves a vigorous defense,” she said.

“I care about defending the little folk, little people and I definitely see myself in her,” Ms. Mustafa added. “Maybe I’ll wear my Harvard sweatshirt to the airport now — I normally don’t — because she went here and she was part of the Harvard Black Law Students Association.”

Above all, Ms. Mustafa said, she was proud of and excited by Judge Jackson’s record: “This Black woman is just killing it.”

PHOTOS (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LELANIE FOSTER) (A12-A13)

**Load-Date:** November 15, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The Pity of the Elites; jay caspian kang***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:655P-2YN1-JBG3-61NX-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 7, 2022 Thursday 17:01 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1677 words

**Byline:** Jay Caspian Kang

**Highlight:** How prestigious universities value student trauma.

**Body**

When I was writing my book “The Loneliest Americans,” I spent a lot of time pondering a question: How does a person tell their own story in a fair way? The book has some elements from my own life, and I wanted to represent them well. My parents grew up in South Korea during the war. There were periods of my childhood in the United States when we were very poor. But I am now a comfortable man in his early 40s who has one of the most decadent luxuries a person can buy these days: a master’s degree in creative writing.

Every writer needs to make choices out of a lifetime of things that happen to them. I wondered how much I should mine those more difficult details to make myself more sympathetic to the reader. Should I obscure the various privileges that I’ve had since? I do not think back on my life as an unending sequence of generational traumas and discrimination, even though, despite whatever well-being I might have now, I probably have a solid claim to both. So which version is fair to me, my family and my readers?

I never really did resolve this question (in the book, I ended up talking through the idea of immigrant narrative choice without really committing to one trope or the other). I understood my incentives lay with a squalid tale of poverty, misery and discrimination, but I also couldn’t quite figure out how to tell that story in an honest way.

I was thinking about all this again when I read the journalist Rachel Aviv’s recent [*article*](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2022/04/04/mackenzie-fierceton-rhodes-scholarship-university-of-pennsylvania)in The New Yorker. Aviv tells the story of Mackenzie Fierceton, a former student at the University of Pennsylvania. When she was a teenager, she showed up bloodied and bruised at her elite private school. She was ultimately taken away from her mother, whom Fierceton claimed had abused her, and placed in foster care. She stayed at her school on a scholarship.

During her senior year, on her application to Penn, she left blank any personal data about her biological parents. As a result, the school’s coding system automatically labeled her application “first generation,” a term typically reserved for kids who are the first people in their family to go to college.

Fierceton’s mother was charged with felony child abuse and misdemeanor assault, but the charges were ultimately dropped. Accusations of parental abuse are difficult to prove. Even though teachers at Fierceton’s school had noticed that she sometimes had bruises, her mother claimed they were the result of falls.

Penn offered Fierceton a full scholarship, which she accepted. She began pursuing a degree in political science and applied for a hybrid master’s program at the university’s school of social work. On that application, she was asked if she was the first person in her family to attend college. She checked yes. By her logic, she did not have a family. She was accepted into the program.

In 2020, Fierceton applied for a Rhodes scholarship and was one of 32 students nationwide to win the prestigious award. Around that time, she gave an interview to a local paper. The article said that Fierceton had grown up “poor,” which she has denied telling the reporter. The father of one of her high school acquaintances ended up telling Penn that Fierceton might be misrepresenting her background. An investigation began that included a call to Fierceton’s mother, who told the school that her daughter had grown up in a loving home.

Penn notified the Rhodes Trust, which began its own investigation into whether Fierceton had presented the details of her life in a truthful manner. Despite her collecting over 20 letters from people who affirmed her credibility, including childhood friends and teachers, the trust recommended that her scholarship be rescinded. Penn added a notation on her undergraduate transcript that she’d been sanctioned and is withholding her master’s degree until she submits an apology letter to the university.

What struck me the most in Aviv’s excellent story was a passage from the Penn Office of Student Conduct’s report on its investigation: “Mackenzie may have centered certain aspects of her background to the exclusion of others — for reasons we are certain she feels are valid — in a way that creates a misimpression.”

This language — a pidgin of legal vagaries, therapy talk and academic social justice terms like “centered” — is ubiquitous at elite, progressive institutions. It is also generally incomprehensible and meaningless. But for the sake of argument, let’s try to take it at face value. What, exactly, did Fierceton “center” and what did she exclude?

Was the problem that a child who was placed into foster care and had no contact with her biological mother wasn’t actually a first-generation college student? Or was the real issue that Fierceton did not really fit the profile of a suffering student who needed the benevolence of an Ivy League school?

It’s clear that such institutions have constructed a loose, informal hierarchy of injustices and traumas. Fierceton’s upper middle class upbringing cuts against the horror she says she endured. The fact that she is white probably does, too. One can imagine a prototype of the type of student that people like Fierceton gets compared with: an impoverished BIPOC city kid who attends a “bad” public school but still manages to pursue academic excellence and community service or whatever. The type of student, in other words, whom places like the University of Pennsylvania, where only [*3.3 percent of the student body*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/college-mobility/university-of-pennsylvania) comes from families in the bottom 20 percent of income earners, has few of.

Aviv also writes about Anea Moore, a Black Penn student, who said she was endlessly paraded around by the university to tell her story of triumph over adversity. “Penn dragged me to every single news outlet that asked for an interview and sent a Penn communications person with me to make sure I said the right things,” Moore told Aviv. “It was, like, ‘Oh, yay, Penn has a Black Rhodes scholar with dead parents who grew up ***working class***.’”

Students like Moore make schools like Penn look virtuous and dogged in their commitment to social justice. And the likely reason they kept asking Moore to be that spokesperson was presumably because she was one of the only people on campus who actually fit the bill.

Students, of course, know all this, which, in turn, places pressure on applicants to present themselves as testaments to strength in the face of unending challenges. Last year, Elijah Megginson, then a senior in high school, wrote an [*Opinion*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/09/opinion/college-admissions-essays-trauma.html) piece about the conflict he felt over writing a college essay that he knew would reflect the difficulties of his life but would also define him in a way he resisted. He wrote:

In my life, I’ve had a lot of unfortunate experiences. So when it came time for me to write my personal statement for college applications, I knew that I could sell a story about all the struggles I had overcome. Each draft I wrote had a different topic. The first was about growing up without my dad being involved, the second was about the many times my life was violently threatened, the third was about coping with anxiety and PTSD, and the rest followed the same theme Every time I wrote, and then discarded and then redrafted, I didn’t feel good. It felt as if I were trying to gain pity. I knew what I went through was tough and to overcome those challenges was remarkable, but was that all I had to offer?

These trauma contests encourage a doctrinaire, almost algorithmic way of thinking about the hardships a person might have faced, many of which may be none of the admissions committee’s business. Emphasizing these details doesn’t mean that the students are lying, nor do I place any of the blame on them for trying to game a system they didn’t create.

Black students like Moore and Megginson are asked to perform their trauma whether they want to or not. White students who, like Mackenzie Fierceton, do not exactly fit the profile of the oppressed, apparently must sometimes prove their ordeals to a board of supposedly caring and equity-driven bureaucrats.

A compassionate society, especially one with as much inequality as the United States, should talk about discrimination and the very real ways some people’s lives are harder than others. We should talk about privilege and systemic racism and the ways in which the history of violence against Black, Latino, Native American and Asian people in this country still shape their lives today. But I do not understand how the trauma algorithms that currently exist at elite institutions advance any of these conversations.

Instead, most students, I believe, want to search for moments of solidarity with people from different backgrounds despite the pressures placed upon them to turn their life stories into cultural capital. My objection here isn’t so much a hysterical warning that these calculations will cause society to collapse, but more that we should simply reject them because we shouldn’t think about suffering and injustice in such hierarchical and craven ways. These students should be afforded a measure of privacy and dignity.

My hesitation to string my own collection of traumas and identities into an alluring narrative did not come from any dignity or bravery on my part. I just think there is a way in which the denial of one’s hardships constitutes a far more insidious form of dishonesty. But I am wary of the ways in which adversity has become currency in elite spaces, including the literary book market.

The economies around trauma are both bizarre and decadent. We don’t have to buy into the right-wing trope that people who talk about the discrimination they’ve faced are “playing the victim.” We can just think of students in a reasonable and human way and not as collections of horror stories that we should pity and then sort into hierarchies based on ridiculous definitions of trauma.

Have feedback? Send a note to [*kang-newsletter@nytimes.com*](mailto:kang-newsletter@nytimes.com).

Jay Caspian Kang ([*@jaycaspiankang*](https://twitter.com/jaycaspiankang?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)), a writer for Opinion and The New York Times Magazine, is the author of “The Loneliest Americans.”

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Alberto Miranda FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 7, 2022

**End of Document**



[***With Trump's Nod, Vance Rallies To Win Senate Primary in Ohio***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CC-9GF1-JBG3-61NB-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 4, 2022 Wednesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1760 words

**Byline:** By Shane Goldmacher and Jazmine Ulloa

**Body**

J.D. Vance, the author of ''Hillbilly Elegy,'' won a G.O.P. race that saw nearly $80 million in television advertising.

CINCINNATI -- J.D. Vance, the best-selling author whose ''Hillbilly Elegy'' about life in Appalachia illuminated a slice of the country that felt left behind, decisively won the Ohio Senate primary on Tuesday after a late endorsement by Donald J. Trump helped him surge past his rivals in a crowded field.

Casting himself as a fighter against the nation's elites, Mr. Vance ran as a Trump-style pugilist and outsider who railed against the threats of drugs, Democrats and illegal immigration, while thoroughly backpedaling from his past criticisms of the former president.

The contest, which saw nearly $80 million in television advertising, was one of the most anticipated of the 2022 primary season for its potential to provide an early signal of the direction of the Republican Party.

The result delivered a strong affirmation of Mr. Trump's continued grip on his party's base. But a fuller assessment of Mr. Trump's sway will come through a series of primaries in the next four weeks -- in West Virginia, North Carolina, Idaho, Pennsylvania and Georgia.

Mr. Vance had been trailing in most polls behind Josh Mandel, a former Ohio state treasurer who had also aggressively pursued Mr. Trump's backing, until the former president's mid-April endorsement helped vault Mr. Vance ahead. A third candidate, State Senator Matt Dolan, ran as a more traditional Republican, sometimes mocking his rivals for their unrelenting focus on the former president instead of Ohio issues and voters.

Cheers went up at Mr. Vance's Cincinnati election party when The Associated Press called the race shortly after 9:30 p.m.

''The people who are caught between the corrupt political class of the left and the right, they need a voice,'' Mr. Vance said in his victory speech. ''They need a representative. And that's going to be me.''

Mr. Vance is an unlikely champion of the Trumpian mantle, after calling the former president ''reprehensible'' in 2016 and even ''cultural heroin.'' But he had changed his tune entirely by 2022, and Mr. Trump called to congratulate him on his victory on Tuesday evening, according to a person briefed on the call.

With more than 90 percent of the vote counted, Mr. Vance was leading across almost the entire state. But the results also captured some of the tensions and demographic trade-offs of a Republican Party pulled in different directions as Mr. Dolan was strongest in the voter-rich cities of Cleveland and Columbus.

Trump-style Republicans did not prevail in the other top contest on Tuesday. Gov. Mike DeWine of Ohio, a more traditional Republican who has held offices in the state for more than 40 years, finished far ahead of his multiple primary rivals after a strong right-wing challenge never gained traction despite some conservative backlash to Mr. DeWine's early and assertive response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr. DeWine had almost double the votes of his closest rival, Jim Renacci, a former House member. In the fall, he will be running against Nan Whaley, the former mayor of Dayton, who won the Democratic nomination on Tuesday, becoming the first woman in Ohio history to be nominated by a major party for governor.

In the Senate race, Mr. Vance will now face Representative Tim Ryan, a 48-year-old Democrat from the Youngstown area who has positioned himself as a champion of blue-collar values and has not aligned with some of his party's more progressive positions.

If Mr. Vance prevails in the fall, the 37-year-old graduate of Yale Law School and investor would become the second-youngest member of the Senate, the chamber's youngest Republican and a rare freshman who would arrive in Washington with a national profile.

His book had achieved best seller status not just from conservatives but liberals, who in the wake of the 2016 election had used it as something of a decryption key to understand Mr. Trump's appeal in rural reaches of the country.

Mr. Vance's metamorphosis from an outspoken ''Never Trump'' Republican in 2016 to a full-throated Make America Great Again warrior in 2022 echoes the ideological journey of much of the party in recent years. Republicans have moved closer and closer to the former president's hard-line policy positions on issues like trade and immigration, and to his combative posture with Democrats and on cultural issues that divide the two parties. For some Republican voters, the primary was animated by fears that traditional family values and a white American culture were under attack by far-left Democrats, establishment Republicans and elites.

From the very start, Mr. Vance did have a crucial financial benefactor: His former boss, Peter Thiel, the Silicon Valley investor who pledged $10 million to Mr. Vance even before he formally joined the contest and who added millions more in the final stretch to trumpet Mr. Trump's endorsement in the last weeks.

The Senate primary was unusual in the extent that it unfolded in two places at once. In Ohio, there was the typical fevered competition for votes, in town halls, debates and television ads. In Florida, there was the battle for Mr. Trump's approval at Mar-a-Lago, the former president's private club, with public shows of fealty, lobbying by surrogates and shuttle diplomacy. In one episode last year, multiple Ohio candidates vied for Mr. Trump's support in front of one another at an impromptu meeting at Mar-a-Lago.

In a verbal flub that seemed almost fitting to how the candidates ran, Mr. Trump accidentally conjoined the names of two rivals over the weekend. ''We've endorsed J.P., right?'' Mr. Trump said at a rally in Nebraska. ''J.D. Mandel.''

Mr. Trump's endorsement set off a frenzy among Ohio Republicans who questioned Mr. Vance's Republican credentials, with rivals circulating fliers online and at a Trump rally accusing him of being a Democrat in disguise and resurrecting his past comments against Mr. Trump.

Mr. Mandel had been the front-runner for much of the race, casting himself as the true pro-Trump candidate (''Pro-God. Pro-Guns. Pro-Trump'' was the tagline in his TV ads). But that became an all-but-impossible argument to prosecute in the final weeks after Mr. Trump picked Mr. Vance.

''If the whole issue in the campaign is who is most Trump-like, expect it to work against you when you don't get the endorsement,'' said Rex Elsass, an Ohio-based Republican strategist.

At a restaurant in the Cleveland suburb of Beachwood on Tuesday, more than a dozen Mandel supporters and campaign volunteers struck an optimistic tone at the start of the night, expressing confidence. But it was not too long before Mr. Mandel took the podium to deliver the news.

Mr. Mandel told the crowd that he called Mr. Vance ''to congratulate him on a hard-fought victory'' and would do what he could to help get him elected. ''The stakes are too high for this country to not support the nominee,'' Mr. Mandel said to a round of applause in the room.

Beyond Mr. Vance, Mr. Dolan and Mr. Mandel, the crowded race included a single female candidate, Jane Timken, a former Ohio Republican Party chair, who was backed by the retiring incumbent, Senator Rob Portman, as well as Mike Gibbons, a businessman who poured millions of his own money into the race and at one point had climbed to the top of the polls.

Mr. Dolan had toiled for most of the contest far behind the polling leaders, avoiding direct attacks from his rivals. But he tapped into his own fortune to fund more than $11 million in television ads as he cut a path separate from the rest of the Trump-focused field by refusing to amplify the falsehood that the 2020 election was rigged. At one debate, Mr. Dolan was the lone candidate to raise his hand to say the former president should stop talking about the 2020 election.

The contest was nasty and lengthy, with nothing capturing the intensity more than a near-physical confrontation between Mr. Gibbons and Mr. Mandel at one March debate, where they bumped bellies as they lobbed verbal threats at one another.

Mr. Vance scolded them both. ''Sit down. Come on,'' he said. ''This is ridiculous.''

Much of the race was shaped by huge sums spent on television -- nearly $80 million, according to the ad-tracking firm AdImpact, with a lot of it coming from outside groups and out-of-state donors. The conservative Club for Growth spent more than $12 million on television ads aimed to boost Mr. Mandel or tear down his rivals.

Mr. Thiel, the Silicon Valley investor, seeded a pro-Vance super PAC with $10 million in early 2021 -- months before Mr. Vance even entered the race. Mr. Vance is one of two former Thiel employees -- the other is Blake Masters in Arizona -- running for Senate with Mr. Thiel's hefty financial backing. Mr. Thiel had served as a key link between Mr. Vance and Mr. Trump, attending an introductory meeting between them in early 2021.

The politics of Ohio have changed drastically in the Trump era. Once the quintessential presidential swing state, Ohio broke for Mr. Trump by 8 percentage points in both 2016 and 2020, ending a half-century streak of the state backing the national winner. Republicans have sharply run up their margins among ***working-class*** white voters and in more rural areas, offsetting the losses that the party has suffered in the state's suburbs around cities like Columbus and Cleveland.

In the Democratic primary, Mr. Ryan, who briefly ran for president in 2020, easily turned back a primary challenge from Morgan Harper, 38, a former adviser at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau who ran as a progressive, banking $5 million for the general election.

Mr. Ryan has already run an anti-China ad that focuses on Ohio jobs and his opening ad of the general election has him tossing darts inside a bar and seeking to separate himself from the broader Democratic brand, lamenting those who have called for defunding the police.

But Mr. Ryan faces an uphill race in a state that has trended Republican and in a year when his party is saddled with President Biden's low approval ratings. Some Republicans see Mr. Ryan as formidable -- Mr. Trump among them -- but the general election is not seen by either party as among the half-dozen closest contests that will determine control of the Senate, now divided evenly 50-50.

Shane Goldmacher reported from Cincinnati. Jazmine Ulloa reported from Beachwood, Ohio.Shane Goldmacher reported from Cincinnati. Jazmine Ulloa reported from Beachwood, Ohio.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/us/politics/vance-wins-trump-senate-primary-ohio.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/03/us/politics/vance-wins-trump-senate-primary-ohio.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: J.D. Vance in Cincinnati after his Republican primary victory. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE McGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1)

Above, voters in Columbus, Ohio, on Tuesday. Josh Mandel, below left, who had also pursued Donald J. Trump's backing in the Senate primary, conceding on Tuesday. Gov. Mike DeWine, below right, a more traditional Republican, easily won his primary. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

BRIAN KAISER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

PAUL VERNON/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A19)

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

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[***Sanders, Canceling Rally In Mississippi, Suggests He's All In on Midwest***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC4-YMR1-JBG3-6067-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 6, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 1199 words

**Byline:** By Sydney Ember

**Body**

The decision suggests that the Sanders campaign is largely ceding another Southern state to Joseph R. Biden Jr. and going all-in on the Midwest instead.

BURLINGTON, Vt. -- Senator Bernie Sanders has canceled a planned rally in Jackson, Miss., and will instead travel to Michigan on Friday, a striking indication that his presidential campaign is shifting its focus to the Midwest and largely ceding another Southern state to former Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr., according to people familiar with the plans.

After holding a rally in Phoenix on Thursday night, Mr. Sanders had been scheduled to travel to Jackson on Friday for a rally focused on racial justice.

The change in plans suggests that Mr. Sanders will not challenge Mr. Biden for the support of black voters in the South -- a vital base in the Democratic Party -- and is instead going all-in on the Midwest as he tries to compete with Mr. Biden for ***working-class*** voters there. Black voters in the South have overwhelmingly backed Mr. Biden to this point, and on Super Tuesday this week their support lifted him in states like Alabama, North Carolina and Virginia.

In Alabama, Mr. Sanders won only 9 percent of black voters, compared with 72 percent for Mr. Biden, according to exit polls. Mr. Biden outperformed Mr. Sanders among black voters in Virginia by more than 50 points, and by 40 points or more in Texas and North Carolina. In several states, Mr. Sanders came in third among black voters, behind not only Mr. Biden but also Michael R. Bloomberg.

Mr. Bloomberg quit the race a day later, and Mr. Sanders's ideological rival on the left, Senator Elizabeth Warren, announced on Thursday that she was dropping out as well, effectively making the Democratic contest a two-man race between Mr. Sanders and Mr. Biden.

The shift in Mr. Sanders's schedule was also an acknowledgment that he had not improved his standing among black voters in the South four years after his first run for president. In 2016, he faced criticism for his inability to organize support from African-Americans, a weakness that contributed to his loss to Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary.

Speaking to reporters in Burlington on Thursday, Mr. Sanders acknowledged the scheduling change but said his campaign was sending staff members to Mississippi, which votes next Tuesday, along with Michigan and four other states. Michigan is the biggest prize of that day, awarding more than three times the pledged delegates of Mississippi.

''If possible, I will try to get to Mississippi,'' Mr. Sanders said. ''You can't go every place.''

''We're very proud of the fact that we have strong support in the African-American community,'' he added. ''We are going to be working with the African-American community, the Muslim community, in Michigan, and in every state in the country.''

Asked if he saw a path forward for his campaign without winning Michigan, Mr. Sanders said he did. ''Every state is important,'' he said. ''Michigan is very, very important.''

He also acknowledged Ms. Warren's exit from the race, crediting her with running a ''strong, issue-oriented campaign'' that ''changed political consciousness in America.''

''I would simply say to her supporters out there, of whom there are millions, we are opening the door to you, we would love you to come on board,'' Mr. Sanders said. ''Together I think we can win this primary process.''

Sanders aides are confident that Mr. Sanders lines up favorably against Mr. Biden in the industrial Midwest, and they have already laid out plans to highlight Mr. Biden's record on trade, which includes voting for the North American Free Trade Agreement. While many blue-collar voters say they feel a connection to Mr. Biden, many have also grown increasingly suspicious of free trade in the Trump era.

In an interview, Faiz Shakir, the campaign manager for Mr. Sanders, said the campaign was considering running an ad in Midwestern states like Michigan and Ohio that will emphasize Mr. Biden's record on trade, and Mr. Sanders has already added blistering remarks about Mr. Biden into his stump speech.

''I will be talking in Michigan about the fact that Joe supported disastrous trade agreements,'' Mr. Sanders said Thursday.

At an event in Phoenix on Thursday night, his first rally since Super Tuesday, Mr. Sanders laced into Mr. Biden for his record on trade, the Iraq war and Social Security, as he has done recently.

But he also opened two new lines of attack, knocking Mr. Biden for his past votes for the ''don't ask, don't tell'' policy that prohibited openly gay people from serving in the military and for his past support for the Hyde Amendment, a measure that bans federal funding for most abortions.

''When you've got two candidates, unlike when you have 18 candidates, it is possible to really contrast the views of the candidates,'' Mr. Sanders said. ''That's what I'm going to do.''

There was a brief disruption at the rally in Phoenix when a man in the crowd unfurled a Nazi flag bearing a swastika, before he was quickly removed. ''The senator is aware of the flag with the swastika on it and is disturbed by it,'' said Mike Casca, a campaign spokesman. Mr. Sanders is Jewish.

A crucial part of Mr. Sanders's argument has been the idea that he is the most electable candidate, able to defeat President Trump in a general election by appealing to the same ***working-class*** white voters who helped hand Mr. Trump his victory in 2016. But among aides and advisers, there has been a growing recognition that his claim hinges on his ability to demonstrate this strength in Midwestern states during the primary.

Mr. Sanders's disappointing performance on Super Tuesday -- he won only four states to Mr. Biden's 10 -- has only increased the sense of urgency inside his campaign.

At a news conference on Wednesday, Mr. Sanders said he was ''disappointed'' in the Super Tuesday results. And in an extraordinary concession, he admitted that his campaign had not managed to generate the soaring turnout among young people that he had banked on to secure the nomination.

While Mr. Sanders has managed to draw support in high numbers among other demographic groups, including Latino voters, his deficit with black voters in the South was central to his losses on Super Tuesday.

Rather than cite his own shortcomings, however, Mr. Sanders has pointed to his opponents' strong connections with African-American voters. In an interview on Wednesday night with Rachel Maddow of MSNBC, he suggested that Mr. Biden was benefiting from his relationship with former President Barack Obama -- and used a parallel argument to explain his deficit in 2016 as well.

''We're running against somebody who has touted his relationship with Barack Obama for eight years,'' Mr. Sanders said. ''Barack Obama is enormously popular in this country in general and the African-American community. Running against Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton was enormously popular.''

''It's not that I'm not popular,'' he added. ''Biden is running with his ties to Obama and that's working well.''

He also said he was generally doing well among voters of color, including Latinos, and with younger black voters.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democratic-primary.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/05/us/politics/bernie-sanders-democratic-primary.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders is turning his focus to Michigan, a ''very, very important'' state in the race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACOB HANNAH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

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[***Persistent Scandals Darken Storm Clouds Around Britain's Leader***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6499-K7X1-JBG3-620H-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 14, 2021 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 5

**Length:** 1262 words

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

**Body**

The British prime minister is facing a new virus variant, a rebellious Conservative Party, collapsing poll ratings and questions about whether he or his staff flouted the lockdown rules.

LONDON -- When Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain warned his country in a televised address on Sunday night that a tidal wave was coming, he might well have been talking about his own political future.

Mr. Johnson's reference was to the latest coronavirus variant, which is sweeping across Britain and prompted him to ramp up a campaign to deliver 18 million booster shots by New Year's Day. But the prime minister faces a different kind of deluge: from a rebellious Conservative Party, collapsing poll ratings and persistent questions about whether he or his staff flouted the very lockdown rules they imposed on the public.

The cascade of bad news is so extreme that it has raised questions about whether Mr. Johnson will even hang on to power until the next election. It is an ominous turn for a leader who has long defied political gravity, surviving scandals and setbacks that would have sunk many other politicians.

''It's not the end for him, but I think it's the beginning of the end,'' said Jonathan Powell, who served as chief of staff to a Labour prime minister, Tony Blair. ''The problem is that these crises have a cumulative effect. As soon as he ceases to be an asset and the party is facing an election, they'll get rid of him.''

With no general election likely for at least two years, there is no immediate threat to Mr. Johnson from the voters. But if Conservative lawmakers decide that Mr. Johnson's unpopularity is jeopardizing their political futures, they have the power to eject him through an internal leadership vote -- or a vote of no confidence. For the first time, political analysts and party members said, such a challenge seems plausible.

Mr. Powell cautioned that this could be a protracted drama; Mr. Johnson, 57, has shown an almost preternatural ability to bounce back from adversity, and despite the recent disgruntlement in his party, he retains an advantage of about 80 seats in Parliament.

But this week showcases the sheer number of problems threatening him, from a difficult vote in Parliament on the virus restrictions he announced, to an election in which the Conservative Party is at risk of losing a once-safe seat.

Then, too, there are a swirl of questions following the disclosure that Mr. Johnson's staff held a Christmas party last year at a time when the government was instructing the public not to go to parties or even visit with family members. Mr. Johnson was pictured attending another get-together at 10 Downing Street -- a Christmas quiz over Zoom, with two festively-clad colleagues at his side -- around that time, which will add to the perception of a double standard for those in power.

The backlash has been swift and stark. Mr. Johnson's rating has plummeted to 24 percent approval and 59 percent disapproval, the lowest of his tenure, according to a poll by the market research firm Opinium. The opposition Labour Party has jumped to a lead over the Conservatives of 9 percentage points, its largest advantage since February 2014.

''The thing that should most worry the prime minister is that while the Tory share has dipped quite clearly, the ratings for the prime minister have dipped even more,'' said Robert Hayward, a Conservative member of the House of Lords and a polling expert. ''The message is quite clear: that this is at the prime minister's door.''

For Mr. Johnson, the rapidly spreading Omicron variant could help him politically, giving him a fresh public-health crisis around which to mobilize another national vaccination campaign. Britain's rapid rollout of vaccines early in the year buoyed the government, though the pace fell off later in the summer, and Britain's rate of fully vaccinated people now trails those of France, Italy and Portugal.

There was anecdotal evidence on Monday that Mr. Johnson's urgent call for booster shots had resonated with the public: people booked more than 110,000 appointments by 9 a.m. on Monday morning, causing the National Health Service's website to crash under the weight of the demand. Long lines formed outside vaccination sites, including one snaking around St. Thomas's Hospital, across the river from Parliament in London.

Mr. Johnson's target of injecting all people aged 18 and older with a booster by the end of this month -- a month earlier than the target he set on Nov. 30 -- seems far-fetched at best. But some experts point out that even if the N.H.S. achieved the goal, it would not avert a surge in infections, since the variant was already circulating widely in the population.

''It's probably too late,'' said Tim Spector, a professor of genetic epidemiology at Kings College London. ''The boost takes a week to work, and Omicron will have taken over from Delta in two weeks.''

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The backbenches of the Conservative Party are simmering with frustration about what many perceive as the government's incompetence and Mr. Johnson's serial duplicity. In addition to the holiday party affair -- which is under investigation and could result in a finding of wrongdoing later this week -- he faces questions over whether he misled his ethics adviser when he denied that he knowingly used political donations to pay for the costly refurbishment of his Downing Street apartment.

The drumbeat of questions about Mr. Johnson's honesty has chipped away at his support, even in the pro-Tory news media. Daniel Hodges, a columnist in the right-leaning Mail on Sunday, recently likened Mr. Johnson to former President Richard M. Nixon and accused his aides of lying consistently.

''There are several reasons for this,'' Mr. Hodges wrote. ''One is obviously Boris himself. As a former minister said: 'He treats facts like he treats all his relationships -- utterly disposable once inconvenient.'''

In the normally friendly Daily Telegraph, for which Mr. Johnson once worked, Allister Heath, a prominent conservative journalist, questioned whether the prime minister could recover. ''There is an overpowering fin-de-regime stench emanating from Downing Street that can no longer be ignored,'' he wrote.

An early test of Mr. Johnson's resilience will come on Thursday, when voters in North Shropshire, a district near Wales, fill a seat vacated after a Conservative lawmaker, Owen Paterson, resigned in a flap over his outside lobbying activities. Oddsmakers now expect the Tories to lose the seat to the Liberal Democrats.

That would be a demoralizing setback for both Mr. Johnson and his party; those are the type of ***working-class*** voters who swept Mr. Johnson to power and whom he needs to hold on to if he wants to win again in the next election.

''The Tories are more willing to get rid of their leaders than the other political parties: we do it much more quickly and ruthlessly,'' Mr. Hayward said. ''But the loss of support is attritional; it isn't over one particular event.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/world/europe/boris-johnson-uk-coronavirus.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/13/world/europe/boris-johnson-uk-coronavirus.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Demonstrators outside Parliament in London rallied against Covid passports and other virus restrictions. Lawmakers are expected to vote on those measures Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Bernie Sanders Cancels Mississippi Rally, Shifting Focus to Michigan***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5YC0-5271-DXY4-X2M0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 5, 2020 Thursday 10:52 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1231 words

**Byline:** Sydney Ember

**Highlight:** The decision suggests that the Sanders campaign is largely ceding another Southern state to Joseph R. Biden Jr. and going all-in on the Midwest instead.

**Body**

The decision suggests that the Sanders campaign is largely ceding another Southern state to Joseph R. Biden Jr. and going all-in on the Midwest instead.

BURLINGTON, Vt. — Senator [*Bernie Sanders*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) has canceled a planned rally in Jackson, Miss., and will instead travel to Michigan on Friday, a striking indication that his presidential campaign is shifting its focus to the Midwest and largely ceding another Southern state to former Vice President   [*Joseph R. Biden Jr.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html), according to people familiar with the plans.

After holding a rally in Phoenix on Thursday night, Mr. Sanders had been scheduled to travel to Jackson on Friday for a rally focused on racial justice.

[Read: [*As Bernie Sanders pushed for closer ties, the Soviet Union spotted opportunity*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html).]

The change in plans suggests that Mr. Sanders will not challenge Mr. Biden for the support of black voters in the South — a vital base in the Democratic Party — and is instead going all-in on the Midwest as he tries to compete with Mr. Biden for ***working-class*** voters there. Black voters in the South have overwhelmingly backed Mr. Biden to this point, and on Super Tuesday this week their support lifted him in states like [*Alabama*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html),   [*North Carolina*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) and   [*Virginia*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html).

In Alabama, Mr. Sanders won only 9 percent of black voters, compared with 72 percent for Mr. Biden, according to exit polls. Mr. Biden outperformed Mr. Sanders among black voters in Virginia by more than 50 points, and by 40 points or more in Texas and North Carolina. In several states, Mr. Sanders came in third among black voters, behind not only Mr. Biden but also Michael R. Bloomberg.

Mr. Bloomberg quit the race a day later, and Mr. Sanders’s ideological rival on the left, Senator Elizabeth Warren, [*announced on Thursday*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) that she was dropping out as well, effectively making the Democratic contest a two-man race between Mr. Sanders and Mr. Biden.

The shift in Mr. Sanders’s schedule was also an acknowledgment that he had not improved his standing among black voters in the South four years after his first run for president. In 2016, he faced criticism for his inability to organize support from African-Americans, a weakness that contributed to his loss to Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primary.

Speaking to reporters in Burlington on Thursday, Mr. Sanders acknowledged the scheduling change but said his campaign was sending staff members to Mississippi, which votes next Tuesday, along with Michigan and four other states. Michigan is the biggest prize of that day, awarding more than three times the pledged delegates of Mississippi.

“If possible, I will try to get to Mississippi,” Mr. Sanders said. “You can’t go every place.”

“We’re very proud of the fact that we have strong support in the African-American community,” he added. “We are going to be working with the African-American community, the Muslim community, in Michigan, and in every state in the country.”

Asked if he saw a path forward for his campaign without winning Michigan, Mr. Sanders said he did. “Every state is important,” he said. “Michigan is very, very important.”

He also acknowledged Ms. Warren’s exit from the race, crediting her with running a “strong, issue-oriented campaign” that “changed political consciousness in America.”

“I would simply say to her supporters out there, of whom there are millions, we are opening the door to you, we would love you to come on board,” Mr. Sanders said. “Together I think we can win this primary process.”

Sanders aides are confident that Mr. Sanders lines up favorably against Mr. Biden in the industrial Midwest, and they have already laid out plans to highlight Mr. Biden’s record on trade, which includes voting for the North American Free Trade Agreement. While many blue-collar voters [*say they feel a connection*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) to Mr. Biden, many have also grown   [*increasingly suspicious of free trade*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/elections/bernie-sanders.html) in the Trump era.

In an interview, Faiz Shakir, the campaign manager for Mr. Sanders, said the campaign was considering running an ad in Midwestern states like Michigan and Ohio that will emphasize Mr. Biden’s record on trade, and Mr. Sanders has already added blistering remarks about Mr. Biden into his stump speech.

“I will be talking in Michigan about the fact that Joe supported disastrous trade agreements,” Mr. Sanders said Thursday.

At an event in Phoenix on Thursday night, his first rally since Super Tuesday, Mr. Sanders laced into Mr. Biden for his record on trade, the Iraq war and Social Security, as he has done recently.

But he also opened two new lines of attack, knocking Mr. Biden for his past votes for the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy that prohibited openly gay people from serving in the military and for his past support for the Hyde Amendment, a measure that bans federal funding for most abortions.

“When you’ve got two candidates, unlike when you have 18 candidates, it is possible to really contrast the views of the candidates,” Mr. Sanders said. “That’s what I’m going to do.”

There was a brief disruption at the rally in Phoenix when a man in the crowd unfurled a Nazi flag bearing a swastika, before he was quickly removed. “The senator is aware of the flag with the swastika on it and is disturbed by it,” said Mike Casca, a campaign spokesman. Mr. Sanders is Jewish.

A crucial part of Mr. Sanders’s argument has been the idea that he is the most electable candidate, able to defeat President Trump in a general election by appealing to the same ***working-class*** white voters who helped hand Mr. Trump his victory in 2016. But among aides and advisers, there has been a growing recognition that his claim hinges on his ability to demonstrate this strength in Midwestern states during the primary.

Mr. Sanders’s disappointing performance on Super Tuesday — he won only four states to Mr. Biden’s 10 — has only increased the sense of urgency inside his campaign.

At a news conference on Wednesday, Mr. Sanders said he was “disappointed” in the Super Tuesday results. And in an extraordinary concession, he admitted that his campaign had not managed to generate the soaring turnout among young people that he had banked on to secure the nomination.

While Mr. Sanders has managed to draw support in high numbers among other demographic groups, including Latino voters, his deficit with black voters in the South was central to his losses on Super Tuesday.

Rather than cite his own shortcomings, however, Mr. Sanders has pointed to his opponents’ strong connections with African-American voters. In an interview on Wednesday night with Rachel Maddow of MSNBC, he suggested that Mr. Biden was benefiting from his relationship with former President Barack Obama — and used a parallel argument to explain his deficit in 2016 as well.

“We’re running against somebody who has touted his relationship with Barack Obama for eight years,” Mr. Sanders said. “Barack Obama is enormously popular in this country in general and the African-American community. Running against Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton was enormously popular.”

“It’s not that I’m not popular,” he added. “Biden is running with his ties to Obama and that’s working well.”

He also said he was generally doing well among voters of color, including Latinos, and with younger black voters.

PHOTO: Senator Bernie Sanders is turning his focus to Michigan, a “very, very important” state in the race. (PHOTOGRAPH BY JACOB HANNAH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Do We Look Down on the Less Educated?; letters***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60TP-7XN1-JBG3-605X-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 12, 2020 Saturday 12:00 EST

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**Section:** OPINION; letters

**Length:** 1383 words

**Highlight:** Readers respond to an Op-Ed arguing that the contributions of those without a diploma have been devalued.

**Body**

Readers respond to an Op-Ed arguing that the contributions of those without a diploma have been devalued.

To the Editor:

Re “[*The Consequences of the Diploma Divide*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/02/opinion/education-prejudice.html),” by Michael J. Sandel (Sunday Review, Sept. 6):

I grew up the son of Danish immigrants. My father managed a thoroughbred breeding farm in Lexington, Ky. Through this unique circumstance I was able to go to cocktail parties with very wealthy, well-educated people. But I also worked on the farm with the hillbillies from eastern Kentucky who had little or no education, some completely illiterate.

Thankfully my parents instilled in me the belief that you respect everyone, not just for what they have, but who they are. I learned a lot from those poor uneducated hillbillies.

Now that I live in the liberal bastion of Amherst, Mass., I clearly see that not everybody learned that lesson of respect for everyone. Many liberal elites completely miss the point that Mr. Sandel is making in his piece and therefore cannot fully understand the Trump phenomenon. Thanks, Mr. Sandel, for articulating the need for understanding and respect, even in a meritocracy.

Niels la Cour

Amherst, Mass.

To the Editor:

Let me get out my tiny violin. Only an entitled white man would try to argue that the “less educated” have had it worse than women and people of color. Women and people of color cannot change biology. The “less educated” can obtain more education.

Coming from a family of eight kids, I paid for my own tuition. I received neither government nor parental aid. Was it Harvard? No. It was far from it. It was a midsize state school that provided me the opportunity to jump economic classes and make enough money to be able to send my daughter to Princeton. Many other Americans have done the same with aid, scholarships, military benefits, community resources and the like.

Please do not minimize gender and racial discrimination. That is dismissive. Instead do something positive and show the “uneducated” how to become “educated.”

Margaret Gottlieb

Washington

The writer is career director at the Graduate School of Political Management at the George Washington University.

To the Editor:

Michael Sandel rightly calls for a shift in our American values to reward and respect workers across our country, many of whom have traditionally been demeaned and mistreated both financially and in spirit. But such a cultural change first requires an internal shift in values among the people with whom we live.

When I left the practice of law to become a high school English teacher, even my own mother struggled with what she perceived as my loss in status (and a salary cut in half), trying to call me “professor.” I told her she didn’t need to gussy it up — I was proud to be a secondary school teacher. And many of my friends thought I had left the law because I didn’t like the pressure; they failed to understand that teaching scores of 15-year-olds day in and day out could be more pressured than making an argument in front of a federal judge.

So clearly if even my own loving mother and friends struggled to accept my new working status, just think what others assume about “mere” teachers. Or custodians. Or truck drivers. Or blue-collar factory workers, sanitation workers, hospital orderlies, day care workers, grocery clerks and home care providers.

We are seeing in this pandemic the innate value to our society of frontline workers like these, and it is high time that we reward and respect all of our workers.

Such a reframing of our cultural values must begin with very private conversations in each of our homes … with our own mothers.

James Berkman

Boston

To the Editor:

Michael Sandel’s suspicion of meritocracy is misplaced. The ***working class*** in fact prizes success, wealth, status and fame. They want it for themselves and, more important, for their children and their children’s children.

What many members of the ***working class*** and increasingly also the middle class are furious about, and what politicians like Donald Trump have tapped into, is the broken promise of the American dream. Forty years of deeply unfair economic policy have made American social mobility among the worst of high-income countries. Many other high-income countries — such as Australia, Canada, the Netherlands, Japan and Portugal — also celebrate merit, have conspicuously higher social mobility than the United States and have not been roiled by a populist backlash.

Mr. Sandel persuasively accuses liberal politicians of treating the legitimate economic grievances of voters with great disdain. The problem, however, is not the celebration of merit, but profound economic unfairness that fails to live up to the ideals of meritocracy.

Economic unfairness — symptoms of which include low social mobility and a broken meritocracy — explains the global wave of populism. Blaming merit will only make the problem worse.

Eric Protzer

Paul Summerville

The writers are the co-authors of “Reclaiming Populism.”

To the Editor:

I read with interest Michael Sandel’s excellent piece on credentialism. Although surely many readers were struck by the irony of a Harvard professor publishing a piece opposing credentialism on the Op-Ed page of The New York Times.

Sam I. Hill

Gosport, Ind.

To the Editor:

I appreciate most of what Michael Sandel says. One thing we have learned from the pandemic is that the most essential workers in our economy, the people we need and should value the most, are often those who are paid the least and accorded the least respect.

I do reject Professor Sandel’s notion that we should look beyond the elite in choosing our political leaders. But I define “the elite” broadly as those who stand out by virtue of superior knowledge, skill, intelligence, experience, wisdom, maturity, courage, humility, compassion, honesty. (Today’s most powerful leader in the world possesses the opposite of all of these qualities.)

We want leaders who are better than ourselves, men and women we and our children can look up to (though not uncritically). But just as important, we want leaders who will not look down on any of us. Our challenge as citizens in a democracy — one we sometimes fail — is to recognize excellence and select leaders of that caliber.

Michael P. Bacon

Westbrook, Maine

To the Editor:

Michael J. Sandel writes near the end of his essay: “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.”

Professor Sandel, non-degreed individuals often choose their occupations as deliberately as you chose your own. To imply that these choices are accidents of birth, grace or the result of some cosmic influence is to imply that these non-degreed individuals are victims of circumstance.

My father had an eighth-grade education but loved his work in machine repair in an auto plant. His brother graduated from college and had a successful career at a major newspaper. Thanks to my father’s union-negotiated pension and my uncle’s blue chip stock, they both lived comfortably in their retirement. Your remark is demeaning.

Joan Evangelisti

Racine, Wis.

To the Editor:

America has been the “land of opportunity” because anyone willing to put talent and ability to work can succeed. The American dream is fundamentally meritocratic. Regardless of what degree we have (or not) and from where, we believe that people should go as far and high as their character and capability take them.

Intelligence, wisdom and judgment don’t require — and aren’t magically transmitted through — a diploma. Nor does a diploma guarantee success.

The article claims that those with degrees from prestigious universities look down with disdain on those who are less educated. That is a false generalization. I for one reserve my disdain for those who have position and status without merit. Who refuse to learn and who deny truth, science and history. Who exploit and appeal to fear and anger rather than logic and reason. And who feel aggrieved and entitled to anything more than the opportunity to earn success.

Jay Markowitz

Pound Ridge, N.Y.

To the Editor:

Mr. Sandel is obviously not overweight if he thinks being undereducated is “the last acceptable prejudice.”

Elaine Luther

Oakmont, Pa.

PHOTO:   (PHOTOGRAPH BY Illustration by Elena Scotti; photographs by Getty Images FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 12, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Boris Johnson Is in Trouble. The Question Is, How Much?***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6495-MJ01-JBG3-61RV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 13, 2021 Monday 18:06 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1287 words

**Byline:** Mark Landler and Stephen Castle

**Highlight:** The British prime minister is facing a new virus variant, a rebellious Conservative Party, collapsing poll ratings and questions about whether he or his staff flouted the lockdown rules.

**Body**

The British prime minister is facing a new virus variant, a rebellious Conservative Party, collapsing poll ratings and questions about whether he or his staff flouted the lockdown rules.

LONDON — When Prime Minister Boris Johnson of Britain warned his country in a televised address on Sunday night that a tidal wave was coming, he might well have been talking about his own political future.

Mr. Johnson’s reference was to the latest coronavirus variant, which is sweeping across Britain and prompted him to ramp up a campaign [*to deliver 18 million booster shots by New Year’s Day*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/12/world/europe/uk-boosters.html). But the prime minister faces a different kind of deluge: from a rebellious Conservative Party, collapsing poll ratings and persistent questions about whether [*he or his staff flouted the very lockdown rules they imposed on the public*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/boris-johnson-christmas-coronavirus.html).

The cascade of bad news is so extreme that it has raised questions about whether Mr. Johnson will even hang on to power until the next election. It is an ominous turn for a leader who has long defied political gravity, surviving scandals and setbacks that would have sunk many other politicians.

“It’s not the end for him, but I think it’s the beginning of the end,” said Jonathan Powell, who served as chief of staff to a Labour prime minister, Tony Blair. “The problem is that these crises have a cumulative effect. As soon as he ceases to be an asset and the party is facing an election, they’ll get rid of him.”

With no general election likely for at least two years, there is no immediate threat to Mr. Johnson from the voters. But if Conservative lawmakers decide that Mr. Johnson’s unpopularity is jeopardizing their political futures, they have the power to eject him through an internal leadership vote — or a vote of no confidence. For the first time, political analysts and party members said, such a challenge seems plausible.

Mr. Powell cautioned that this could be a protracted drama; Mr. Johnson, 57, has shown an almost preternatural ability to bounce back from adversity, and despite the recent disgruntlement in his party, he retains an advantage of about 80 seats in Parliament.

But this week showcases the sheer number of problems threatening him, from a difficult vote in Parliament on the virus restrictions he announced, to an election in which the Conservative Party is at risk of losing a once-safe seat.

Then, too, there are a swirl of questions following the disclosure that Mr. Johnson’s staff held a Christmas party last year at a time when the government was instructing the public not to go to parties or even visit with family members. Mr. Johnson was pictured attending another get-together at 10 Downing Street — a Christmas quiz over Zoom, with two festively clad colleagues at his side — around that time, which will add to the perception of a double standard for those in power.

The backlash has been swift and stark. Mr. Johnson’s rating has plummeted to 24 percent approval and 59 percent disapproval, the lowest of his tenure, [*according to a poll by the market research firm Opinium.*](https://www.opinium.com/resource-center/uk-voting-intention-10th-december-2021/) The opposition Labour Party has jumped to a lead over the Conservatives of nine percentage points, its largest advantage since February 2014.

“The thing that should most worry the prime minister is that while the Tory share has dipped quite clearly, the ratings for the prime minister have dipped even more,” said Robert Hayward, a Conservative member of the House of Lords and a polling expert. “The message is quite clear: that this is at the prime minister’s door.”

For Mr. Johnson, the rapidly spreading Omicron variant could help him politically, giving him a fresh public-health crisis around which to mobilize another national vaccination campaign. Britain’s rapid rollout of vaccines early in the year buoyed the government, though the pace fell off later in the summer, and Britain’s rate of fully vaccinated people now trails those of France, Italy and Portugal.

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Mr. Johnson’s target of injecting all people aged 18 and older with a booster by the end of this month — a month earlier than the target he set on Nov. 30 — seems far-fetched at best. But some experts point out that even if the N.H.S. achieved the goal, it would not avert a surge in infections, since the variant was already circulating widely in the population.

“It’s probably too late,” said Tim Spector, a professor of genetic epidemiology at Kings College London. “The boost takes a week to work, and Omicron will have taken over from Delta in two weeks.”

While the vaccine campaign is widely popular, factions of Mr. Johnson’s party stridently oppose additional virus restrictions, like urging people to work from home or requiring them to show vaccine certificates or proof of a negative test to enter nightclubs or large sports arenas. When the government puts these measures to a vote on Tuesday in Parliament, 60 or more Conservatives lawmakers are expected to vote against Mr. Johnson; that’s a striking number of defections, and one that would put him in the awkward position of relying on the opposition.

The backbenches of the Conservative Party are simmering with frustration about what many perceive as the government’s incompetence and Mr. Johnson’s serial duplicity. In addition to the holiday party affair — which is under investigation and could result in a finding of wrongdoing later this week — he faces questions over whether he misled his ethics adviser when he denied that he knowingly used political donations to pay for the costly refurbishment of his Downing Street apartment.

The drumbeat of questions about Mr. Johnson’s honesty has chipped away at his support, even in the pro-Tory news media. Daniel Hodges, a columnist in the right-leaning Mail on Sunday, [*recently likened Mr. Johnson to President Richard M. Nixon*](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-10299841/DAN-HODGES-Boris-Johnson-heir-Churchill-Hes-beginning-look-like-Tricky-Dicky.html) and accused his aides of lying consistently.

“There are several reasons for this,” Mr. Hodges wrote. “One is obviously Boris himself. As a former minister said: ‘He treats facts like he treats all his relationships — utterly disposable once inconvenient.’”

In the normally friendly Daily Telegraph, for which Mr. Johnson once worked, Allister Heath, a prominent conservative journalist, questioned whether the prime minister could recover. “There is an overpowering fin-de-regime stench emanating from Downing Street that can no longer be ignored,” he wrote.

An early test of Mr. Johnson’s resilience will come on Thursday, when voters in North Shropshire, a district near Wales, fill a seat vacated after a Conservative lawmaker, Owen Paterson, [*resigned in a flap over his outside lobbying activities*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/04/world/europe/uk-politics-boris-johnson-owen-paterson.html). Oddsmakers now expect the Tories to lose the seat to the Liberal Democrats.

That would be a demoralizing setback for both Mr. Johnson and his party; those are the type of ***working-class*** voters who swept Mr. Johnson to power and whom he needs to hold on to if he wants to win again in the next election.

“The Tories are more willing to get rid of their leaders than the other political parties: We do it much more quickly and ruthlessly,” Mr. Hayward said. “But the loss of support is attritional; it isn’t over one particular event.”

PHOTO: Demonstrators outside Parliament in London rallied against Covid passports and other virus restrictions. Lawmakers are expected to vote on those measures Tuesday. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW TESTA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***'You Have To Learn to Listen To These Patients'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:678H-3YR1-JBG3-6530-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 8, 2023 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 22

**Length:** 9593 words

**Byline:** By Tracy Kidder

**Body**

Around 10 p.m. on a warm September night, the outreach van made a stop in South Boston, in the kind of neighborhood said to be ''in transition.'' On one side of the street was a new apartment building, its windows glowing, its sidewalk lit by artful imitations of old-fashioned streetlamps. On the other side, in murky light, stood an empty loading dock. A heap of blankets lay on the concrete platform. Someone passing by wouldn't have known they were anything but discarded blankets. But when the driver of the van climbed up and spoke to them, saying he was doing a wellness check, a muffled curse came back from underneath, then a brief, fierce, ''Go away.''

The driver turned and shrugged to Dr. Jim O'Connell, who was standing at the bottom of the steps. ''Let me try,'' the doctor said, and he walked up to the platform and knelt by the gray mound. Addressing the inhabitant by name, he said: ''Hey, it's Jim O'Connell. I haven't seen you in a long time. I just want to make sure you're all right.''

An earthquake in the blankets, then an eruption -- tangled hair and a bright red face and a loud voice, saying in a Boston accent: ''Doctah Jim! How the hell are ya?''

For the next half-hour, the man reminisced -- about the alcohol-fueled adventures of his past, about old mutual friends, mostly dead. The doctor listened, laughing now and then. He reminded his longtime patient that the Street Clinic was still open on Thursdays at Mass General, as the Massachusetts General Hospital is known. He should come. That is, if he wanted to come.

And then the outreach van moved on to its next stop.

This was in 2015. Homelessness had been a major problem in Boston and all across the country since the 1980s. Dr. Jim -- James Joseph O'Connell -- had been riding on the van for three decades. During that time, he had built, with many friends and colleagues, a large medical organization, which he called the Program, short for the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program. It now had roughly 400 employees and looked after about 11,000 homeless people a year. O'Connell was its president, and also captain of the Street Team, a small piece of the Program, with seven members serving several hundred homeless people who shunned the city's many shelters and, even in Boston's winters, lived outside or in makeshift quarters -- in A.T.M. vestibules, doorways, tents on the outskirts of cities. One patient of O'Connell's slept in a rented storage locker.

About half of O'Connell's administrative work now lay in managing the Street Team, and all his clinical work went to doctoring its patients, Boston's ''rough sleepers,'' as he called them, borrowing a British term from the 19th century.

The van was a crucial tool for reaching those patients. It was financed in part by the state and managed by Pine Street Inn, Boston's largest homeless shelter. Nowadays two vans went out from the Inn each night. They had become an institution, which O'Connell helped to foster in the late 1980s. Back then he used to ride two and sometimes three nights a week, usually until dawn. Now he went out only on Monday nights and got off around midnight.

I first met O'Connell the previous year, as a guest on the van. I was struck by the relationships between this Harvard-educated physician and the people the van encountered. His patients, and prospective patients, were sleeping on benches, arguing drunkenly with statues in parks. For me, the night's tour was a glimpse of a world hidden in plain sight. In American cities, visions of the miseries that accompany homelessness confront us every day -- bodies lying in doorways, women standing on corners with their imploring cardboard signs dissolving in the rain. And yet through a curious sleight of mind, we step over the bodies, drive past the mendicants, return to our own problems. O'Connell had spent decades returning, over and over, to the places that the rest of us rush by. Some months later, I contacted him and asked for another van ride. I followed him around with a notebook on and off for the next five years.

O'Connell was in his late 60s when I met him. He had a ruddy face and silver hair that fell almost to his collar and over the tops of his ears. On van rides and street rounds, he carried a small knapsack, his doctor's bag, its contents refined and miniaturized over the years. It consisted mostly of basic first-aid gear and diagnostic equipment -- a blood-pressure cuff that wrapped around the wrist, a pulse oximeter, an ear thermometer, a simple blood-glucose meter, a stethoscope. Among the losses he regretted was the pint bottle of whiskey he once carried for the times when a patient was in alcohol withdrawal and on the verge of seizure. ''You couldn't do that now,'' he said. ''It's become a moral issue.''

For the van, he usually wore jeans or light-colored corduroy pants, a collared shirt and clogs. He was six feet tall and trim. He moved with an athlete's self-assurance that makes a task look easy, and his voice was full of energy and cheer as he waited on the customers at the back of the van, dispensing sandwiches and condiments, cups of hot chocolate, coffee and soup. To me, he seemed like a composite portrait of the ages of man, youthfulness topped off with silver hair.

A thin man comes wandering out of an alley, into the light of a streetlamp.

''You got soup?'' he asks.

''Yes!'' says O'Connell, grabbing a Styrofoam cup and filling it from one of the vats.

''You got crackers to go with it?''

''Sure!''

''Isn't there a doctor who goes with you guys?''

''I'm a doctor,'' says O'Connell. Then he introduces himself, offering his hand.

''I want to change my doctor,'' says the man. ''I hear good things about you.''

''We'd be happy to take care of you,'' says O'Connell. ''We'd be thrilled.''

Jim O'Connell likes to say that he didn't choose his job but was ''conscripted'' into it.

He was a gifted ***working-class*** kid. He set academic records in high school and graduated from Notre Dame as salutatorian of his class. He studied philosophy and theology at the University of Cambridge in England and afterward was chosen by Hannah Arendt to be one of her teaching assistants. He had many interests and opportunities and explored several paths before starting medical school -- at Harvard, when he was 30. He relished his four years there and also his residency, in internal medicine at Mass General. He had just won a prestigious fellowship in oncology at Sloan Kettering in New York when, on a spring day in 1985, he was led to the office of John Potts, Mass General's chief of medicine. There, Potts and another of the hospital's eminent doctors asked O'Connell to take a brief detour in his career.

Since homelessness had begun rising in the 1980s, emergency rooms in Boston, as elsewhere, had become jammed with people who didn't have homes or doctors. In response, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation began offering grants for creating programs that would integrate these poorest of the poor into a city's mainstream medical care. Boston had applied for a grant. A doctor was required. Boston's mayor, Ray Flynn, was trying to find one. The chief asked O'Connell if he would sign up to fill that slot for a year.

After three years of 110-hour weeks as a resident inside Mass General, O'Connell had absorbed both its general code -- to pursue excellence in medicine -- and also a corollary, which was not to mistake yourself for an ordinary doctor. It was one thing to treat the excluded and despised inside the great hospital, another to imagine doctoring them in dreary clinics elsewhere.

But these were his distinguished elders. They carried the weight of the institution. O'Connell couldn't think of a way to refuse. This would cost him only a year, he remembered telling himself. It would be his year of ''giving back.'' Then he would get on with his life.

The day after he finished his residency, O'Connell boarded a train on Boston's old elevated Orange Line, bound for his first assignment. He wore a collared shirt and a necktie and pressed slacks. He had his stethoscope in a back pocket and no idea of what awaited him. He'd been told to go to Pine Street Inn homeless shelter and report to the medical facility there, something called the nurse's clinic. A colleague who knew O'Connell back then remembered him as athletic, with brown hair and keen blue eyes. ''Handsome, of course,'' she said. ''And cheery, glad to see you.'' He wasn't cocky, she insisted, indeed quite the opposite -- diffident, self-effacing to a fault. He was confident about medicine, though. At that moment in his life, he would have said, if pressed, that he didn't know much about a lot of things, but he did know medicine.

He was resigned to this year of service, even looking forward to it now. It would be a break from the pressures of residency, he figured. The only thing that looked difficult was budgeting a life on the salary, which was $40,000 a year, at that time less than half the median salary of an M.D. in internal medicine. As for doctoring, he was eager to show the people in this nurses' clinic how well he could do the job. Only a few days earlier, he was part of a team running Mass General's I.C.U. The role of doctor in a clinic in a homeless shelter couldn't possibly be as challenging.

The shelter's lobby was a big room with a ceiling of pipes and heating ducts, air full of odors, a clamor of voices, people milling about with no one clearly in charge. He had to look around for the entrance to the nurse's clinic, a swinging double door. He could have been entering a western saloon, unwarned and unarmed.

This clinic inside the Pine Street shelter was run by nurses and was independent from other medical institutions. It was in part the byproduct of a change in nursing that had begun with the feminist movement of the 1960s, a declaration of partial independence from doctors, and it was also a reaction to the callous treatment of homeless patients that many nurses had witnessed in Boston's teaching hospitals.

The morning O'Connell arrived, the clinic was closed for a shift change, but half a dozen nurses were already inside, waiting for him. In the cramped space near the clinic's front desk, metal chairs were arranged in a semicircle, with one chair in front, meant for him. In his memory, he sat there surrounded by nurses. Their faces were stern. They said they weren't interested in investing their time to train a doctor who planned to leave in a year. And if that was what he planned to do -- to play doctor to a bunch of homeless men, earn their trust, have them learn to rely on him and then desert them -- it would be better if he didn't come at all. He was probably looking for an interesting experience, they said. He probably thought he was doing a good deed.

They were warning him, in a way that made him feel accused of having committed those sins already -- as he had, inwardly. He felt shocked, too shocked to feel offended.

When they finished with him, a nurse took his arm and led him outside to the lobby. Her name was Barbara McInnis. A number of people had told O'Connell that she was the person to know in the world of Boston homeless health care. He had imagined someone prepossessing, but the real Barbara McInnis was short and, to his doctor's eye, a bit too heavy for good health. She was dressed not in a nurse's uniform -- she never wore one -- but in a shapeless shift and sandals. He noticed that she had a turquoise cross tattooed on the inside of her wrist. He learned later that she was a lay Franciscan. That is, she believed in service and simplicity and in kindness to all creatures. She actually fed the mice in the alleys outside the shelter.

Her voice, though high and small, sounded gentle. The nurses had seemed hostile, but O'Connell shouldn't take that to heart, McInnis said. Nurses created this clinic, and they were proud of it, and many of them would be happy never to see a doctor on the premises. She disagreed. Homeless people ought to have the benefit of doctors' skills. ''I really think we want doctors,'' she said. ''But you've been trained all wrong.'' Most if not all of the clinic's patients had experienced severe trauma, she explained, and the typical doctor's approach often terrified them. So it would take time and patience and a lot of listening before O'Connell would even have the chance to act clinically. ''You have to let us retrain you,'' she said. ''If you come in with your doctor questions, you won't learn anything. You have to learn to listen to these patients.''

And then he heard her say: ''Come on in now, and you're going to soak feet. I'll show you how.''

She led him back into the clinic. He hooked his stethoscope around his neck on the way. Then he saw McInnis shaking her head at him emphatically. She pointed at a drawer in a nearby table. He dutifully deposited the instrument there.

Why did he submit to all this? I asked him decades later. He told me: ''I don't know if it's a weakness or not, but I've always had a hard time saying no. I remember wishing that I could say something like, 'This is probably not appropriate.''' But once he saw what was going on, he said, ''I was spellbound.''

Along the walls of the little clinic sat disheveled-looking men, their feet in plastic buckets, while nurses bent over them, speaking softly. This was strange enough, but especially strange because O'Connell recognized many of these homeless men. Over the past three years, he'd seen them in the Mass General emergency room, sullen, angry, snarling, resisting all treatment. Here they seemed so docile that they might have been drugged, via foot soaking.

McInnis showed him the technique. It was simple enough. You filled a plastic tub halfway up with Betadine and put the patient's feet in it. And in keeping with an old rule left by the founder of Pine Street Inn, you always addressed the patient by his surname and an honorific -- ''Mr. Jones.''

The new job took O'Connell to many other places, but the Pine Street clinic was one of the principal sites. He spent three afternoons and evenings there each week, soaking feet and not doing much else for more than a month. Among the regulars was a very large elderly man usually dressed in three layers of coats, with wary eyes and a salt-and-pepper beard and a great wave of white-and-gray hair that seemed to be in flight. O'Connell knew him from Mass General's emergency room. The police had taken him there repeatedly, because they didn't know what else to do with him. He was classified as a paranoid schizophrenic, and his chart was thick, a record of 25 years of what is known in medicine as ''noncompliance'' -- those habitually guilty of this are ''treatment resistant.'' The old man had always refused to take medications or to be admitted to the hospital.

At times O'Connell felt frustrated in that clinic, kneeling in front of patients, beginning to form silent diagnoses and not being allowed to act. But having already failed to get medicine into this treatment-resistant patient many times before, O'Connell felt a certain resigned contentment in merely soaking the old man's feet. They were so huge and swollen that O'Connell had to prepare a separate tub for each.

The man didn't speak to him for weeks. Finally, one evening, as O'Connell knelt on the floor filling the tubs, he heard the old man say, ''Hey, I thought you were supposed to be a doctor.'' He was looking down at O'Connell with the suggestion of a smile around his lips and amusement in his eyes.

In the last month, no one here had called O'Connell ''doctor.'' Yes! he said. Yes, he was indeed a doctor!

''So what the hell you doin' soakin' feet?''

O'Connell glanced around and saw McInnis and some other nurses standing nearby, obviously eavesdropping. He looked back up at the man. ''You know what? I do whatever the nurses tell me.''

The old fellow nodded. ''Smart man. That's what I do.''

About a week later, he put his feet in the buckets and said to O'Connell: ''Hey, Doc. Can you give me something to help me sleep?'' He never slept for more than an hour, he said. Within about a month, O'Connell had him taking a variety of medicines for his many ailments. Foot-soaking in a homeless shelter -- the biblical connotations were obvious. But for O'Connell, what counted most were the practical lessons, the way this simple therapy reversed the usual order, placing the doctor at the foot of the people he was trying to serve. As a doctor in training, he'd spent most of his time telling patients what he thought, saying, ''We need to get that blood pressure down,'' or, ''I'm concerned about the results of your kidney tests.'' This new approach was entirely different, and, he began to realize, it was much more effective clinically, at least with homeless people. Foot-soaking was a perfect way to begin.

These were, after all, men who wandered around all day on concrete and stood in lines for hours to get a bed or a meal. When they came into the clinic, they were usually exhausted, and their feet were sore. They'd let you look at their feet before they'd let you examine any other part of them. Cases of athlete's foot, corns, toenails that had gone uncut for years and were coiled around and around themselves -- all were uncomfortable and easily fixed, as was trench foot. A nurse taught him her honey-based treatment for the ailment. After he applied it, patients were always grateful for relief from the incessant itching, and many were willing then to talk about invisible things that were bothering them. Moreover, feet were often diagnostic in themselves. They could reveal important internal problems, such as neuropathies from drinking and vitamin B-12 deficiencies. Loss of feeling in the feet were an alarm telling O'Connell that he'd better try to coax the patient to a hospital. He could also read a patient's likely future in the signs that frostbite leaves on toes. O'Connell and a colleague later made a small study of death records, which suggested that patients with a history of frostbite -- or of trench foot -- had a death rate seven times as high as other homeless people of the same age group.

Around the time of his success with the treatment-resistant old man, O'Connell's internship at the Pine Street clinic ended, and McInnis let him use his stethoscope again.

The Program was conceived as a health care system tailored to the special needs of homeless people. Much of the initial funding went to salaries, which were uniformly skimpy. A standing committee selected the first seven medical personnel and left O'Connell to figure out how to deploy them. They were often rushed, sometimes fretful and unsure, but within a few months, O'Connell felt that they had made a start on what he envisioned -- a citywide clinical practice, situated mainly inside homeless shelters and integrated with two major hospitals.

And then everything became more complex. First, there was an outbreak of drug-resistant tuberculosis at Pine Street, and when that was just coming under control, AIDS hit Boston's homeless population. The project's first ''respite'' -- 20 adjacent beds inside a homeless shelter where patients could recuperate from medical procedures, illnesses or injuries -- quickly became, in effect, an AIDS treatment ward. O'Connell visited regularly and would find the staff scrambling to treat whatever opportunistic infection came next -- pneumonias they'd never seen before, cryptococcal meningitis, toxoplasmosis, Kaposi sarcoma. No matter what they did, everyone died.

The respite was the worst site imaginable for treating people with AIDS. Its patients shared the same huge, crowded room of 180 shelter beds, where homeless men with all sorts of maladies lay breathing and coughing. O'Connell tried to persuade hospital administrators to take in the respite's homeless AIDS patients. He begged them not to discharge people with AIDS to the shelters or, even worse, to the streets. All to no avail. ''The truth is we have nothing, no tools,'' O'Connell remembered thinking. ''It's like we're putting our fingers in the dike, but the dike is going to cave in soon.''

The days and nights ran together. Before he knew it, most of his one-year commitment had passed. O'Connell wrote to Sloan Kettering, asking that they defer his fellowship again.

He had worked at Boston's two largest shelter clinics for more than a year, and for a while he imagined that he knew most of the city's homeless population. But when he began riding the van three nights a week, he realized that he'd never met most of the people who slept outside -- the rough sleepers. What were they doing to stay alive out there? What was it like to live under a bridge? To answer such questions, he had to win the trust of this homeless population. He worried that the task would be more difficult than in the clinics, where homeless patients typically felt safe and where he could trade on some of the popularity of McInnis and the other nurses. But the crews that ran the new, state-sponsored outreach vans soon became popular, too, and the food and clothes and blankets they provided never failed to draw rough sleepers from their hiding spots to the back of the van, where O'Connell met them with a bartender's patience and a student's sincere interest.

Once they got used to seeing O'Connell at their encampments, many rough sleepers would chat. He often asked why they preferred to sleep outside rather than in the shelters. The most common answer began with a question. Had Dr. Jim ever tried to sleep in a shelter, with a hundred other people in the same room? Well, they just couldn't do it. Almost always, they would add that he shouldn't think they chose to live outside. Offer them someplace else besides a shelter, and they'd gladly move in.

The most striking explanation came from a man who slept under one of the Storrow Drive bridges -- a sweet, soft-spoken fellow who suffered from schizophrenia. O'Connell had met him half a dozen times and given him coffee and blankets and socks and treated him for a few minor ailments. In the middle of a very cold night, afraid the man might die of hypothermia, O'Connell begged him to come to the Pine Street shelter. But the man demurred. ''Look, Doc, if I'm at Pine Street, I can't tell which voices are mine and which are somebody else's,'' he said. ''When I stay out here, I know the voices are mine, and I can control them a little.''

In the shelter clinics and on the van, O'Connell came face to face with dozens of people who hadn't seen a doctor in years, let alone a psychiatrist or a dentist. He saw many with rotted teeth and many cases of scabies and maggots and lice. He came across people with AIDS who had been discharged from emergency rooms with no platelets, including a few who appeared in the lights of the outreach van with blood flowing from their ears and noses. O'Connell met an elderly man who looked fairly normal until he took off his hat at O'Connell's request, revealing a grotesque-looking cancer that had invaded his head, paralyzing the left side of his face. That patient had been a professor at M.I.T., had suffered a psychotic break and had been living on the streets for years, no one noticing or caring to notice what must have started as a small, easily treated basal cell carcinoma, now metastasized into an overspreading, fatal growth that had reached his spine. At times, O'Connell imagined that he and his colleagues were practicing something like wartime or post-earthquake medicine. It was as if he had been parachuted into another world that modern technologies had never reached. The situation was appalling, the work overwhelming. And, if he was honest with himself, utterly fascinating.

O'Connell's work consumed about 100 hours a week. He recalled thinking, Well, this is easier than residency. This was his first job as a full-fledged doctor, and he wanted to do it well. The hours were just what it took.

The clinical tasks were challenging. How do you treat H.I.V. in a person who has no place to live? How do you treat diabetes in patients who can't even find their next meals? How do you treat physical illnesses in patients whose activities of daily living are completely determined by the consumption of alcohol or the search for narcotics? At medical school, questions like that hadn't come up.

In this fledgling practice, patients taught O'Connell and his colleagues what terms like ''patient centered'' actually meant. For instance, the case of a small, thin man who had made Pine Street Inn his home. O'Connell first met him at the shelter's clinic. He told O'Connell he couldn't swallow his food, but until recently he'd been able to manage liquids. Now he couldn't swallow his vodka. A person sleeping in a shelter, trying to survive out on the streets each day, tended not to pay attention to aches and pains or even hunger, not until some essential function was impaired -- in this case, swallowing vodka.

It turned out that this patient had a very large untreatable cancer of the esophagus. O'Connell arranged for him to have a tube inserted into his stomach so he could take liquids. O'Connell also resolved that the poor fellow shouldn't die in the strident chaos of Pine Street Inn. O'Connell spent the weekend writing up applications, insisting that his dying patient be admitted to a nursing home. The effort paid off. O'Connell picked him up at Pine Street and drove him to a first-class nursing facility and went home that night feeling pleased with himself.

About a week later, walking down the alley to Pine Street Inn's front door, O'Connell heard, from up ahead, a cacophony of men's voices, laughter and shouting of a high alcoholic content. Among the voices, he thought he recognized his dying patient's voice, and when the drinking men came into view, there he was indeed, holding a bottle of vodka and pouring its contents down the tube in his stomach.

O'Connell approached him. What was he doing here?

The man said he appreciated what O'Connell had tried to do. ''But I was in that nursing home and everybody was sittin' in a chair, lookin' out the window, starin' into space and drooling or watchin' TV, but nobody's talkin'.'' He gestured at the drinking crew. ''These are my people, OK?''

This was O'Connell's ratiocination: ''He wanted to be around the people he knew. He was going to continue to drink his vodka and be with his friends. What I did for him didn't seem right from the perspective of the person we were trying to serve.''

To deal with the emotional side of the work, O'Connell fell back on his medical-school training in compartmentalization -- you're in a hospital and you go into a room where the patient is very sick and failing, and then, when you enter the next room, you forget the tragedy unfolding in the previous one and concentrate on the person in front of you. Eventually, though, he couldn't shut out any of the rooms. The problems in each would accumulate all week, and on Friday nights when the Pine Street clinic closed, many of the staff would drive out to Jamaica Plain and crowd into Doyle's pub, and they'd drink and talk about how maddening it felt to witness deaths that could have been prevented, and how if you fixed one problem for a patient, that same patient was there again the next week, afflicted with a dozen additional problems. By midnight at Doyle's, the effect of the talk and the beer was cathartic.

McInnis always came along to the pub on Friday nights. O'Connell would sit beside her at the bar and drive her home. Sometimes she and other staff members would stop at his place on the way, so that she could watch her favorite TV show, ''Miami Vice.'' He never quite figured out what she saw in it, but he enjoyed watching her enjoy it. Some nights at Doyle's, he would rebel against his normal practice and rant a little to her. How could this country treat people this way? How could any Americans, homeless or not, never have had their own doctor? Never have been given a screening? Never have been given anything? How, for that matter, could a hospital send people out to the streets with no platelets in their blood?

McInnis would listen, and in her high but somehow calming voice she would tell him: ''Jim, you're a doctor. You're not God. There are things you can't fix. You just have to do your work.'' It was always the same general message, and it had corollaries. One that became like a proverb for him concerned hiring for the Program: ''We don't want saints and zealots. We want flawed human beings who do their jobs. Just make this an ordinary job that people like to do.''

He had bought into that notion. He told himself that he was just going to dig in and work and not look beyond that. He recalled saying to himself: ''This is what I was trained for. I wanted to take care of people who were sick. And, oh, my God, have I landed in a world where people are sick.''

Near the end of the second year of his enlistment, O'Connell called Sloan Kettering to say that he wouldn't be coming after all.

The Program was one of 19 health care for the homeless projects funded by grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Pew Memorial Trust. At a meeting of administrators in the late 1980s, O'Connell met several people who still believed that when the grants ran out in 1989, the numbers of homeless people would have shrunk and mainstream medicine would have taken over the care of the remaining few. He heard some of the administrators saying, ''We're working our way out of this job.'' He wished it were true.

By then, it was clear to him that homelessness was still growing, in Boston and the rest of the country -- growing ''inexorably,'' he would say some years later. Many forces lay behind this: deinstitutionalization, gentrification, cuts in welfare programs, the AIDS epidemic. It was clear that creating a system for bringing decent care to homeless people was going to take a lot more than four years.

Mainstream medicine was evolving toward a corporate model. As the sociologist Paul Starr predicted, growing numbers of doctors would be required to meet ''some standard of performance, whether measured in revenues generated or patients treated per hour.'' The organization that O'Connell and his six colleagues were trying to create was obliged to invert that evolving norm, to practice what O'Connell called ''upside-down medicine.'' Not out of defiance but necessity. Unlike their counterparts in mainstream medicine, they had time to spend with their patients, but first, as a rule, they had to find the homeless people who needed care, and then persuade them to receive it -- for free.

For instance, an elderly former philosophy professor -- homeless for many years after suffering a psychotic break -- who would simply walk away or pretend he was sleeping whenever O'Connell and his colleagues approached his favorite park bench. Then, one winter night, O'Connell found him at South Station shivering in the cold. O'Connell fetched him a coat from the van. A few days later, the professor came to the clinic that O'Connell's team had established at Mass General, and he kept coming back, probably because O'Connell could talk with him knowledgeably about philosophers and literary critics whom the old professor claimed he had known personally (and really had known, as O'Connell discovered) -- figures like Lionel Trilling and Carl Van Doren. He never allowed O'Connell to do so much as measure his blood pressure, but he regularly returned, and when his health began to fail some years later, O'Connell was able to spot the alteration and coax him into Mass General.

Once a patient was engaged, the first imperative wasn't measuring vital signs, but rather emulating the family doctor of his childhood, who knew all the problems in their household and came when needed. A country-doctor approach for an urban population -- this was the kind of doctoring that could bring in suspicious patients. Most had been bruised by hospitals and doctors, and if the Program ushered them in and out of an exam room quickly, most would never come back.

Because they had avoided doctors and hospitals, many homeless people had problems that couldn't be handled with a brief office visit and a prescription. Many required complex, time-consuming interventions. This was true of every homeless person who had tuberculosis or AIDS, and of those with maladies grown dire from years of neglect, Virtually every patient also had social problems: women arriving at the shelter clinics with bruised faces and broken bones, whispering in tears about abusive boyfriends; men and women telling him they were sick of the drinking life and asking him to find a detox for them; dying patients who begged him to find their relatives and left him wishing the Program could afford to hire a detective.

During the first years, the small group of providers were free to practice without worrying much about cost and standard notions of efficiency, because they were financed by grants and received the same amount no matter how many patients they saw. When the grants ended, in 1989, they had to get their support from Medicaid, the state and federally financed plan intended to bring low-income Americans into the mainstream of American health care.

States have great latitude in determining how much money and care Medicaid provides. Many states put up little more than the minimum, but Massachusetts funded its version generously. When O'Connell went looking for money and guidance at the State House, he found a ready audience in the president of the Massachusetts Senate, who expressed astonishment that an actual doctor was focusing on homeless people.

The Program's income increased under Medicaid and fueled the Program's growth. At the start, in 1985, a handful of clinicians saw 1,246 homeless patients. By 1996, the annual budget had grown from $550,000 to roughly $7 million, and clinicians were seeing more than 6,000 patients -- many of them on a regular basis, and all of them eligible to receive specialty care at Mass General and the Boston Medical Center.

By then, the Program's future seemed secure. O'Connell gave up day-to-day administrative duties. Some turmoil followed, incited partly by disputes over efficiency, but the Program survived and resumed its growth. O'Connell retained some oversight duties and the title of president, but he had time now to focus on the care of rough sleepers, the smallest but most vulnerable group. He found the money for a Street Team, which over the years came to include psychiatrists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, case managers, recovery coaches, volunteers. In 2002, the team created a Thursday Street Clinic at Mass General, tailored to the needs of rough sleepers. They invited rough sleepers to make use of the Program's new respite facility. And they greatly increased the percentages of rough sleepers who received preventive tests and whose vital signs, like blood pressure and blood sugar, were brought to acceptable levels.

But it wasn't enough. Proof of this arrived in the form of a photograph that a patient had taken in 1999 -- 11 rough sleepers, seated together, all but one of them men. In the photo, they look vigorous, high-spirited. You wouldn't be surprised if they got up and changed into jackets and ties and went looking for jobs. Their average age was 36. All received primary care from the Program and specialty care at Mass General, one of the world's great hospitals. And yet six years later, when O'Connell first saw that photograph, all but one of the 11 had died. The revelation was shocking, but not exactly surprising. It crystallized what the Street Team had encountered in many of their patients -- histories of horrifying childhood abuse, followed by fatal sequels of alcoholism, drug addiction, disease, underlying varieties of mental disorders.

Around that time, in 2005, the team received the use of what seemed like a possible solution -- 24 housing vouchers for rough sleepers. It was part of a pilot project to test a new approach to addressing homelessness, known as Housing First. In the old prescription, people who were ''chronically homeless,'' who spent most of a year in shelters or on the streets, had to be treated and stabilized before they qualified for publicly financed housing. In practice, most rarely got stabilized enough to qualify. But studies of shelters in New York and Philadelphia had shown that only 10 percent of users were chronically homeless, and they cost more than all the rest. Why not house the chronically homeless people first, then tend to their problems? Surely this would improve their health and welfare and save the public money.

O'Connell was enthusiastic. Only partly in jest, he wrote an order on his official Mass General prescription pad for a studio apartment that would cure the ills of one John Doe, presently living under the Storrow Drive bridges. The actual results were disappointing. During the next decade and a half, housing proved to be a miracle cure for some of the Street Team's patients, and a modest success for some others. But for many, it led to relocation after relocation to avoid eviction. The rough sleepers' finely honed skills for outdoor living didn't help them indoors. O'Connell remembered a patient who pitched a tent in his apartment. Another made a tape recording of sounds of the street, which he used as his lullaby, his antidote to indoor insomnia. Many had forgotten or never learned the basic domestic arts. Some didn't know how to turn on a TV.

For O'Connell, the failures didn't negate the moral imperatives of Housing First. But too often, in Boston and elsewhere, housing for chronically homeless people came without sufficient support -- not enough treatment for the problems they brought with them, too little in the way of lessons on how to live indoors. And in some cases the wretched nature of the housing was also to blame.

As the years went on, the impediments grew. By 2018, Boston didn't have enough affordable housing to accommodate people of middling income, let alone the city's homeless people, whose numbers were still rising.

The Program's main fund-raising event, its Gala, was a rite of Boston's charitable springtime -- a vast hotel ballroom, dresses and suits, photographers, speeches and pledges. At the end of the 2018 version, O'Connell took the stage and told two stories. The first was cheery, about a patient who was about to be housed, in a subsidized, well-managed apartment building, after three decades on the streets.

The second story was somber. ''Not quite as nice in the end,'' O'Connell warned the audience. It was about a long-term patient. She had lived many years outside on the waterfront with a hard-drinking, crack-smoking crew, and then she decided to change her life. She went voluntarily into detox and quit drugs and alcohol for good. All on her own, without public assistance, she found both an apartment and a job in a laundromat. For nine years she paid her own rent, providing room and board for her boyfriend and a child he had with another woman. I once visited her apartment. For décor and tidiness, it would have met the standards of a Dutch housewife.

''The problem was,'' said O'Connell from the podium, ''one day she came to our clinic with shoulder pain -- '' It was a symptom of lung cancer in a late stage. Mass General treated her. She was plucky and determined, given to saying, ''Heaven don't want me, and Hell's afraid I'll take over.'' She had survived for nearly four years. But just a few weeks ago she was told that the cancer was finally unstoppable. In the meantime, she'd also been told that she was being evicted from her apartment.

Gentrification was transforming Boston. Real estate developers had bought the building in the ***working-class*** neighborhood where the ailing woman lived. They planned to turn the place into condos, O'Connell recalled. They offered to sell her the apartment for $245,000. She'd actually tried to find a way to raise the money, but failed. The day she received her official eviction notice, she paged O'Connell, but when he called her back, she was crying so hard she couldn't speak. At that moment, O'Connell realized that her apartment stood for everything she'd accomplished in her life. And now it was being taken away. If she had been housed with public assistance instead of paying her rent by herself, she would have kept her housing voucher, and the city would have prevented the landlord from kicking her out until she found another apartment.

''In the end, she died frantic that she was going to lose housing,'' O'Connell told the silent crowd.

He paused. At every talk he gave, I sensed that whether it was asked or not, the question of what was to be done hung in the air. He addressed it now:

''This is a complicated problem. Homelessness is a prism held up to society, and what we see refracted are the weaknesses in not only our health care system, our public-health system, our housing system, but especially in our welfare system, our educational system, and our legal system -- and our corrections system. If we're going fix this problem, we have to work together to fix the weaknesses of all those sectors.''

It was a bleak assessment, implying that the only cure for homelessness would be an end to many of the country's deep, abiding flaws.

Homelessness is fed by income inequality, racism and a cascade of other related forces. These include insufficient investments in public housing, also tax and zoning codes that have spurred widespread gentrification and driven up real estate prices, thereby reducing the already insufficient supply of affordable housing. Getting the millions of visibly and invisibly homeless people housed is the first, most obvious solution to the current problem. Most homeless people fall only briefly into the condition and are far less needy than the Street Team's patients. They could manage housing without a great deal of support, O'Connell figured. And yet, for everyone, dilapidated and poorly situated housing can be a poverty trap and a way back to homelessness, or to an early death.

A study in Boston, from 2012, showed that average life expectancies varied drastically between rich and poor neighborhoods, by 30 years in one pairing. The environments in which people lived their lives could be destiny in neighborhoods where violence was common and residents lacked access to anything except fast food and convenience stores. One Street Team patient had been receiving a great deal of social support from a caseworker, and yet the patient was spending most of her nights and days on the streets again because she had been placed in an apartment building where someone routinely stole her electricity and Social Security checks -- and because one day a neighbor broke through the screen in her ground-floor window and stabbed her with a butter knife, leaving her with a collapsed lung. I stood with O'Connell outside that building one day, watching rats scurry around the garbage pails. ''This is where the city is placing people and claiming victory,'' he said.

He had seen much better examples of housing projects, in Denver and San Francisco, for instance, and yet in both cities, as in Boston, the cost of housing had risen outlandishly while the pool of homeless candidates for housing kept growing. On a recent trip to Southern California, O'Connell was given a tour of the 50-square-block section of Los Angeles known as Skid Row, where about 2,000 people were living on pavement in terrible squalor. Tens of thousands more were living under freeways and beside riverbeds in the greater Los Angeles area. When he returned, O'Connell told the Street Team: ''L.A. makes me feel like we're playing in a bathtub here in Boston. The dimension of the problem is beyond all imagination. Tents and encampments all over the place. L.A. would have to create housing for at least 66,000.''

In 2016, the City of Los Angeles conceived an ambitious new project -- to develop or acquire, in the course of 10 years, 10,000 units of housing for homeless people. To pay for this, it floated a $1.2 billion bond, which would be used to leverage about $2.8 billion more from private and other public sources. In 2022, the city controller reported ''mixed results.'' Housing was being created, but the cost for each unit was rising ''to staggering heights'' -- on average, roughly $600,000 per unit in construction.

The chasm was widening between Americans who could afford the necessities of life and the millions left in poverty. But the Los Angeles project showed that the problem of homelessness had become too large, too visible, too offensive to be ignored -- and that wide public support for remedies could be marshaled. Seventy-six percent of voters in Los Angeles had approved that $1.2 billion bond, and the voters of Los Angeles County had also approved an increase in their sales tax, to finance support services for the newly housed. Promising partial remedies were underway in many other locales: the conversion of hotels, motels and vacant apartment buildings into housing for homeless people; programs providing rental assistance and job training and a large menu of other support services.

O'Connell especially admired the work of an old friend named Rosanne Haggerty. She founded an organization called Community Solutions as a vehicle for helping willing cities and counties toward ''functional zero'' -- defined as ''a future where homelessness is rare overall, and brief when it occurs.''

The central tenet behind Haggerty's strategy held that homelessness was a function of fragmentation among social-service agencies, both public and private. Part of the cure, she believed, lay in creating systems made up of all the relevant agencies in a city or region. These coalitions would share responsibility for each homeless individual within their jurisdiction, making sure that each person was known by name. The system would constantly improve itself through an ''iterative cycle'' -- tackling a problem, studying the results, then doing the job better. Haggerty described the strategy as ''a public-health approach -- science-based, data-driven, collaborative, prevention-oriented.'' By 2018 the organization was assisting dozens of cities and counties, with measurable success. In 2021, the MacArthur Foundation gave the group $100 million to accelerate its work.

O'Connell emphatically agreed with Haggerty when she said that the term ''homelessness'' failed to capture the complexity of the problem. He agreed with what seemed like her fundamental goal: ''Each person we see in the shelters and out on the streets, somebody has to own responsibility for knowing that person and getting them housed.'' He imagined that was possible now in many American communities. But he had his doubts when it came to the most afflicted places, and also to Boston, because of its real estate boom: ''You could change all the zoning laws in Boston right now and create a more coherent system, and because of the costs it would still take us years and years and years to build enough affordable housing for everyone who needs it.''

O'Connell remembered McInnis telling him, ''We're way down on the solution scale.'' Housing wasn't just complicated. He found that if he mused too long about the problem, on the forces ranged against great progress and the disagreements among allies, he grew hungry for the clinic, his colleagues, his patients. ''I don't get despairing,'' he told me. ''But it's much easier to just go take care of people.'' For all its limitations, that work felt full and rich and edifying, and real. Some allies in the struggle against homelessness criticized the Program for using resources that should have gone to housing. O'Connell's reply was plain: ''This is what we do while we're waiting for the world to change.''

Haggerty told me, ''Jim is doing exactly what he should.'' Medicine alone couldn't solve homelessness, she said. ''This is really about accountability, system design, performance. Until that's fixed, Jim is basically standing at the bottom of a cliff, trying to save people.''

By 2019, the Program's budget had grown to about $60 million a year, and the landscape of its system was like a subway map of the city -- some 30 clinics, one for each of the city's shelters and two affiliated with Mass General and the Boston Medical Center. It had also acquired its own headquarters, with a busy ground floor like a train-station concourse: a large dental clinic, a pharmacy that filled 1,500 prescriptions a day, a soundproofed room where people in the throes of drug overdoses could be treated and counseled if they chose. Also the headquarters of various teams -- the Street Team and a team that served unhoused transgender people and a mobile team that focused, with extraordinary success, on the treatment of AIDS and hepatitis C. The Program's latest respite hospital, the Barbara McInnis House, occupied the three floors above the lobby. It had 104 beds and a large nursing staff, a jewel of a place.

O'Connell had recently turned 70. Riding on the van one quiet night that winter, watching the city go by in the dappled, semidarkness of the cabin, I said to him, ''You could drive the van when you retire.''

I meant this as a joke, but for him the idea was resonant. He said: ''I have this vision of like, the old bus of Ken Kesey, and picking up our patients and going on trips. You know, to the zoo, to the movies, to the beach, just gather everybody and go, three days a week go and do something.''

He had begun to call himself ''redundant,'' a now-unnecessary part of the Program. But he still had roles to play as president and, until he found a replacement, as captain of the Street Team. And he still had doctoring to do. Many longtime patients -- ''the old classics,'' he called them -- had died. He felt obliged to help serve the ones who remained -- ''to stand with them in the darkness, if need be,'' as McInnis had said. (She died in 2003, from a fatal interaction between anesthesia for minor surgery and a drug she took for diabetes. He still quoted her often, and once in a while invented things he felt she would have said.)

Dozens of old classics still relied on O'Connell. They were a colorful group, many housed, many precariously. There was Kevin, a former bank robber who would describe his heists and trade secrets while O'Connell examined him. There was Frankie, an ordained minister who used to preach on the Boston Common but now was losing track of time. He would page O'Connell at all hours of the night and be forgiven in the morning. There was a former pop singer, Susie, who had belonged to a band that once opened for B.B. King. She was a college graduate and suffered from the same problem with alcohol as most of the old classics. ''I like my beverages, Jim. You know that.'' She refused to have the Street Team counsel her about her drinking or to admit it was the cause of her many ailments. She often called, but usually at times when O'Connell was in his office. He could put her on speaker and catch up with his email while listening: ''Holy socks, Jim! I haven't seen you since Moby Dick was a minnow.''

And there was a new patient growing more interesting by the day. He had washed up on the Street Team's shore in 2017, a tall and physically powerful man nearing 50. He had spent nearly 20 years in state prison, and now he was trying to go straight, to find a purpose for himself, a place in the world. He was a rough sleeper out of necessity. He couldn't bear to stay in the shelters after two decades in prison, and because of his record, he was having a hard time finding housing. And yet he was inventing an occupation: self-appointed deputy to O'Connell. He was turning himself, with O'Connell's tacit approval, into a social director when he was sheltering in McInnis House, and had become a protector and caretaker of the weak when he was out on the streets.

The Program had improved many lives. It had transformed some. For instance, Joanne Guarino, who had spent 30 years in and out of homelessness and now served on the Program's board of directors. Among her other duties, she delivered a yearly lecture to the new crop of Harvard medical students. She would tell them her story and answer their questions and usually close with this last piece of advice: ''Don't be a shithead doctor.''

I imagined that O'Connell would go on growing old with his patients for some time to come. In 2019, though, he began to experience his own medical problems, in a cascading pattern that reminded him of elderly patients. A shoulder surgery led to the discovery of an anomaly in his heart's electrical conduction system, which required a pacemaker. After the procedure, he spent a night under observation, isolated in the Mass General I.C.U. Not even his wife, Jill, was allowed in. When he woke up the next morning, however, a familiar voice asked, ''How ya feelin'?''

A small, wiry man had pulled the visitor's chair over to the bedside. It took O'Connell a moment to realize this wasn't a doctor, but rather one of the old classics, Billy Bianchino.

Billy was smiling. ''We've all been real worried about ya, Dr. Jim, and I thought I'd come and see aboutchya.''

O'Connell wanted to ask Billy how he'd managed to get in, but he didn't let himself. The rough sleepers' devious ways were more amusing and miraculous left unknown, like the mechanics of a magic trick. O'Connell often coached the Street Team on the importance of visiting patients when they were languishing in the hospital, lonesome and afraid. Once the surprise wore off, he realized that he himself had been feeling lonely, and he was very glad to see Billy sitting there.

The first flood of Covid infections was large and lethal in Boston, especially inside nursing homes and jails and among people in low-income neighborhoods, many of whom went out to work in dangerous, low-paying jobs and came home to crowded apartments. Everyone expected catastrophe for the city's homeless people. But by the fall of 2020, when the virus's first wave had abated, the rough sleepers -- the most vulnerable of populations in normal times -- remained largely uninfected. Perhaps outdoor living and their untouchable status had protected them. And while the virus did spread among 30 to 40 percent of the people sleeping inside the city's two largest homeless shelters, most of the illnesses had been mild.

Boston's response on behalf of homeless people was impressively collective -- the city's hospitals, the city and state public-health departments, the mayor and governor's offices, the shelter organizations, all collaborated. The Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program ran testing in the shelters, converted a floor of McInnis House into a special Covid isolation unit, equipped and staffed two medical tents that the city erected for quarantine and isolation and later helped to run 500 beds in a field hospital in the city's convention center. Everyone on the Street Team pitched in, except for O'Connell.

He was obliged to listen and watch from a distance. He had come down with yet another new ailment, an autoimmune disorder of unknown origin, causing inflammation of the blood vessels. His colleagues at Mass General had put him on a long course of medications, and when Covid arrived, they advised him into quarantine.

He had a small summer house on the Rhode Island shore. He retreated there, conferring with his colleagues by phone and computer and looking out to sea during the first season of Covid. We spoke often by phone. His voice always sounded cheerful, even when his thoughts had a melancholy cast. On one call, he said, ''I think of this as my rehearsal for complete irrelevance.''

I began to think he really was about to retire, but when I suggested as much, early in the summer of 2021, he said: ''Oh, no! I'm coming back! I've got six more months of these damn shots and stuff, and then I'm coming back!''

In November, a second season of Covid descended on Boston, but O'Connell returned to the city -- to join the Street Team for its Thursday meetings and to resume his weekly daytime street rounds, wearing a surgical mask. I joined him one late fall afternoon.

Downtown, a familiar mixture of new patients and old classics were camped with their importuning signs at their usual venues, in doorways and beside streetlamps and mailboxes. O'Connell made many stops to chat with them, home visits as it were. He would approach them exuberantly, greeting old friends by name, offering a hand to new prospects. Watching him, I was struck again by his manner: saying little, but actively listening, tilting slightly forward, his eyes attentive, a suggestion that he was about to break into a smile. And rarely ending a conversation himself, but rather allowing almost all of them to talk for as long as they wanted, as if he had all the time in the world.

Tracy Kidder is the author of numerous books of narrative nonfiction, including ''The Soul of a New Machine,'' ''House'' and ''Mountains Beyond Mountains.'' He has won the Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award. Cole Barash is a visual artist whose current work focuses on the relationship between humans and nature. His monograph, ''When the Wind Blows North,'' is scheduled to be published in 2023.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/05/magazine/boston-homeless-dr-jim-oconnell.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/01/05/magazine/boston-homeless-dr-jim-oconnell.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Dr. Jim O'Connell examining Stephen, who has lived on the streets for many years. Stephen and his friend James encountered O'Connell on a subway platform as he conducted rounds. (MM20-MM21)

Charmaire, newly homeless for the first time, checking in at a clinic at the Boston Medical Center that is run by the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program. (MM23)

O'Connell in an outreach van in November. (MM24)

O'Connell checking on a patient's wound. (MM25)

At the Program's foot clinic at St. Francis House. (MM26)

Lisa having her blood pressure checked by Dr. Alison May at the Boston Medical Center clinic. Lisa was born and raised in Boston and worked as a cook. Formerly homeless, she is now in housing. (MM27)

Rickey having head wounds dressed at the Program's clinic at Mass General. He has lived in the Boston area his entire life and has known O'Connell for over 30 years. He is an Army veteran and worked as a baker at the Omni Parker House hotel. (MM28)

Beds at Pine Street Inn, Boston's largest homeless shelter. The plexiglass barriers were installed in response to the pandemic. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY COLE BARASH OF THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM29) This article appeared in print on page MM20, MM21. MM22. MM23. MM24, MM25, MM26, MM27, MM28. MM29, MM45, MM46, MM49.

**Load-Date:** January 8, 2023

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[***Vance Wins Republican Senate Primary in Ohio After Nod From Trump***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65CB-N741-DXY4-X441-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 3, 2022 Tuesday 12:12 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1828 words

**Byline:** Shane Goldmacher and Jazmine Ulloa

**Highlight:** J.D. Vance, the author of “Hillbilly Elegy,” won a G.O.P. race that saw nearly $80 million in television advertising.

**Body**

J.D. Vance, the author of “Hillbilly Elegy,” won a G.O.P. race that saw nearly $80 million in television advertising.

CINCINNATI — J.D. Vance, the best-selling author whose “Hillbilly Elegy” about life in Appalachia illuminated a slice of the country that felt left behind, decisively won the Ohio Senate primary on Tuesday after a late endorsement by Donald J. Trump helped him surge past his rivals in a crowded field.

Casting himself as a fighter against the nation’s elites, Mr. Vance ran as a Trump-style pugilist and outsider who railed against the threats of drugs, Democrats and illegal immigration, while thoroughly backpedaling from his past criticisms of the former president.

The contest, which saw nearly $80 million in television advertising, was one of the most anticipated of the 2022 primary season for its potential to provide an early signal of the direction of the Republican Party.

The result delivered a strong affirmation of Mr. Trump’s continued grip on his party’s base. But a fuller assessment of Mr. Trump’s sway will come through a series of primaries in the next four weeks — in West Virginia, North Carolina, Idaho, Pennsylvania and Georgia.

Mr. Vance had been trailing in most polls behind Josh Mandel, a former Ohio state treasurer who had also aggressively pursued Mr. Trump’s backing, until the former president’s mid-April endorsement helped vault Mr. Vance ahead. A third candidate, State Senator Matt Dolan, ran as a more traditional Republican, sometimes mocking his rivals for their unrelenting focus on the former president instead of Ohio issues and voters.

Cheers went up at Mr. Vance’s Cincinnati election party when The Associated Press called the race shortly after 9:30 p.m.

“The people who are caught between the corrupt political class of the left and the right, they need a voice,” Mr. Vance said in his victory speech. “They need a representative. And that’s going to be me.”

Mr. Vance is an unlikely champion of the Trumpian mantle, after calling the former president “reprehensible” in 2016 and even [*“cultural heroin.”*](https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/07/opioid-of-the-masses/489911/) But he had changed his tune entirely by 2022, and Mr. Trump called to congratulate him on his victory on Tuesday evening, according to a person briefed on the call.

With more than 90 percent of the vote counted, Mr. Vance was leading across almost the entire state. But the results also captured some of the tensions and demographic trade-offs of a Republican Party pulled in different directions as Mr. Dolan was strongest in the voter-rich cities of Cleveland and Columbus.

Trump-style Republicans did not prevail in the other top contest on Tuesday. Gov. Mike DeWine of Ohio, a more traditional Republican who has held offices in the state for more than 40 years, finished far ahead of his multiple primary rivals after a strong right-wing challenge never gained traction despite some conservative backlash to Mr. DeWine’s early and assertive response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr. DeWine had almost double the votes of his closest rival, Jim Renacci, a former House member. In the fall, he will be running against Nan Whaley, the former mayor of Dayton, who won the Democratic nomination on Tuesday, becoming the first woman in Ohio history to be nominated by a major party for governor.

In the Senate race, Mr. Vance will now face Representative Tim Ryan, a 48-year-old Democrat from the Youngstown area who has positioned himself as a champion of blue-collar values and has not aligned with some of his party’s more progressive positions.

If Mr. Vance prevails in the fall, the 37-year-old graduate of Yale Law School and investor would become the second-youngest member of the Senate, the chamber’s youngest Republican and a rare freshman who would arrive in Washington with a national profile.

His book had achieved best seller status not just from conservatives but liberals, who in the wake of the 2016 election had used it as something of a decryption key to understand Mr. Trump’s appeal in rural reaches of the country.

Mr. Vance’s metamorphosis from an outspoken “Never Trump” Republican in 2016 to a full-throated Make America Great Again warrior in 2022 echoes the ideological journey of much of the party in recent years. Republicans have moved closer and closer to the former president’s hard-line policy positions on issues like trade and immigration, and to his combative posture with Democrats and on cultural issues that divide the two parties. For some Republican voters, the primary was animated by fears that traditional family values and a white American culture were under attack by far-left Democrats, establishment Republicans and elites.

From the very start, Mr. Vance did have a crucial financial benefactor: His former boss, Peter Thiel, the Silicon Valley investor who pledged $10 million to Mr. Vance even before he formally joined the contest and who added millions more in the final stretch to trumpet Mr. Trump’s endorsement in the last weeks.

The Senate primary was unusual in the extent that it unfolded in two places at once. In Ohio, there was the typical fevered competition for votes, in town halls, debates and television ads. In Florida, there was the battle for Mr. Trump’s approval at Mar-a-Lago, the former president’s private club, with public shows of fealty, lobbying by surrogates and shuttle diplomacy. In one episode last year, multiple Ohio candidates vied for Mr. Trump’s support in front of one another at an impromptu meeting at Mar-a-Lago.

In a verbal flub that seemed almost fitting to how the candidates ran, Mr. Trump accidentally conjoined the names of two rivals over the weekend. “We’ve endorsed J.P., right?” Mr. Trump said at a rally in Nebraska. “J.D. Mandel.”

Mr. Trump’s endorsement set off a frenzy among Ohio Republicans who questioned Mr. Vance’s Republican credentials, with rivals circulating fliers online and at a Trump rally accusing him of being a Democrat in disguise and [*resurrecting his past comments against Mr. Trump*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/08/us/politics/jd-vance-trump-ohio.html).

Mr. Mandel had been the front-runner for much of the race, casting himself as the true pro-Trump candidate (“Pro-God. Pro-Guns. Pro-Trump” was the tagline in his TV ads). But that became an all-but-impossible argument to prosecute in the final weeks after Mr. Trump picked Mr. Vance.

“If the whole issue in the campaign is who is most Trump-like, expect it to work against you when you don’t get the endorsement,” said Rex Elsass, an Ohio-based Republican strategist.

At a restaurant in the Cleveland suburb of Beachwood on Tuesday, more than a dozen Mandel supporters and campaign volunteers struck an optimistic tone at the start of the night, expressing confidence. But it was not too long before Mr. Mandel took the podium to deliver the news.

Mr. Mandel told the crowd that he called Mr. Vance “to congratulate him on a hard-fought victory” and would do what he could to help get him elected. “The stakes are too high for this country to not support the nominee,” Mr. Mandel said to a round of applause in the room.

Beyond Mr. Vance, Mr. Dolan and Mr. Mandel, the crowded race included a single female candidate, Jane Timken, a former Ohio Republican Party chair, who was backed by the retiring incumbent, Senator Rob Portman, as well as Mike Gibbons, a businessman who poured millions of his own money into the race and at one point had climbed to the top of the polls.

Mr. Dolan had toiled for most of the contest far behind the polling leaders, avoiding direct attacks from his rivals. But he tapped into his own fortune to fund more than $11 million in television ads as he cut a path separate from the rest of the Trump-focused field by refusing to amplify the falsehood that the 2020 election was rigged. At one debate, Mr. Dolan was the lone candidate to raise his hand to say the former president should stop talking about the 2020 election.

The contest was nasty and lengthy, with nothing capturing the intensity more than a near-physical confrontation between Mr. Gibbons and Mr. Mandel at one March debate, where they bumped bellies as they lobbed verbal threats at one another.

Mr. Vance scolded them both. “Sit down. Come on,” he said. “This is ridiculous.”

Much of the race was shaped by huge sums spent on television — nearly $80 million, according to the ad-tracking firm AdImpact, with a lot of it coming from outside groups and out-of-state donors. The conservative Club for Growth spent more than $12 million on television ads aimed to boost Mr. Mandel or tear down his rivals.

Mr. Thiel, the Silicon Valley investor, seeded a pro-Vance super PAC with $10 million in early 2021 — months before Mr. Vance even entered the race. Mr. Vance is one of two former Thiel employees — the other is Blake Masters in Arizona — running for Senate with Mr. Thiel’s hefty financial backing. Mr. Thiel had served as a key link between Mr. Vance and Mr. Trump, [*attending an introductory meeting between them*](https://www.axios.com/jd-vance-ohio-senate-4f3455d1-20c0-428b-8569-a9d11306ba9f.html) in early 2021.

The politics of Ohio have changed drastically in the Trump era. Once the quintessential presidential swing state, Ohio broke for Mr. Trump by 8 percentage points in both 2016 and 2020, ending a half-century streak of the state backing the national winner. Republicans have sharply run up their margins among ***working-class*** white voters and in more rural areas, offsetting the losses that the party has suffered in the state’s suburbs around cities like Columbus and Cleveland.

In the Democratic primary, Mr. Ryan, who briefly ran for president in 2020, easily turned back a primary challenge from Morgan Harper, 38, a former adviser at the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau who ran as a progressive, banking $5 million for the general election.

Mr. Ryan has already run an [*anti-China ad*](https://twitter.com/TimRyan/status/1508795783210016772) that focuses on Ohio jobs and his opening ad of the general election has him tossing darts inside a bar and seeking to separate himself from the broader Democratic brand, lamenting those who have called for defunding the police.

But Mr. Ryan faces an uphill race in a state that has trended Republican and in a year when his party is saddled with President Biden’s low approval ratings. Some Republicans see Mr. Ryan as formidable — Mr. Trump among them — but the general election is not seen by either party as among the half-dozen closest contests that will determine control of the Senate, now divided evenly 50-50.

Shane Goldmacher reported from Cincinnati. Jazmine Ulloa reported from Beachwood, Ohio.

Shane Goldmacher reported from Cincinnati. Jazmine Ulloa reported from Beachwood, Ohio.

PHOTOS: J.D. Vance in Cincinnati after his Republican primary victory. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MADDIE McGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (A1); Above, voters in Columbus, Ohio, on Tuesday. Josh Mandel, below left, who had also pursued Donald J. Trump’s backing in the Senate primary, conceding on Tuesday. Gov. Mike DeWine, below right, a more traditional Republican, easily won his primary. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY MADDIE MCGARVEY FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; BRIAN KAISER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; PAUL VERNON/ASSOCIATED PRESS) (A19)

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2022

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[***A Bohemian Model Turned Painter***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63X0-YSM1-DXY4-X2T3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 22, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 15; CRITIC'S PICK

**Length:** 1217 words

**Byline:** By Will Heinrich

**Body**

Suzanne Valadon taught herself to paint while modeling for Renoir and Toulouse-Lautrec. A revelatory new survey at the Barnes Collection shows what she learned.

PHILADELPHIA -- It's hard to believe that ''Suzanne Valadon: Model, Painter, Rebel'' at the Barnes Foundation is the first American museum show for this sensational French painter.

Born in Bessines-sur-Gartempe and raised in Paris by a single mother, Valadon (1865-1938) began drawing at the age of 9. After a few unsuccessful career attempts, which she later claimed included a circus act, Valadon began modeling for artists in her teens. Gustav Wertheimer made her a siren, floating naked from the wave to entrap sailors with a kiss. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, who painted her hung over, nicknamed her ''Suzanna'' -- a reference to a biblical parable about voyeurism and lust that she liked so much she dropped her actual birth name, Marie-Clémentine.

At 18 she gave birth to a son, whom her friend Miguel Utrillo later endowed with a surname, though he may not have been the father. (The child, Maurice Utrillo, also became a successful painter, though he struggled with alcohol and mental illness.) Valadon sold drawings and etchings, befriended Edgar Degas, and carefully studied the painters who painted her, learning from the way they worked. Just shy of 30, she made an advantageous marriage that let her give up modeling and devote her time to drawing. But she didn't pick up a paintbrush herself till 1909, at 44, when she left her businessman husband for the painter André Utter, a friend and contemporary of her son's.

Once she did start painting, Valadon exhibited widely, and sold enough to support her unconventional family. But in the longer term her art was overshadowed by her son's career, diminished by the usual misogyny and obscured by prurient interest in her lifestyle. The show at the Barnes, curated by Nancy Ireson, is a thrilling tour of her portraits, nudes, still lifes and drawings.

At the Barnes, temporary shows appear in a sequestered space adjoining the permanent collection, which cannot be altered. (As it happens, the Museum founder, Albert Barnes, overlooked Valadon completely, though he did collect Utrillo.) But with 36 paintings, many of them large, and 14 works on paper, the Valadon show feels like a small museum in itself.

We first meet the artist as a model for Renoir, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and others in color reproductions as well as in four actual canvases, including ''The Kiss of the Siren'' and she comes through as charming, passionate and uncommonly self-aware. Only when you enter the exhibit's second room and encounter her own work do you see how uncompromising she was.

Her bohemian lifestyle, with its artist lovers and second marriage to a man two decades her junior, could have resulted as much from circumstance as from inclination. As Martha Lucy, an art historian, put it in her catalog essay, speaking of Valadon's modeling, ''***working-class*** status meant that there were fewer moral impediments to pursuing such disreputable employment.''

But Valadon's art was certainly rebellious. Her 1909 ''Adam and Eve,'' a moody, greenish-gray self portrait with Utter that shows them plucking fruit from the Tree of Knowledge, may have been the first full male nude ever painted by a European woman; 11 years later, to show it at the Salon des Indépendants, Valadon had to add a leafy loincloth. Her frank and unsexy treatment of other nudes, her candid self portraits, the defiantly bored and irritated expressions she often gave her models, even the trousers on the cigarette-smoking woman lounging across ''The Blue Room,'' all do count as brazen steps forward for their time.

Still, the real revelation is the shocking visual splendor of Valadon's work. And that all starts with her precise but powerful line, as the exhibit makes clear in a tantalizing handful of drawings and prints.

Utrillo steps naked out of a washtub in ''Maurice and His Grandmother,'' a black crayon drawing from around 1890. His arms extend forward but bend back again to hold a towel behind his shoulders, and his head tilts down in concentration. Behind him, Valadon's mother, his caretaker, squats on the floor half-drawn, an apparition.

Though Valadon contours her son beautifully, capturing the tautness of his belly and the turn of his foot, even conveying the childish smoothness of his skin, the line itself is slow and thick. The boy stands out like a paper doll come to life, but only so far -- the smoldering line that cuts him out of the scene also welds him back in.

When Valadon finally began painting, she carried on this sublimated conflict, the mesmerizing mix of alienation and claustrophobia that she plumbed in her drawings. She and Utter look happy enough in ''Adam and Eve'' -- at least ''Eve'' does -- even if their naked bodies are a bit wan and underfed. And though Valadon's color choices rely on Cézanne-like contrasts, with sickly green undertones for her lover and splotchy faces for both of them, they do add up to an inviting surface. But the picture's crisp outlines still give it a tense, glassy feeling, like a tightly set mosaic.

In a 1912 ''Family Portrait,'' it's the content that's unnerving. Valadon's son slumps over disconsolately; her elderly mother stares passively; her tall young lover earnestly occupies his corner; while Valadon herself looks out warily, her mind somewhere else. (She looks, naturally enough, like a woman gazing into a mirror.) Behind them hangs a mustard-colored curtain that emphasizes the waxy stiffness of their faces. They seem about as familiar as strangers in an elevator.

In ''Marie Coca and Her Daughter Gilberte,'' the artist simply twists her subjects in opposite directions. Mother sits in an armchair facing left; daughter sits on a cushion on the floor, her head against her mother's knees; and a doll sits on the daughter's lap, staring straight down the middle. The greenish shadow of the daughter's red velvet cushion is echoed in the papered wall, which recedes at another sharp angle, and her flaring cheeks are the brightest spot in a room of black clothing and brown upholstery. At first sight, the surface is as placid as any bourgeois drawing room -- but it roils, on any closer inspection, with hostility and violence.

In later paintings, Valadon juxtaposes clashing patterns of vibrant color to create a different, less specifically anchored sort of tension. She even lets her wiry outlines evaporate occasionally in gorgeous still lifes of flower arrangements. But the same low hum of discord continues. And nearly all these elements -- the patterns, the vivid characterization of women, the self-aware discontent -- come together in ''The Blue Room.''

A young woman in a pink camisole and striped pants, her black hair pulled back, stretches at full length on a bed covered with an ivy-patterned blue blanket. Matching drapes hang down like theater curtains on either side, and an unlit cigarette sticks straight out of her lips, brazen as a cigar. At the center of a maelstrom of color, on display but in command, she's perfectly at ease.

Suzanne Valadon: Model, Painter, RebelThrough Jan. 9, Barnes Foundation, 2025 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia; 215.278.7000, barnesfoundation.org.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/arts/design/valadon-painter-barnes-philadelphia.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/arts/design/valadon-painter-barnes-philadelphia.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Works by Suzanne Valadon, from left: ''Family Portrait'' (1912)

''The Blue Room'' (1923)

''Marie Coca and Her Daughter Gilberte'' (1913). (PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARTIST RIGHTS SOCIETY (ARS), NEW YORK

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**Load-Date:** October 22, 2021

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[***Songs That Inspire Us to Fight On***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63WT-0P61-JBG3-64S6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 21, 2021 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 20

**Length:** 1157 words

**Byline:** By Tom Morello

**Body**

The music of the Industrial Workers of the World shows us how to sing and fight for justice

By Tom Morello

Harmonizing and hell-raising, rhythm and rebellion, poetry and politics, singing and striking. The Industrial Workers of the World -- the shock troops of the early-20th-century labor movement -- virtually invented the protest song for the modern age.

The I.W.W. was formed in 1905, advocating a militant revolutionary unionism, a cocktail of socialist, syndicalist and anarchist labor theory put into practice. It was always known as a singing union, and its songs were written by hobos and the homeless, itinerant workers and immigrants. I.W.W. songs -- like ''The Preacher and the Slave'' and ''Solidarity Forever'' -- looked an unjust world square in the eye, sliced it apart with satire, dismantled it with rage and then, with mighty singalong choruses, raised the roofs of union halls and holding cells, ''from San Diego up to Maine, in every mine and mill.''

The goal of the Industrial Workers of the World -- or Wobblies, as members were widely known -- was revolution, not just winning strikes. Unlike other unions of the time, it accepted all workers as members: Black people, women, unskilled laborers, sex workers, immigrants of every race and creed. It sought to forge ''one big union'' of the entire global ***working class*** and used direct action, sabotage and the power of song in class war against the ruling class. Its reputation as a kick-ass union fueled by kick-ass songs remains the stuff of legend.

Its songs, some more than 100 years old, addressed the same issues facing us today: poverty, police brutality, immigrant rights, economic and racial inequality, militarism, threats to civil liberties, union busting. ''Casey Jones (The Union Scab),'' ''We Have Fed You All a Thousand Years,'' ''Bread and Roses,'' ''Ain't Done Nothin' if You Ain't Been Called a Red'' -- often set to familiar tunes and popular hymns of the day, these songs united workers from diverse backgrounds under the banner of solidarity. What's the antidote for divide and conquer? Work together, fight together, sing together.

Defiant and hopeful, these songs have an unapologetic mission: to fan the flames of discontent by lifting the spirits of those fighting for a more just and humane planet. The I.W.W. aimed to ''create a new society within the shell of the old,'' and I hope you can hear that new world echoing here, where song meets struggle.

The Wobbly songwriters also laid the sonic and ideological groundwork for those who followed: Woody Guthrie, Lead Belly, Pete Seeger, Paul Robeson, Utah Phillips, Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs, Nina Simone, Bruce Springsteen, the Clash, Public Enemy, Billy Bragg, Ani DiFranco, System of a Down and Rage Against the Machine. Without them, there'd be no ''This Land Is Your Land,'' no ''We Shall Overcome,'' no ''Masters of War,'' no ''London Calling,'' no ''Killing in the Name.''

Much of my career has been one long audition to become a part of that legacy. I'm a union man and an unapologetic musical rabble-rouser. I've been a member of the Local 47 musicians' union in Los Angeles for 32 years, and I'm a proud card-carrying member of the Industrial Workers of the World -- it lives on! My mom was a union high school teacher, and the Morellos were hardworking coal miners in central Illinois. The cause of workers' rights is in my blood.

[Read more about this project from Jane Coaston and Kathleen Kingsbury here.]

I've been greatly influenced by many of the songs and songwriters who carried that red union card. Playing acoustic protest music under my folk singer Nightwatchman moniker, I've written and sung dozens of tunes that owe a significant debt to this union's remarkable musical history. My song ''Hold the Line,'' from my new album, is an example of how I've tried to carry forward that legacy.

My guide has been Joe Hill, who epitomized the I.W.W.'s anarcho poet warrior. He is my favorite musician of all time, even though there are no known recordings of him playing or singing. He was a tireless crusader for justice through his music, and his jams are a fine starting point for aspiring rebels. Hill was an I.W.W. organizer and a true musical and political revolutionary. He walked it like he sang it. That's why the mine owners and the other bosses out West, and the politicians who did their dirty work, were afraid of him. And in the end, that's why in 1915 he was executed in Utah on a trumped-up murder charge

''A pamphlet, no matter how good, is never read more than once, but a song is learned by heart and repeated over and over,'' Hill famously said. His songs (''There Is Power in a Union,'' ''We Will Sing One Song,'' ''Joe Hill's Last Will'') are sung today and will be tomorrow.

I've traveled far to pay my respects to the heroes of the I.W.W. I've placed flowers on Mother Jones's grave in Mount Olive, Ill. I've hummed ''The Internationale'' at the resting place of Big Bill Haywood's ashes in the Kremlin wall. And while on tour in Sweden, I made the hundred-mile trek from Stockholm to Gavle, Hill's birthplace.

I sat by a little tree in the backyard that blooms where his ashes were spread, and I sang ''I Dreamed I Saw Joe Hill Last Night,'' written in the 1930s by Earl Robinson from a poem written by Alfred Hayes in the years after Hill's death. The tiny room in the building where he and his family lived now serves as a union headquarters and museum. Fascists bombed the place 20 years ago. After all these years, they're still afraid of Hill; they're still afraid of his songs.

And they should be.

'''The copper bosses killed you, Joe. They shot you, Joe,' says I. 'Takes more than guns to kill a man,' says Joe. 'I didn't die.'''

The songs live on wherever working people stand up for their rights, dreaming and scheming and struggling for something better than what was handed to them. These tunes are still sung on picket lines, at the barricades and through the tear gas haze of Group of 8 protests. They're even more relevant now as workers throughout the country -- like those at Kellogg's, Nabisco and John Deere -- are striking and taking to the picket line.

The I.W.W.'s mighty music of equality, justice and freedom is a reminder of struggles won and lost, as well as the battle hymns of struggles to come.

So get out there and start creating that new world. Maybe learn some of these world-changing jams. Then write some of your own.

As a power guitarist with Rage Against the Machine, Audioslave and Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, with the acoustic chords of the Nightwatchman and in protests around the country, Tom Morello has spent over three decades melding music and political activism.

The songs ''Solidarity Forever'' and ''I Dreamed I Saw Joe Hill Last Night'' were performed by Tom Morello and the Freedom Fighter Orchestra. ''Hold the Line (featuring grandson)'' was performed by Tom Morello and grandson.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/pageoneplus/21rex1.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/pageoneplus/21rex1.html)

**Load-Date:** October 21, 2021

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[***‘The Jesus Rolls’ Review: ‘The Big Lebowski’ Character Is on a …***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y9F-CDJ1-DXY4-X4N7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 27, 2020 Thursday 00:57 EST

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**Section:** MOVIES

**Length:** 494 words

**Byline:** Glenn Kenny

**Highlight:** John Turturro, who also directs, returns as the purple bowling virtuoso from the 1998 Coen brothers’ film.

**Body**

John Turturro, who also directs, returns as the purple bowling virtuoso from the 1998 Coen brothers’ film.

The character actor John Turturro has a directorial sensibility as vivid and eccentric as his performing apparatus. His 2007 [*“Romance &amp; Cigarettes”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/07/movies/07roma.html) was a sweatily erotic ***working-class*** jukebox musical, while his 2014   [*“Fading Gigolo”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/07/movies/07roma.html) featured Turturro as a male prostitute and Woody Allen as his procurer.

For all that, the premise of “The Jesus Rolls,” his new writing, directing and starring effort, could well have emerged from a fever dream. Here, Turturro revives the notorious purple-clad bowling virtuoso he embodied in [*“The Big Lebowski,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/07/movies/07roma.html) the Coen brothers film from 1998. That’s unusual enough, but there’s more. Some may remember “Going Places,” the once-notorious Bertrand Blier black comedy from 1974, in which young and healthy Gérard Depardieu and Patrick Dewaere play a couple of aggressive sexual roustabouts roving the French seaside. Here, Turturro places “The Jesus” in the lead role of a sometimes loose, sometimes direct, remake of that movie.

[Video: [*Watch on YouTube.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/07/movies/07roma.html)]

In a not-entirely-deft bit of cinematic historical revisionism at its outset, “The Jesus Rolls” dispenses with the character’s problematic sex-offender status. Which is not to say that this Jesus is an angel. On release from Sing Sing, he tries to seduce his best buddy, Petey (Bobby Cannavale, in maximum amiable oaf mode), and steals a muscle car.

The duo pick up an old girlfriend of Jesus, Marie. Played with an exuberant lack of inhibition by Audrey Tautou, Marie’s casual attitude toward consent and partnering goes hand in hand with her unresponsiveness. Which flummoxes Petey and Jesus as the trio wend their way through Long Island, Port Chester and other scenic New York locales. These are shot for maximum lyrical effect — there are enough pleasant lakeside vistas to edit together a credible “I Love New York” TV ad — by Frederick Elmes.

In Blier’s picture, the vagabond males were in their 20s; Turturro and Cannavale are obviously not. Yet they are credible as irresponsible schemers led by their genitals. This perhaps says something about men in general. (It should be noted that as graphic as this remake sometimes is, it’s considerably toned down from the French film.)

The movie mostly bounces along powered by a lunacy that toggles between amiable and sinister. When Susan Sarandon turns up in the role of a released prisoner (a character played by Jeanne Moreau in the Blier film), “The Jesus Rolls” ambles into more genuinely audacious territory, offering emotionally compelling candor about aging and loneliness. After which it settles back into licentious goofball mode. The movie doesn’t always work, but it’s never boring.

The Jesus Rolls

Rated R for themes, language, nudity, sexuality, violence, you name it. Running time: 1 hour 25 minutes.

PHOTO: John Turturro, left, with Bobby Cannavale. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA/SCREEN MEDIA)

**Load-Date:** February 28, 2020

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[***Rolling on Without The Dude***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y9V-GDD1-JBG3-64MJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 28, 2020 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; Movies, Performing Arts/Weekend Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 482 words

**Byline:** By Glenn Kenny

**Body**

John Turturro, who also directs, returns as the purple bowling virtuoso from the 1998 Coen brothers' film.

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Rated R for themes, language, nudity, sexuality, violence, you name it. Running time: 1 hour 25 minutes.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/27/movies/the-jesus-rolls-review.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/27/movies/the-jesus-rolls-review.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: John Turturro, left, with Bobby Cannavale. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA/SCREEN MEDIA)

**Load-Date:** February 29, 2020

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[***What Comes After the Religious Right?; Guest Essay***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65KH-HHG1-DXY4-X190-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

June 1, 2022 Wednesday 17:25 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 4480 words

**Byline:** Nate Hochman

**Highlight:** What Comes After the Religious Right?

**Body**

Even for an insider like me, the whirlwind of energy and debate within today’s conservative movement can be bewildering. But what’s clear is that the Republican Party is changing. A new kind of conservatism, represented by right-wing elites like Ron DeSantis, Christopher Rufo and Tucker Carlson, is making itself known. We are just beginning to see its impact. The anti-critical-race-theory laws, anti-transgender laws and parental rights bills that have swept the country in recent years are the movement’s opening shots. They have made today’s culture wars as fierce as they have been in decades. But this new campaign is also distinctly different from the culture wars of the late 20th century, and it reflects a broad shift in conservatism’s priorities and worldview.

The conservative political project is no longer specifically Christian. That may seem strange to say at a moment when a mostly Catholic conservative majority on the Supreme Court appears poised to overturn Roe v. Wade. But a reversal of the landmark 1973 ruling would be more of a last gasp than a sign of strength for the religious right. It’s hard to imagine today’s culture warriors taking any interest in the [*1950s push*](https://www.jta.org/archive/movement-for-christian-amendment-of-constitution-revived) for a Christian amendment to the Constitution, for example. Instead of an explicitly biblical focus on issues like school prayer, no-fault divorce and homosexuality, the new coalition is focused on questions of national identity, social integrity and political alienation. Although it enjoys the support of most Republican Christians who formed the electoral backbone of the old Moral Majority, it is a social conservatism rather than a religious one, revolving around race relations, identity politics, immigration and the teaching of American history.

Today’s culture war is being waged not between religion and secularism but between groups that the Catholic writer Matthew Schmitz has described as “[*the woke and the unwoke*](https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/woke-religion-america).” “Catholic traditionalists, Orthodox Jews, Middle American small-business owners and skeptical liberal atheists may not seem to have much in common,” he wrote in 2020. But all of those demographics are uncomfortable with the progressive social agenda of the post-Obama years.

Rather than invocations of Scripture, the right’s appeal is a defense of a broader, beleaguered American way of life. For example, the language of parental rights is rarely, if ever, religious, but it speaks to the pervasive sense that American families are fighting back against progressive ideologues over control of the classroom. That framing has been effective: According to a [*March Politico poll*](https://www.politico.com/f/?id=0000017f-9034-d137-abff-f0f410670000), for example, American voters favored the key provision of Florida’s hotly debated Parental Rights in Education law, known by its critics as the Don’t Say Gay law, by a margin of 16 percentage points. Support for the initiative crosses racial lines. In a [*May poll*](https://americanprinciplesproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/APP-Battleground-Survey-5-22.pdf) of likely general election voters in six Senate battleground states — Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin — the conservative American Principles Project found that Hispanics supported the Florida law by a margin of 11 percentage points and African Americans by a margin of four points.

The upshot is that this new politics has the capacity to dramatically expand the Republican tent. It appeals to a wide range of Americans, many of whom had been put off by the old conservatism’s explicitly religious sheen and don’t quite see themselves as Republicans yet. As the terms of the culture war shift, Barack Obama’s “coalition of the ascendant” — the mix of millennials, racial minorities and college-educated white voters whose collective electoral power was supposed to establish a sustainable progressive majority — is fraying, undermining the decades-long conventional wisdom that America’s increasing racial diversity would inevitably push the country left.

That thesis was prominently advanced by the progressive political scientists John B. Judis and Ruy Teixeira, but [*both of them*](https://newrepublic.com/article/144547/redoing-electoral-math-argued-demographics-favored-democrats-wrong) have grown alarmed about the rightward movement among nonwhite voters in recent years. “If Hispanic voting trends continue to move steadily against the Democrats, the pro-Democratic effect of nonwhite population growth will be blunted, if not canceled out entirely,” Mr. Teixeira [*wrote in December*](https://theliberalpatriot.substack.com/p/the-democrats-hispanic-voter-problem-dfc?s=r). “That could — or should — provoke quite a sea change in Democratic thinking.” In the absence of that sea change, however, it is likely that disaffected people of all races will continue to move into the Republican coalition.

But is all this good for American conservatism? Particularly for social conservatives older than I am, who have sustained a long string of losses in the culture war, the potential for a new Republican majority is nothing to sniff at. But some have already expressed misgivings about this coalition. “We must not allow evangelical political priorities to be co-opted by functional pagans simply because we share a limited set of political objectives,” [*wrote*](https://wng.org/opinions/andrew-walker-on-conservatism-1636374635) Andrew T. Walker, a fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center. Pushing back on “woke lunacy” is valuable, he said, but it may not be worth embracing a politics that “causes Christians to adopt or excuse the disposition of cruelty and licentiousness.” As of now, the new secular conservatives and the old religious right are bound together in an uneasy partnership to fight the cultural left. But they may yet find themselves at odds about the country’s future.

The Rise and Fall of the Religious Right

The Republican Party hasn’t always been the natural home for conservative Christians. In the years leading up to Roe v. Wade, some Republican governors — including Ronald Reagan of California — helped liberalize state abortion laws. In 1970, Nelson Rockefeller, New York’s liberal Republican governor, signed what Planned Parenthood’s president at the time, Dr. Alan Guttmacher, approvingly [*called*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/19/us/politics/new-york-abortion-roe-wade-nyt.html) “the most liberal abortion law in the world.” Democrats, on the other hand, were hardly all social liberals. In 1976, Jimmy Carter’s presidential bid was backed by Pat Robertson, a leading voice on the emerging religious right and the son of a Democratic senator. Mr. Robertson’s ally Lou Sheldon of the Traditional Values Coalition declared that “God has his hand upon Jimmy Carter to run for president.”

All of that began to change with the inflammation of the culture wars in the final decades of the 20th century: Roe, the rise of mass-produced pornography, the Supreme Court’s ban on school-sponsored prayer, the gay rights movement and the push for an Equal Rights Amendment all drove the religious right to organize as a political force. As Democrats moved left on these issues, the G.O.P. pivoted right. In 1980 the Democratic Party platform added its first plank on gay rights, prompting the conservative columnist Pat Buchanan to remark bitterly that Mr. Carter was “not the sort of simpleton to allow biblical beliefs to get in the way of carrying San Francisco.”

When Mr. Reagan ran for president, he disavowed the abortion bill he signed in California as a “mistake” and courted the Moral Majority. In 1983 he published “Abortion and the Conscience of the Nation” — the first book written by a sitting president. By the time George W. Bush was elected on the backs of evangelicals and born-again Christians in 2000, the culture war battle lines were clear. He went on to carry [*80 percent*](https://www.barna.com/research/born-again-christians-were-a-significant-factor-in-president-bushs-re-election/) of voters who ranked “moral values” as their top issue in 2004.

But American church attendance was declining. The [*share of self-identified Christians*](https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/12/14/about-three-in-ten-u-s-adults-are-now-religiously-unaffiliated/) in the United States dropped from 75 percent in 2011 to 63 percent in 2021 while the share of religious “nones” — i.e., those who identified as atheist, agnostic or “nothing in particular” — jumped from 19 percent to 29 percent, according to the Pew Research Center. The G.O.P. has not been immune to this trend. The [*share of Republicans*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/341963/church-membership-falls-below-majority-first-time.aspx) who belong to a church dropped from 75 percent in 2010 to 65 percent in 2020, according to Gallup. Although the sharp drop-off in religiosity began in the liberal mainline Protestant denominations, it has spread to their conservative counterparts as well. [*Fewer than half*](https://twitter.com/dcoxpolls/status/1526547284732915713) of Republicans said “being Christian” was an important part of being American in 2020, according to Pew — a 15 percentage point drop from 2016. Across the ideological and theological spectrum, organized religion is waning.

As a result, the religious right’s influence in the G.O.P. has been declining since the Bush era. The party’s 2008 presidential nominee, John McCain, repeatedly [*flip-flopped*](https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2006/04/mccain-s-not-really-a-conservative.html) on Roe, [*voted*](https://www.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/07/14/mccain.marriage/) against a proposed constitutional amendment defining marriage as between a man and a woman and [*decried*](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/2000/02/29/mccain-attacks-two-leaders-of-christian-right/0bf3e70f-8859-499c-9cfa-79d3417e03d9/) Jerry Falwell as one of several “agents of intolerance.” Mitt Romney, who sat atop the G.O.P. presidential ticket in 2012, had a similarly [*spotty*](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/mitt-romneys-biggest-flip-flops-202776/) track [*record*](https://www.npr.org/2012/05/10/152431577/romneys-views-on-gay-marriage-also-evolving) on social issues.

While President Donald Trump delivered on a number of religious conservative priorities — most notably, appointing enough conservative justices to the Supreme Court to cobble together a likely majority of anti-Roe votes — he is a lifelong pro-choicer and sexual libertine who made [*explicit appeals*](https://www.politico.com/story/2016/06/donald-trump-gay-rights-224343) to gay and lesbian voters on the 2016 campaign trail and was the first openly pro-same-sex-marriage candidate to win the presidency. “It is hardly surprising that the religious right is no longer even perceived as a relevant force in U.S. politics,” George Hawley [*concluded*](https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/is-the-religious-right-to-blame-for-christianitys-decline/) in The American Conservative. “Far from a kingmaker in the political arena, the Christian right is now mostly ignored.”

Revolution From the Middle

The decline in Republican church membership directly coincides with the rise of Mr. Trump. As Timothy P. Carney [*found*](https://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/why-ex-churchgoers-flocked-to-trump/) in 2019, the voters who went for Mr. Trump in the 2016 primary were far more secular than the religious right: In the 2016 G.O.P. primaries, Mr. Trump won only about 32 percent of voters who went to church more than once a week. In contrast, he secured about half of those who went “a few times a year,” 55 percent of those who “seldom” attend and 62 percent of Republicans who never go to church. In other words, Mr. Carney wrote, “every step down in church attendance brought a step up in Trump support, and vice versa.”

The right’s new culture war represents the worldview of people the sociologist Donald Warren called “Middle American radicals,” or M.A.Rs. This demographic, which makes up the heart of Mr. Trump’s electoral base, is composed primarily of non-college-educated middle- and lower-middle-class white people, and it is characterized by a populist hostility to elite pieties that often converges with the old social conservatism. But M.A.Rs do not share the same religious moral commitments as their devoutly Christian counterparts, both in their political views and in their lifestyles. As Ross Douthat [*noted*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/15/opinion/sunday/conservatism-after-christianity.html), nonchurchgoing Trump voters are “less likely to be married and more likely to be divorced” than those who regularly attend religious services. No coincidence, then, that a [*2021 Gallup poll*](https://www.npr.org/2021/06/09/1004629612/a-record-number-of-americans-including-republicans-support-same-sex-marriage) showed 55 percent of Republicans now support gay marriage — up from [*just 28 percent*](https://news.gallup.com/poll/147662/first-time-majority-americans-favor-legal-gay-marriage.aspx) in 2011.

These voters are more nationalistic and less amenable to multiculturalism than their religious peers, and they profess a skepticism of the cosmopolitan open-society arguments for free trade and mass immigration that have been made by neoliberals and neoconservatives alike. “M.A.Rs feel they are members of an exploited class — excluded from real political representation, harmed by conventional tax and trade policies, victimized by crime and social deviance and denigrated by popular culture and elite institutions,” Matthew Rose [*wrote*](https://www.firstthings.com/article/2019/10/the-outsider) in “First Things.” They “unapologetically place citizens over foreigners, majorities over minorities, the native-born over recent immigrants, the normal over the transgressive and fidelity to a homeland over cosmopolitan ideals.”

In this sense, the fierceness of today’s culture wars is actually tied to the decline in organized religion. Frequent church attendance is correlated with more negative attitudes toward gay men, lesbians and feminists, but as the pollster Emily Ekins [*noted in 2018*](https://www.voterstudygroup.org/publication/religious-trump-voters), it softened respondents’ views of culture war issues such as race, immigration and identity. Nonchurchgoing Trump voters are more likely to support a border wall, tighter restrictions on legal immigration and a ban on immigration to the United States from some Muslim-majority countries. They are less inclined to agree that “acceptance of racial and religious diversity is at the core of American identity.” While the majority of religious conservatives eventually fell in line behind Mr. Trump, the political and cultural energy he represented was primarily a reflection of the nonreligious right.

What is occurring on the right, then, is a partial realization of the program that the [*hard-right*](https://chroniclesmagazine.org/principalities-powers/toward-a-hard-right/) writer Sam Francis championed in his 1994 essay “[*Religious Wrong*](https://www.chroniclesmagazine.org/religious-wrong/).” He argued that cultural, ethnic and social identities “are the principal lines of conflict” between Middle Americans and progressive elites and that the “religious orientation of the Christian right serves to create what Marxists like to call a ‘false consciousness’ for Middle Americans.” In other words, political Christianity prevented the right-wing base from fully understanding the culture war as a class war — a power struggle between Middle America and a hostile federal regime. He saw Christianity’s universalist ideals as at odds with the defense of the American nation, which was being dispossessed by mass immigration and multiculturalism. “Organized Christianity today,” he wrote in 2001, “is the enemy of the West and the race that created it.”

Mr. Francis’ position, of course, has always been far outside the mainstream of conservative opinion. Conservatives have traditionally viewed religion as foundational to Western heritage, and they have seen its moderating influence on identitarian conflicts as a crucial component of civic harmony. But as a description of recent trends, his assessment holds some weight: The decline of organized religion on the right has, in fact, supercharged the culture war.

Many observers — including Mr. Francis, whose writing became more openly white nationalist toward the end of his career — have been quick to suggest that this new energy is, in essence, white identity politics. It’s true that the decline of religion as an organizing force on the right has made other forms of identity more prominent — and in the absence of a humanizing Christian ethic, white racial consciousness could fill the void. There are and always have been strains of white-supremacist politics that reject Christianity for that reason. (The American eugenicist Madison Grant, for example, echoed Friedrich Nietzsche in denouncing Christianity as “the religion of the slave, the meek and the lowly.” Christianity tends “to break down class and race distinctions,” Mr. Grant [*wrote in 1916*](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Passing_of_the_Great_Race/AdcKAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&amp;gbpv=1&amp;dq=madison+grant+Early+ascetic+Christianity+played+a+large+part+in+this+decline+of+the+Roman+Empire,+as+it+was+at+the+outset+the+religion+of+the+slave,+the+meek,+and+the+lowly,+while+Stoicism+was+the+religion+of+the+strong+men+of+the+time.+This+bias+in+favor+of+the+weaker+elements+greatly+interfered+with+their+elimination+by+natural+processes,+and+the+fighting+force+of+the+empire+was+gradually+undermined.+Christianity+was+in+sharp+contrast+to+the+worship+of+tribal+deities+which+preceded+it,+and+tended+then,+as+it+does+now,+to+break+down+class+and+race+distinctions.+Such+distinctions+are+absolutely+essential+to+the+maintenance+of+race+purity+in+any+community+when+two+or+more+races+live+side+by+side&amp;pg=RA2-PA221&amp;printsec=frontcover). “Such distinctions are absolutely essential to the maintenance of race purity in any community when two or more races live side by side.”)

But it would be wrong to reduce these developments to racial animus. In a speech at the 2021 National Conservatism Conference, Mr. Rufo, a leading conservative activist, described the New Right’s project as a counterrevolution: “The goal is to protect these people, Middle Americans of all racial backgrounds — ***working class*** and middle class — to protect them against what I think is a hostile and nihilistic elite that is seeking to impose its values onto the working and middle classes to bolster their own power, prestige, status and achievement.”

Mr. Rufo, like many of his contemporaries, rarely discusses matters of faith. Today’s right-wing culture warriors think in distinctly Marxian terms: a class struggle between a proletarian base of traditionalists and a powerful public-private bureaucracy that is actively hostile to the American way of life. In lieu of Mr. Buchanan and Phyllis Schlafly, the conservative avatars of today’s culture war look more like Mr. Rufo or — at the level of elected office — Governor DeSantis of Florida. A hero of the new cultural right and a prospective 2024 presidential front-runner, the governor is nominally Catholic and is politically friendly to conservative Christians. But he rarely discusses his religion publicly and almost never in the context of politics. (He did cite his “faith in God” and “in the power of prayer” when [*discussing*](https://floridapolitics.com/archives/471430-gov-desantis-first-family-leans-on-faith-amid-casey-desantis-cancer-battle/) his wife’s breast cancer diagnosis last November.)

Overthrowing the New Left

Whereas the old Christian conservatism was about defending an old order, the new social conservatism is about overthrowing a new one. The transformation of the right is a direct response to a shift on the left. In the years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, when the G.O.P. was the party of the traditional moral order, many individualists, rebels and eccentrics found themselves aligned with progressives. Today the reverse is true. The left is now widely seen as the schoolmarm of American public life, and the right is associated with the gleeful violation of convention. Contemporary social pieties are distinctly left wing, and progressives enforce them with at least as much moral ardor as the most zealous members of the religious right.

In recent years, American progressivism has departed from its traditional live-and-let-live philosophy on social issues, graduating from a push for rights (e.g., same-sex marriage) to a demand for affirmation (e.g., mandates that religious bakers custom-make cakes celebrating same-sex marriage). Progressives and religious conservatives alike have argued that this was the inevitable conclusion of the gay rights movement — that the logic of civil rights law required the transformation of the public square to accommodate L.G.B.T.Q. Americans once they were recognized as a distinct class.

The left’s program is now not so much securing equal rights for certain groups as punishing those who hold views toward those groups that — while well within the mainstream just a decade or two ago — are now deemed unacceptable. Religious conservatives, for their part, have increasingly retreated from a battle for the public view of sexuality and marriage to the defensive crouch of “religious liberty.”

Today’s left-wing cultural program represents the tastes and worldview of an insular class of often white progressive elites, who now sit to the left of nonwhite Democrats on any number of social issues, including race. (A [*2017 Pew survey*](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/18/opinion/democrat-electorate-left-turn.html), for example, found that 79.2 percent of white liberals agreed that “racial discrimination is the main reason why many Black people can’t get ahead these days,” whereas 59.9 percent of Black Americans said the same.) Though a group [*Pew calls*](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/11/09/the-democratic-coalition/) the ‘progressive left’ — which is 68 percent white — makes up just 12 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents, its members are more likely to donate to campaigns and [*turn out to vote*](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/04/26/10-political-engagement-knowledge-and-the-midterms/) than other Democratic constituencies.

As a result, they exercise an outsize influence over the social agenda of the Democratic Party. Moderate Democrats in Congress have regularly broken with progressives on economic issues like regulation and spending, but the entire party is generally [*in lock step on most social issues*](https://www.nationalreview.com/2022/04/dont-expect-a-sister-souljah-moment-from-democrats-anytime-soon/). All but one of the 225 House Democrats elected in 2018 are co-sponsors of the Equality Act, which would write gender identity and sexual orientation into federal civil rights law, and House Democrats have rarely, if ever, publicly acknowledged that ideas central to critical race theory are being taught in public schools, let alone criticized that fact.

As Democratic elites have embraced a more aggressive form of social liberalism, the party has alienated a swath of its traditional ***working-class*** base. Many Americans of all racial backgrounds are deeply uncomfortable with at least some aspects of post-Obama cultural progressivism. A recent poll from the American Principles Project, for example, found that Hispanics and African Americans in six battleground states supported “laws that prohibit biological males who identify as transgender women from participating in girls’ sports programs both in K-12 and at the collegiate level.” When it came to “banning puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and physical sex-change surgeries for children under the age of 18 who identify as transgender,” Hispanics supported such measures by a margin of nine percentage points and African Americans by a margin of 15 points.

All this challenges the conventional wisdom among Republican elites. The G.O.P.’s post-2012 “autopsy,” for example, argued for a strategy of moderation on cultural issues — paired with a recommitment to low taxes and deregulation — to make inroads with nonwhite voters. In fact, the opposite strategy seems to have been successful. In 2020, Mr. Trump won more votes from nonwhite people and Hispanics than any other Republican presidential candidate in modern American history and a higher percentage of nonwhite and Hispanic votes than any other since Mr. Bush in 2004, running on an aggressive culture-war platform that simultaneously eschewed several tenets of Republican economic orthodoxy, from welfare cuts and government spending to immigration and free trade. To rephrase James Carville’s famous adage on the 1992 campaign trail: It’s the culture war, stupid.

Conservatism in a Secular America

The future of the emergent, not-so-silent majority remains uncertain. If Roe is overturned, it may well heighten the contradictions within the uneasy alliance of the new and old forms of social conservatism. In the days after the leak of the Supreme Court draft opinion, the Barstool Sports founder Dave Portnoy — perhaps the most prominent representative of M.A.R.s — declared that if Republicans tried to ban abortion, he would become a Democrat. Just let a “woman do what she wants with her body,” he said, with an expletive for emphasis.

A controversy at last year’s Turning Point USA, a conservative youth conference, was instructive in showing the potential cracks within the new coalition. Brandi Love, a pornographic actress who [*describes*](https://thefederalist.com/2020/04/30/no-living-under-an-islamic-caliphate-wouldnt-be-better-than-keeping-camgirls-legal/) herself as a “sex, drink and rock ’n’ roll conservative,” purchased tickets to the event, but after a backlash online, she was barred from attending. She slammed the move, describing it as “a worst-case example of cancel culture” to a writer for [*The Daily Caller*](https://dailycaller.com/2021/07/18/exclusive-brandi-love-sas-tpusa-kicked-out-reaction/). She added that if Turning Point USA “is the future, then the future is run by puritanical, fanatically devout Christians who will demand compliance or else.” A number of prominent conservatives echoed the claim: “I couldn’t care less who bangs who, and I missed the part of the Constitution that addresses threesomes,” [*tweeted*](https://twitter.com/johncardillo/status/1416944344892850179) the TV commentator John Cardillo. The Federalist’s Ben Domenech [*concurred*](https://twitter.com/bdomenech/status/1416645865029124100): “The right has an opportunity to be the big tent party. Don’t be a bunch of prudes.”

At the time, I voiced my own objections to Ms. Love’s presence at the conference. I rejected her argument that she had been canceled by free speech hypocrites because, I wrote, it assumes that “the only valid alternative to political correctness and left-wing cultural orthodoxy is the absence of any social or cultural standards whatsoever.” This is the heart of the distinction between anti-woke liberals and traditional social conservatives: The disaffected recent converts in the conservative coalition often object to the new left-wing puritanism for the same reason that they objected to its old right-wing counterpart: It prevents them from doing and saying whatever they please, free of social repercussions. That is its own kind of libertinism. Social conservatives, in contrast, do not oppose the enforcement of social norms as such; they oppose the enforcement of left-wing social norms on the grounds that they are the wrong norms.

A resolution of these contradictions will not be necessary for the new conservatism to succeed. Every political coalition contains its fair share of internal tensions. But old social conservatives will need to decide how much they are willing to concede in exchange for a political future, and secular converts will need to decide if they are more alienated by the left’s cultural authoritarianism than they are by the G.O.P.’s positions on issues like abortion.

If it can be sustained, however, the secular right may be able to deliver on the old religious right’s priorities. Indeed, if Roe is overturned, it will have been due to the election of a president who exemplified the new conservatism. In many ways, the new conservatism is winning where the old conservatism could not. The parental backlash against progressive pedagogy, for example, has inspired [*a wave*](https://www.nationalreview.com/2021/12/the-graphic-obscene-material-sparking-a-parental-revolt-in-the-schools/) of states and localities to crack down on obscenity and sexually explicit content in school libraries. Whereas the religious right failed on gay marriage, school prayer and a number of other social issues, the new conservatism — which has yet to even fully take shape — has already notched a wave of important victories. At least 17 states have passed laws aimed at restricting the teaching of critical race theory, and 14 have barred transgender athletes from competing in single-sex sports corresponding to the gender they were not assigned at birth.

Where religious conservatives fit in all this remains uncertain. Some have pointed to a new strain of Catholic thought known as postliberalism, championed primarily by Catholic academics such as Patrick Deneen and Adrian Vermeule, as one promising alternative path for the New Right. Thinkers in this tradition want to implement a specifically — and sometimes [*explicitly*](https://www.theamericanconservative.com/dreher/what-do-integralists-want-reactionary-catholicism/) — Catholic political order. But the relationship between these intellectuals and the grass-roots energy has [*always been uneasy*](https://scholars-stage.org/the-problem-of-the-new-right/). Insofar as there is crossover between the two forms of conservatism, the Catholic postliberals could be understood as intellectual fellow travelers in the Trumpian culture war. But they do not define its ethos, and in some ways, they are at odds with it.

While the old religious right will see much to like in the new cultural conservatism, they are partners, rather than leaders, in the coalition. That may be the best thing they can hope for in a rapidly secularizing country. The new cultural conservatism may protect the embattled minority of traditionalist Christians; it will not restore them to their pre-eminent place in public life, as the old religious conservatism hoped to do. But it may have an actual chance at winning. And that, from the conservative perspective, is worth a great deal.

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The New York Times

May 1, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section AR; Column 0; Arts and Leisure Desk; Pg. 24

**Length:** 1717 words

**Byline:** By Siddhartha Mitter

**Body**

Igshaan Adams and Bronwyn Katz use abstraction and humble materials to make sense of their country at the Venice Biennale.

CHICAGO -- On a recent afternoon, the artist Igshaan Adams instructed me to pull up Cape Town on Google Earth on my phone. We thumbed away from the waterfront and the verdant enclaves that hug the iconic Table Mountain, and over to the sprawling Cape Flats, all dusty brown.

This was where the apartheid regime forcibly relocated nonwhite people into commuter suburbs, designated by race. Adams, who is ''Coloured'' by that rubric -- a holdover term that remains widely employed as a cultural designation for South Africa's mixed-race communities -- grew up in a place called Bonteheuwel.

We found his block, low houses cheek by jowl. Across the tracks lay Epping, a big industrial zone of factories and hangars. In between was open land. We zoomed in and saw them: the paths formed by people trekking between the two zones.

''I almost died there once,'' Adams said. Urban planners call such tracks desire lines -- a poetic technical term. But these ones got crossed by necessity. ''I've been robbed there many times,'' Adams said. ''You knew going there that it was dangerous but you had to; you had to go and find a job or whatever you needed.''

We were at the Art Institute of Chicago, where Adams was installing his solo exhibition, ''Desire Lines.'' His work features exquisite tapestries woven with thousands of beads -- glass, stone, shell, acrylic, wood. The works are at first view entirely abstract. Yet they are thick with references -- to home, to community, to the land. Many, indeed, retrace his own footfall.

Adams, 39, is currently in the main exhibition at this year's Venice Biennale, with an immense woven piece, ''Bonteheuwel/Epping,'' with greenish and cream accents over pink dominant tones, in the Arsenale. Three broad diagonal streaks reproduce ones on the section of open land that he showed me. The tapestry is a stylized land-use document, a kind of map.

But the land is never neutral, especially in South Africa, where colonization, mining and apartheid produced extreme inequality -- white people form nine percent of the population but still own 72 percent of arable land. So what you can do in the terrain hews close to what you can do in life.

''When I was growing up, there was a set ceiling for a Coloured person -- you could become a manager at a shop, that was the height your aims could reach,'' Adams told me. ''Everyone had a clear path that was laid out for you. And so the desire line represents finding your own path.''

An Artistic Kinship

The sculptor Bronwyn Katz also grew up in South African terrain where the land was heavily punctured: Kimberley, a mining hub, notably for diamonds. ''There were all these holes in the landscape,'' Katz told me. One, called the Big Hole, was a 700-foot open mine in the city center, now a tourist attraction. Mine dumps strewn around town polluted water and gardens.

Like Adams -- with whom she is good friends -- Katz is Coloured: in her case Indigenous Khoe, which the racist bureaucrats filed into that broader category. Though ''born free'' after apartheid, as the South African saying goes, in 1993, she too grew up in a Coloured area, Greenpoint, where people had mining-related jobs; her father is a metalworker.

Katz is also in the Venice Biennale, and at 28, one of the fastest-rising stars in South Africa's art scene. She had a solo exhibition at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in 2018, just three years out of art school at the University of Cape Town; recently her work appeared in the New Museum Triennial.

And, like Adams, she works with household and mass-market objects to make works that are formally abstract yet charged with memories and histories of people in South Africa simply trying to exist on the land.

Her work in Venice, ''Gõegõe,'' is made from bed-spring metal and pot scourers rendered into a bristling, geometric form. At the New Museum, she showed ''Xãe,'' a mini-forest of cylinders made of pot scourers and steel wool. ''Gõegõe'' is inspired by Khoe myth, Katz told me by video from her studio in Cape Town. There was a river snake with a diamond for an eye. One day it awoke to find that a man had stolen its eye, and it entered a blind destructive rage. ''The story has many layers,'' she said.

Using hydrochloric acid, she instigated a slow rusting that will result in the sculpture shedding flakes. ''It takes me a while to figure out the intentions of the work,'' she said. ''What I know for sure is that this work speaks about extraction, our relationship with extraction, and the destruction that extraction causes.''

Adams and Katz are not the only South Africans in the Biennale. The international exhibition also includes the film and installation artist Simnikiwe Buhlungu, and separately the South Africa pavilion features Roger Ballen, Lebohang Kganye and Phumulani Ntuli. Even these form only a slice of the dynamic South African scene.

Still, Adams and Katz have affinities. ''They have this energy, which is not of chaotic assemblage, but to turn something mundane into something beautiful,'' said Cecilia Alemani, the curator of the Venice Biennale.

Tandazani Dhlakama, a senior curator at the Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa in Cape Town, told me that Adams and Katz joined a current of South African artists who buck expectations that art from the country should be figurative or explicitly political. ''They are finding poetic ways to talk about personal narrative, history and land,'' she said.

And Khanyisile Mbongwa, who curated the 2020 Stellenbosch Triennale, emphasized the intimacy in their work, the journey within. ''These are deep conversations with their cultures, with childhood memories and dreaming,'' she said.

Ancestral Knowledge

Near the end of art school, Katz asked her grandparents in Kimberley to write her letters.

''I was lucky that my grandparents really enjoyed telling stories,'' she said. They wrote to her about ghosts and talking birds; details of the family lineage; and the tale of the gõegõe snake with the diamond eye that inspired her Venice work.

''There's an overwhelming perception in South Africa that Khoe people are dead,'' Katz said. Yet her own family proved that Indigenous culture persisted.

Not far from Kimberley were sites of rock carvings dating back thousands of years, symbolic and patterned -- early abstraction, Katz said, noting their inspiration.

Katz studies !Ora, the Khoe language most closely linked to her roots. (The exclamation mark denotes a type of click.) It informs many of her titles, together with Afrikaans, the Coloured lingua franca. Her smaller sculptures -- wall-hung wire curtains, glyph-like montages of bent steel and iron ore -- represent efforts, she told me, while ''archiving'' !Ora, to simultaneously script some new ''language that I don't have a name for.''

Adams too has partial Indigenous ancestry, with Nama grandparents from the inland Karoo. Along with tapestries he makes suspended sculptures, tangled but graceful cloud-like forms made from wire, spray-painted in silver, pink or copper tones. In the Chicago show these hang very low, hovering over a huge tapestry on the floor.

Their inspiration is the rieldans, an Indigenous folk dance in which participants kick up dust clouds. Adams read the dance as a metaphor: Sometimes you can't see a path, he said. But you can tell it is being made when you see ''dust particles rising up from the floor.''

Coming to Terms

Adams did not have an easy route. Family circumstances, he said, veered between ***working-class*** and outright poor. His parents were alcoholic. One grandfather was a police officer. The grandmother who raised him, though illiterate, worked at the Pollsmoor prison -- during apartheid, Coloured people often found themselves both victims and enforcers.

His family included Muslims and Christians. Racial trauma was deeply internalized, he said. An older brother who could pass for white got better treatment. ''There was no equality even in the family,'' Adams said.

Also, he was gay. ''I always felt in this in-between space,'' he said. His early 20s, he said, were ''very destructive'' -- drugs, alcohol, lack of direction. ''I wanted to know what it feels like to have that internal peace that Islam speaks about. Is this actually possible?''

His path passed through a woman-led Sufi community, graphic design studies at a technical college, and eventually an art-school diploma. By then much had changed. For his graduation show he recreated his grandmother's living room; she came and sat there, ''watching her soapies'' on TV beneath his embroidered self-portraits.

The Chicago show includes a hall tiled with linoleum squares he collected from homes in Bonteheuwel. Many families, even poor one, replace their linoleum every Christmas, he said. ''That act I find quite hopeful. But a part of me also identifies with things being of no value, and making them valuable.''

Hendrik Folkerts, a former Art Institute curator who organized the show (he is now at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm), said that Adams's art has grown outward, coming to terms with the home first and gradually the world. ''He has gone from a very interior space to the actual land,'' Folkerts said.

Their land is fraught but to them it is compelling. Although Cape Town is known to Black South Africans for its unbothered white privilege, in comparison to Johannesburg, Katz, who has tried both cities, said she found it necessary to stay there. ''It's important to take up space in Cape Town,'' she said.

As for Adams, though his desire lines have taken him far, he has never truly left his Bonteheuwel community, where for every social ill there was also some offsetting mechanism of solidarity. Now it's his turn. His atelier employs friends, neighbors, aunties. His studio manager, Morné Roux, is a childhood pal who got his first passport for the trip to Chicago.

At the atelier, they call Adams ''Pa,'' or father. He can't stand it; they won't stop. ''It's a beautiful community,'' he said. If his output is prolific, it's also because he's looking after his people. ''It's a massive responsibility,'' he said, no complaint in his tone. ''I can't drop the ball.''

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Igshaan Adams, above left, with ''Epping II,'' and Bronwyn Katz, above right, in her studio. Katz's ''Gõegõe,'' below, is inspired by an Indigenous tale. Adams's ''Desire Lines,'' bottom, includes cloudlike forms and a hall tiled with linoleum squares. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE AGYEI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAMANTHA REINDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

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ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO)

**Load-Date:** May 15, 2022

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[***The Strange Allure of the Blockchain; Tressie McMillan Cottom***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64M4-GC61-JBG3-62FJ-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 24, 2022 Monday 00:02 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1368 words

**Byline:** Tressie McMillan Cottom

**Highlight:** Why the appeal of cryptocurrencies and NFTs crosses borders of class and race.

**Body**

My family managed to get together for a small Thanksgiving dinner last year. It was our first gathering since April 2020. After a big meal, my cousin only wanted to talk about one thing: cryptocurrency. He is a middle-aged Black man from New York, just a few years older than I am, but those years make a huge difference in his job security. When he came of age, he got a blue-collar job working for the city. He has worked at that job since he was 17 years old, so he will be able to retire as a relatively young man. And since the job is unionized, my cousin will retire with a pension and health benefits — the kind of pathway to economic security that is becoming increasingly rare.

These days, ours is an information economy that likes credentials, which involves going to some kind of postsecondary school. Even with high wages for skilled trades, like the one my cousin used to get that union job straight after high school, blue-collar trades are a hard sell to young workers. My cousin is not exactly a dinosaur, but he is not the kind of guy you imagine day-trading or actively managing an investment portfolio.

Yet he is absolutely enthused about Bitcoin. While he is figuring out his second act, he views crypto as the way to build “generational wealth” and “freedom.” I put those words in quotes because you hear them a lot in conversations around financial-sector schemes, and I am not sure they mean anything in those contexts. This week, the New York mayor, Eric Adams, is living up to his campaign promise to get his first three paychecks converted to cryptocurrency. My blue-collar cousin has a lot in common with his mayor. The allure of the next American frontier crosses all kinds of lines, including class lines. I’ll get to that in a second.

Bitcoin is the most well-known cryptocurrency, but there are many others, like Ethereum, Dogecoin, and Tether, which come up a lot among my peers. Some people talk about crypto as being revolutionary because it promises to democratize access to financial markets and give individual investors control of their destiny. In an adjacent space, nonfungible tokens — or NFTs — promise something similar. NFTs are like coupons that represent an underlying object, like a piece of artwork, although they could represent almost anything.

For my part, the discussion over Thanksgiving leftovers brought home a data point about women’s and people of color’s interest in cryptocurrency. A 2021 [*survey*](https://www.norc.org/PDFs/ASonFinance/Spotlight%20on%20cryptocurrency%20Topline.pdf) found that the people who trade crypto are a far cry from the young, white, male image of a techbro:

The average cryptocurrency trader is under 40 (mean age is 38) and does not have a college degree (55 percent). Two-fifths of crypto traders are not white (44 percent), and 41 percent are women.

That survey captured a lot of people, like my cousin.

What fascinates me is how widely crypto and NFT talk has diffused, and so quickly. It is not often that I hear the same branding from lower-income people of color that I also hear from high-earning white peers with advanced degrees. Depending on your consumer profile — biographical data like your age, race and gender, plus your purchasing habits — you probably hear about these financial instruments from online ads, social media groups, and peers who are early adopters.

I hear about crypto from my educated, high-income academic and writing friends who also shop at Target a lot. I also hear about crypto from financial advisers and college classmates who share stories about making a lot of money mining crypto and trading NFTs. But because of my racial and geographic identities, I also hear about crypto from my ***working-class*** friends and family. They are getting messages about crypto from Facebook and Instagram and their friends who have moved on from candle-leggings-timeshare-jewelry multilevel marketing schemes to trading Dogecoin. Crypto and NFTs might be the only thing these diverse groups share in common. For that reason alone, the explosion of these technologies deserves some sociological attention.

All of the branded cryptos and NFTs were born out of the invention of the blockchain. I don’t think of blockchain as a technological innovation so much as it is a cultural iteration. Blockchain is about solidarity among strangers. That’s the kind of thing we have been striving for since the first mechanical age. On a purely technical level, blockchain is a ledger. That ledger is decentralized (although we will complicate that a bit in future discussions) and that decentralization makes it hard to manipulate. Now, the point of decentralization is that ideally no one who records information in the ledger has to trust anyone else when they exchange information based on that ledger. If I buy something, I can list my ownership in the ledger that assigns my ownership rights a unique identifier. If someone challenges my ownership, the ledger’s record is the god tier of ownership. I have something that no one can take away from me! You start to see why this idea would appeal to a lot of people, but especially to groups of people whose right to ownership has been encoded in legal precedent and cultural norms for generations. If I live in a community where the police absolutely use eminent domain to claim my private property and I cannot do anything about it, that sense of everyday powerlessness would make the promise of blockchain sound pretty good. To me, though, it presents more questions than answers.

Those questions are about the culture of blockchain, not about its technical innovation. Blockchain promises to decouple trust in our financial transactions from institutions. I do not have to trust that someone owns something, or trust that an institution will defend my ownership of something. Blockchain says trust moves from institutions — like banks and regulators — to the apolitical ledger. In theory, no one owns the ledger. That means no one can undermine your bargaining power in an exchange. But is that actually how the ledger works? Is an apolitical platform possible in a world where everything we do has a political cause and effect? I’m skeptical on that front. And healthy skepticism is a good place to start when deciding whether something is a scam or merely risky.

Last week I did something I wish I had done before that Thanksgiving dinner conversation. I talked with some people about cryptocurrencies and NFTs. First was a far-ranging conversation with Anil Dash, a writer and entrepreneur best known, perhaps, as the C.E.O. of Glitch, a software development company. He has taken a lot of heat for having a [*nuanced assessment*](https://anildash.com/2021/11/14/i-didnt-invent-nfts-but-we-dont-really-have-any-other-way-to-talk-about-tech/) of blockchain, crypto and NFTs. We used to write together on a culture and technology vertical on Medium, where Anil has blogged about tech for years now. Anil is thoughtful and erudite on the cultural history of internet technologies. He is also pragmatic and has a keen interest in inequality. That mix of expertise and sensibility made him the first person I wanted to talk to about the intersection of citizen consumers and the alternative financial technologies infiltrating our everyday lives. The conversation was so rich that I will write about it in a two-part discussion starting next week.

My friend Darrick Hamilton, an economist, has warned that we shouldn’t be too aggressive on replacing the danger of unjust financial systems with wildly risky alternative currencies. That sounds about right to me. It reminds me of another legitimate scheme in higher education, which I researched and wrote about for years: Telling people that their very expensive, low-quality degrees from these schools may not be a good solution for them rarely worked. That is the power of culture. And that’s the reasoning behind my first question to Anil: What social problem is blockchain trying to solve? I’ll ask this time and time again as we talk about the idea of institutional failures and the unsatisfying stop-gaps we create to navigate them.

Tressie McMillan Cottom (@[*tressiemcphd*](https://twitter.com/tressiemcphd)) is an associate professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Information and Library Science, the author of “Thick: And Other Essays” and a 2020 MacArthur fellow.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Diana Ejaita FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** January 27, 2022

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[***Candidates Seek Voters at Churches, Bars and Other Rain-Free Spots***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62T9-MB41-JBG3-60H6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 31, 2021 Monday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 923 words

**Byline:** By Dana Rubinstein and Sean Piccoli

**Body**

Because of the downpour, candidates for New York City mayor pressed their cases to voters at churches and bars, instead of in parks and on street corners.

The cold rain dashed countless Memorial Day weekend plans in New York City, including those of the eight leading Democratic candidates for mayor, who were understandably eager to bump as many elbows as possible with just over three weeks before the June 22 primary.

Instead of campaigning at subway spots and in parks, candidates spent the weekend in search of captive audiences. They tracked them down in churches, in bars and wherever dry spots could be found.

Their messages varied in nuance, but the cold rain did not drown out one unifying theme: Post-pandemic New York City is in crisis, with a rise in shootings, increasing poverty and an exacerbated need for affordable housing.

Several of the candidates made haste to pulpits in the voter-rich neighborhoods of central Brooklyn and southeast Queens to tout their wares.

In East Flatbush, Andrew Yang pitched himself to parishioners at the Clarendon Road Church as an heir to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s fight against poverty.

Dr. King argued for a version of guaranteed income, Mr. Yang pointed out -- a concept that Mr. Yang cast a klieg light on during his 2020 presidential campaign. (The candidate made a point of noting that he knows Martin Luther King III, who is backing his campaign.)

''This is when you probably met me, is when I appeared on your TV screens,'' Mr. Yang told the congregation. ''Now, you might remember this, the magical Asian man, who was saying we should start giving everyone money.''

At separate Pentecostal churches in Queens, parishioners encountered beeping thermometers, consent forms and two well-funded but badly lagging first-time candidates for mayor: Raymond J. McGuire and Shaun Donovan.

At Bethel Gospel Tabernacle, a majority Black church in a ***working-class*** section of Jamaica, a 15-piece live band and choir played rousing gospel to nearly empty pews, while two jumbo screens flanking the stage showed a live webcast interview with Mr. McGuire, the former Citigroup executive.

It was the first of four scheduled church stops on Sunday in Queens, during which Mr. McGuire referenced his ''old Pentecostal'' religious upbringing and warned that New York City was facing ''a crisis of Covid, a crisis of the economy, a crisis of safety and a crisis of education.'' He said he was best equipped to lead the city to a place of shared prosperity.

''I do not owe any political favors,'' Mr. McGuire said.

At Aliento de Vida, a bilingual church in Corona in an old playhouse, parishioners were greeted to a speech from Mr. Donovan, the former housing and budget secretary who is running on his experience in the Obama administration.

His framing was similar to Mr. McGuire's.

New York is in a ''Nehemiah moment,'' Mr. Donovan said, referring to the biblical figure who rebuilt Jerusalem from ruins.

Scott M. Stringer, the New York City comptroller who is trying to revive his campaign following an allegation of sexual harassment, had planned to host his Sunday media event outdoors, in Foley Square. But with the rain pouring down, he relocated to the vaulted, Guastavino-tiled overhang at 1 Centre Street in Manhattan.

There, Mr. Stringer said he would tamp down on the rise in hate crimes by educating students about the dangers of bigotry and focusing resources on hate-crime hot spots.

Mr. Stringer, who is running as a progressive, implicitly renounced the more pro-policing campaigns of his competitors.

''We can do it without resorting to the old Giuliani-style playbook of over-policing,'' Mr. Stringer said.

Citing the rain, Maya Wiley had to scrap two outdoor events on Saturday at the Bronx Night Market and the Urbanspace Market in Bryant Park.

She began her Sunday morning at two Black Baptist churches in Brooklyn, touting her commitment to New York City public housing, but then had to scratch another outdoor event planned for Socrates Sculpture Park in the progressive precincts of western Queens.

Instead, she ended up at Katch bar in Astoria, with State Senator Michael Gianaris, who earned his progressive merit badge by helping to torpedo Amazon's plans to build a second headquarters in Long Island City.

At the bar, Ms. Wiley sampled a signature house cocktail with tequila renamed the ''Mayarita'' for the occasion. Over the din of more than two dozen flat-screen TVs showing a New York Knicks playoff game, Ms. Wiley and Mr. Gianaris greeted customers and well-wishers from behind the bar and served them the red concoction in stemmed cocktail glasses.

It was a tougher setting than church for contemplating the city's woes, but Ms. Wiley tried.

''We had a crisis before Covid -- of affordability, of systemic racism,'' she said, ''and what Covid did was fast-track and deepen some of the crises we already were facing.''

She said the city is in recovery from the disease, but even when it is curbed, ''We will still have people facing eviction. We will still have people who are hungry. We will still have a homeless crisis. We will still have a crisis of safety -- safety from crime and safety from police violence.''

Roseann McSorley, who owns and runs Katch with her husband, said the restaurant has hosted other women seeking office, including Cynthia Nixon and State Senator Jessica Ramos. Ms. McSorley didn't outright endorse Ms. Wiley but said she supported the effort to put a woman in Gracie Manson, adding: ''It's time.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/30/nyregion/mayor-ny-campaign-wiley.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/30/nyregion/mayor-ny-campaign-wiley.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Maya Wiley campaigned from behind the bar at Katch in Queens. (PHOTOGRAPH BY ANDREW SENG FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 31, 2021

**End of Document**



[***No Longer Running but Still in the Race***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654T-3W01-JBG3-64X2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 3, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BU; Column 0; Money and Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 4; CORNER OFFICE

**Length:** 1456 words

**Byline:** By David Gelles

**Body**

Jim Weber, the longtime chief executive of Brooks Running, was for many years a devoted runner. The hours spent racking up the miles were more than exercise for him. They were a chance to meditate on life, to devise strategy about business, and to ruminate on the thorny problems that come with operating a company with more than $1 billion in annual sales.

Then, a few years ago, Mr. Weber got cancer. He had to step away from running the business, endured difficult rounds of treatment and emerged cancer-free -- but missing a lung.

Though Mr. Weber can no longer run, he is still active, walking laps around Brooks's new headquarters in Seattle. The company, which is part of Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate, is profitable and growing quickly.

And Mr. Weber, who has been C.E.O. for more than two decades -- steering it from near bankruptcy, through private equity ownership, out from being a subsidiary of Fruit of the Loom, and into being a stand-alone part of Berkshire Hathaway -- is still enjoying what he calls his ''dream job,'' with no plans to retire.

This interview was condensed and edited for clarity.

Tell me about growing up in Minnesota.

I was one of six kids within eight years of each other in a ***working class*** suburb of St. Paul, and it was a very chaotic and busy house. My dad was an alcoholic and he was never happy, and almost a bully at times. He had so much negative energy that I just ended up avoiding him. So I was pretty independent, and I decided I wanted to be a glass-half-full kind of person. I wanted to sort of break out and be happy and pursue being good at something and not being bitter. So I poured myself into hockey, but my Plan B was to run a company.

One of the things I've gotten perspective on, though it's really kind of tricky, is that I was born a white male in the Midwest. Everybody is dealt so many cards when they are born, and I was born with a good hand. That's a broader lens now that I have in life.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it?

My first job was a commercial banking officer at Norwest Bank in Minneapolis, and I learned how to financially analyze a business, from a profit and loss balance sheet to cash flow. I became a really good financial analyst in that first banking job, but I knew I wanted to be on the other side of the table at some point and run a company.

There were layoffs at some Berkshire Hathaway companies during the pandemic. How did you manage to avoid having them at Brooks?

When you don't know what's going to happen, the conventional wisdom of all the C.E.O. peers I talk to and most private equity people I know, and most bankers, is to hunker down, batten down the hatches, and throw stuff overboard you don't need. Shed costs, because it's about first and foremost survival, and not only survival, but protecting profits.

But we didn't have a brand that we were protecting. We were creating a brand, we were adding new customers. We're in an entrepreneurial mode, have been now for 20 years. So in April 2020, when everybody's laying off people, my own board was saying, Jim, you know, you're probably going to have to lay off people.

But we had a thought that in stressful times, running is convenient. It's cheap. People might go running. So we paused, and as soon as we saw runners running and digital demand picking up, we turned back on our supply chain, and I think we probably did it at least eight weeks before anybody else did. It's hard to describe how meaningful that was. We kept our marketing spending going. We didn't lay off one person, and we grew 31 percent last year. And this year, without our supply chain issues, we'd be up over 30 percent.

When did you realize Brooks had the potential to compete with big companies like Nike in the running market?

When the Great Recession hit in 2008 and 2009 and the world was ending, economically speaking, it just crushed apparel. We did a layoff at that point. But by February of 2009, shoes started selling.

Nike is one of the greatest brands ever built, and it's about competitive, athletic achievement and breaking the tape on the podium. It's just so powerful. But we saw running as the most unique sport in all the world, and we had this ''Run Happy'' ethos, which was unique.

Running is maybe the original sport from a competitive standpoint, with cross country, track and field, the Olympics, road racing, trail running and ultramarathons. But it transcends sport, because it's an investment in yourself. One hundred and fifty million people have running as part of their fitness, health and wellness, meditation regimen. It's a tool to invest in themselves. So we positioned our brand right in the middle of the running lifestyle. We're doing something no one else has ever done, and creating this unique brand that's only about running. And it's the biggest category of sporting goods.

It's rare to be a C.E.O. for 20 years. Why haven't you left to take other jobs?

All the heroes I had in business had built incredible brands and fantastically dominant businesses. So once I got on to Brooks and I saw that it could be a great business, and that you could attract a customer for life and sell them three pairs of shoes a year, I saw it, that flywheel in the business.

I almost left a couple of times. But I love building things. And here's the other thing about Berkshire: This is the closest thing to owning this business. I'm the chief culture officer, I'm the chief strategy officer, I'm the chief risk officer. I'm accountable for everything short term, medium term, long term. I have a dream job. So that's what's kept me. I knew this was a gem.

What do you think is the biggest misconception about good leadership today?

I think that the whole command and control thing is a relic. It's about engaging people and creating it a North Star, a purpose, so that the team is going to give as much as they get.

So what's the misconception? The misconception is that you can command and control your way to really creating value in culture. If you want to attract great talent, you've got to create purpose and mission and an opportunity for those people.

How do you manage your stress as a chief executive?

Running became absolute therapy for me. Once I quit playing competitive hockey in college, I ran three to five days a week and I've done marathons and all that. But mostly I ran by myself and, mostly without music because I processed. If I had a notepad with me, I'd process big decisions and puzzles and problem solve. It truly was meditation for me.

I got cancer a couple of years ago, and I can't sustain a running heart rate, so I can't do these six-mile-long runs anymore. It's killing me, but I'm still active. I can do intervals, I can do walk-runs and the gym. But running has just been absolutely my best processing time throughout my entire life.

Besides affecting your running, how else did cancer affect your professional life?

It was not great. It was a four-year thing and the surgery was brutal. I have one lung now. But I learned what I really value and the way I want to live life. I want to live every day and I want to get the most out of every day. I don't want to be the cancer survivor and do speeches on that. I want to be a C.E.O., and a dad, and a papa and a runner. That's who I am. So I just determined I was going to beat this thing, and I'm cancer-free today.

Did you ever thing about stepping down when you were sick?

No. And in fact, on Day 3 of my diagnosis, I called Warren and I told him, ''I'm going to fight this thing. It might take a while. I might have to leave for six to eight months. And my biggest fear is I get healthy and eight months from now, I have no job and no team and nothing to do.''

He said, ''Don't worry, Jim. Brooks will be there when you get healthy.''

Am I defined by my job? Yeah. I love this job and I love this team and this brand. And so that was a huge fear of mine because I don't have a retirement plan. I don't want to do something else. I'm doing exactly what I want to be doing, and I didn't want to change that.

Do you think Brooks is basically the company it needs to be right now, or is it still growing and changing?

We just put together a 2030 vision for Brooks to continue this path to be a leader in performance running, focused on runners, and we think that niche 10 years from now is absolutely a $4 billion company. We're building something in a category that is bigger than outdoor or fitness. Running is bigger than all of that. I don't know when I'm going to retire, but I'm not going to do another gig.David Gelles is the Corner Office columnist and a business reporter. Follow him on LinkedIn and Twitter: @dgelles.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/business/brooks-running-jim-weber.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/business/brooks-running-jim-weber.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY STUART ISETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 3, 2022

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[***Scores of Catholic Schools Won't Be Reopening. Ever.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60SC-VR21-DXY4-X03G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 6, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 23

**Length:** 1456 words

**Byline:** By Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio

**Body**

About 150 Catholic schools have closed nationwide citing insurmountable financial pressures from the coronavirus pandemic.

In more than four decades of coaching girls' basketball at Lebanon Catholic High School in southeastern Pennsylvania, Patti Hower had led the team to three state championships and 20 district titles. This year, with four starting players returning, there were high hopes again.

But then in April came the news: the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg announced that the school, whose origins date to 1859, was permanently closing, citing insurmountable financial stress, exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic.

''We played our last game in March and had a postgame talk saying, 'We're looking forward to this upcoming year,''' said Ms. Hower, 68, who attended the school, like her father and granddaughters. ''We never thought, 'Hey, we're never going to get on that court together again as a team.'''

As schools around the country debate how to reopen safely, a growing number of Catholic schools -- already facing declining enrollments and donations from before the pandemic -- are shutting down for good.

About 150 Catholic schools have closed, said Kathy Mears, the director of the National Catholic Educational Association, equal to about 2 percent of the 6,183 schools that were up and running last year. The number of closures is at least 50 percent higher this year than in previous years, Ms. Mears said.

In Boston, the archdiocese has had to close nine schools so far, and about two dozen others are on a ''watch list,'' said Thomas Carroll, superintendent of schools for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston. In early July, the Archdiocese of New York announced that it would be closing 20 Catholic Schools.

As parents and families lost their jobs during the pandemic, many could no longer pay tuition at Catholic schools, even though fees are generally much less than at other private schools. And when churches began shutting down to curb the spread of the virus, that also ended a major source for donations -- some of which would normally be allotted for parish schools.

For many schools after years of declining enrollments, the coronavirus became the mortal strike. ''If a school was financially vulnerable, the pandemic was the thing that pushed them over the edge,'' Ms. Mears said.

Enrollment at Catholic schools in the United States peaked at 5.2 million nationwide in the early 1960s, according to the National Catholic Educational Association. But as the percentage of practicing Catholics has declined across the United States, so has the number of children enrolling in Catholic schools. Enrollment for the 2019-20 school year was down to about 1.7 million.

The closing of the parochial schools has etched a profound sense of loss among teachers and families, who face the abrupt disappearance of spaces that long served as focal points for personal relationships and family ties.

The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston reported the closure of four schools in April, saying that fallout from Covid-19 was the final blow for facilities long struggling to meet costs.

''The cataclysmic effects of this pandemic have left us with no options -- which breaks out hearts,'' Cardinal Daniel DiNardo said in a statement.

One of those schools, St. Francis of Assisi, had been severely damaged by Hurricane Harvey in 2017, but community members had worked hard to support rebuilding efforts and welcome students back in the fall of 2018, said Sharita Palmer Mayo, whose two sons attended the school. Less than two years later, the closure has forced families to look elsewhere for schooling once again.

''We had literally just like built a little family there,'' Ms. Palmer Mayo said. ''I was in love with the school.''

Among the best-known Catholic schools shutting its doors is the Institute of Notre Dame, a renowned all-girls facility founded in Baltimore in 1847. School leaders said that the school was deeply in debt and facing a 43 percent enrollment decline over the past five years. In a letter they noted that the coronavirus ''caused significant, added financial hardship.''

Prominent alumni include the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, and a former Democratic senator for Maryland, Barbara A. Mikulski.

''It was painful for everybody,'' said Sister Patricia Murphy, the chair of the board of trustees at the school. Ms. Murphy is part of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, a congregation of sisters who sponsor the Institute of Notre Dame. She added that she believed the decision to close the school was a necessary one.

Ms. Murphy graduated from the school in 1962 and said that the education and the friendships forged there would forever stay close to her heart. ''My classmates Zoom every other week,'' she noted in an interview.

After graduating, Ms. Murphy attended a public teachers' college. When she told a male dean at the college that she wanted to be a high school history teacher, he responded: '''What would a little thing like you want to do that for? Why wouldn't you want to be an elementary schoolteacher?'''

But Ms. Murphy wouldn't stand for that after her education at the Institute of Notre Dame, she said. ''I was stunned,'' she said, and she still went on to become a high school history teacher.

At Notre Dame, girls ''got a really good sense of what women could do,'' Ms. Murphy said.

Still, some alumni are fighting to keep the school open, upset that school leaders, including the School Sisters of Notre Dame, haven't pushed harder to avoid closure. Drena Fertetta, an alumnus who graduated from Notre Dame in 1983, began a group called Saving IND Inc., dedicated to reopening the school next year, perhaps at a different site.

''There is just a sisterhood that happens to the girls who go to that school,'' Ms. Fertetta said. ''It's not something we're willing to just walk away from.''

For Isabel Romero, who was supposed to complete her senior year at the Institute of Notre Dame, the news of the closure was devastating, particularly since she was looking forward to special senior year traditions. At graduation, all the girls dress in identical white gowns, holding a dozen long-stemmed red roses, a custom that alums and students hold dear.

''There are times when reality sets in and it's like, 'Oh, I wont be going there next year,' and you just start to cry again,'' Ms. Romero, 17, said.

''When I first stepped into I.N.D. it actually felt warm, friendly and comforting,'' she said. She is not certain if she will feel the same sense of belonging at her new school, especially as she is attending classes online.

Parochial schools have provided an alternative to public schools for some low-income families, non-Catholics included, seeking both academic and spiritual development, school leaders say.

Catholic education was once seen as ''the surest ticket out of poverty for generations of low-income families, but in particular immigrants,'' Mr. Carroll, the superintendent in Boston, said. ''Schools that got hit the hardest were schools that were low-income and ***working-class*** populations.''

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles -- which runs the largest Catholic school system in the country, serving about 73,000 students -- has had to close two elementary schools, one that served predominantly Latino children, many of them with ***working-class*** parents, said Paul Escala, the superintendent and senior director of Catholic schools for the archdiocese.

At present, Mr. Escala said, the church is trying to ''avoid at all costs'' shutting down additional schools, but the economic challenges are daunting.

''You get to a tipping point where the school may not be able to sustain itself any longer,'' he said. ''The consequences are going to come, the only question is really when.''

Facing school closures, families have scrambled to find new classrooms for their children. Some have turned to other Catholic schools; others have switched to public or charter schools.

Ms. Palmer Mayo, whose two children attended St. Francis of Assisi in Houston, sent them to the nearby public school where she works as a teachers' assistant. Though Ms. Palmer Mayo is confident that her children will have some great teachers, ''they won't have that personal interaction'' they received at St. Francis, she said.

Alyssa Loser would have been a senior this year at Lebanon Catholic in Pennsylvania, playing on Ms. Hower's basketball team. The school had been a staple in her family. Her grandmother and her great-great-grandfather also attended the school.

Now she is attending a public high school, taking classes online apart from her friends. ''I'm going into my senior year and I have to start all over somewhere else,'' she said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/05/us/catholic-school-closings.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/05/us/catholic-school-closings.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The closing of parochial schools, like Quigley Catholic High School in Baden, Pa., top, has etched a profound sense of loss among teachers and families. Above, Charles Fabian, the facilities manager at Queen of the Rosary Catholic Academy in Brooklyn, sorted through classroom materials to be donated. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSIE WARDARSKI/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** September 6, 2020

**End of Document**



[***How Civil War History Explains Memestocks***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654J-JX51-DXY4-X294-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 2, 2022 Saturday 11:32 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1632 words

**Byline:** Emily Flitter

**Highlight:** In the 19th century, small investors played a big role in finance. Wall Street took it away. Redditors are trying to get it back.

**Body**

In 1861, Jay Cooke, a minor money man hoping to help the Union army, lobbied Abraham Lincoln’s government to make investing accessible to more Americans. In 1972, Bill Gross, destined to earn the nickname “the Bond King,” realized that more value could be squeezed out of the products that Cooke wanted to sell — government bonds — if they were traded by experts. And in 2021, a Reddit user named Roaring Kitty led a band of regular Joes on a crusade against financial engineers of Mr. Gross’s ilk.

And that arc of U.S. economic history helps explain why people were calling me a puppet on the internet.

At least that is how I came to understand it. At first, all I knew is that I was facing intense backlash from Roaring Kitty and company after I wrote about the evolution of what they, and other smaller retail investors, believed — a baseless theory that various powerful entities were out to get them and tank their stocks.

While I was awash in all their bad vibes, I was also reading two new books: “The Bond King,” by the NPR host Mary Childs and the forthcoming “Bonds of War” by the historian David K. Thomson.

I realized that there is a strong link between the Civil War-era campaign to sell bonds to ***working class*** people and a stock-hoarding movement among financially inexperienced masses connecting on the internet.

It’s called financial populism.

Over the past century and a half, finance in the United States has been characterized by an ebb and flow of who feels Wall Street is for them, who feels (or is) excluded.

Understanding how we got where we are now is one way to demystify the Reddit-based investing revolution, which is powered by a [*conspiracy theory*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/29/business/gamestop-stock.html) along with a deep resentment of the way real power and wealth seem so out of reach for most people these days.

About the conspiracy theory: A year into the pandemic, a group of doctors, factory workers, salesmen, dentists and other investing amateurs came to the defense of companies facing existential challenges: a chain of empty movie theaters and a secondhand video game retailer. Hedge funds, run by superrich and increasingly powerful people, were shorting shares of those companies. The smaller investors fought back.

They gathered on a Reddit forum called r/WallStreetBets, where group members goaded and cheered one another into buying more and more shares of these companies — GameStop and AMC Entertainment — vowing to hold on to them “with diamond hands.” Stocks became stonks, jokey things infused with the currency of internet memes. The buying only stopped when a handful of retail brokerage firms cut off access to the market like a bartender cutting off a sloppy drunk.

The stocks’ prices crashed and the biggest zealots moved from r/WallStreetBets to a new subreddit, r/Superstonk, and began posting essays many thousands of words long that they called “dds,” short for “due diligences,” to explain what had happened.

These were ostensibly research reports, modeled, perhaps, after professional financial analysts’ publications. They made the baseless claim that securities regulators, brokerage houses and the people in charge of the market’s day-to-day functioning had gotten together and agreed to create fake shares of the stocks, which they were secretly passing on to hedge funds preparing to short them again.

To fight back against this supposed scheme, the Redditors pledged to buy as many more shares of GameStop and AMC as possible to bring about the “mother of all short squeezes,” or the MOASS for short, when short sellers would be forced to pay whatever price the Redditors asked — maybe even $1 million a share — to cover their bets.

Reality check: There is no giant conspiracy, there are no fake shares; there will be no MOASS. The January 2021 short squeeze did cause breakdowns in the stock market, the most dramatic of which occurred in the brokerage houses that eventually shut down trading in those stocks, not based on any moral authority, but because they were about to run out of money to cover failed trades.

But the Redditors accomplished something real. Like Jay Cooke, who pointed out how hard it was for most people to get access to investment products in 1861, the Reddit crowd highlighted structural problems in the stock market and prodded regulators to try to fix them. The Securities and Exchange Commission has since proposed several changes to stock market operations that would make them [*more visible and easily understood*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/business/sec-short-selling.html) and [*faster*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/09/business/stock-market-trades-sec-robinhood.html).

The People’s War Effort

Wall Street has long boasted that its great-great grandfather firms saved the Union during the darkest period of the Civil War by generously lending Lincoln’s administration money. This claim, which financial titans repeat to imply that their work is morally good and descended from opponents of slavery, is now getting a fresh look.

In “Bonds of War,” Mr. Thomson describes how, after arranging an initial $50 million loan in early 1861, elite financiers in New York, Boston and Philadelphia basically told Lincoln’s Treasury secretary, an Ohioan named Salmon P. Chase, that they wished him the best of luck. They felt it was too risky to keep buying U.S. debt, especially since individual states had regularly defaulted on their debt during the antebellum period.

Jay Cooke, a financier from Philly who wanted to make the big leagues, persuaded Chase to make it easier for Treasury notes and bonds to be sold in small denominations, then started going door-to-door signing people up to buy them. He specifically targeted “small subscribers,” as he put it, who came away from agreeing to make their investments “almost with tears in their eyes, so overjoyed at the patriotic scene.”

Mr. Thomson, an assistant professor of history at Sacred Heart University, chronicles how Cooke assembled an army of salesmen and sent them all over the country looking for people who had saved a little money and wanted to make a statement while spending it. Buying Treasuries let Union sympathizers — including formerly enslaved people, Native Americans and residents of Southern cities — express their support for the cause no matter who or where they happened to be. It made buyers feel powerful.

For the first time, wage-earners played a crucial role in the U.S. financial system — and they knew it. A new class of financial participants was born.

On and off, well into the second half of the 20th century, the image of the investor that Jay Cooke helped create prevailed, especially during the periods in which the United States was deeply involved in world wars and appealed yet again to patriotism in search of financial support.

If Jay Cooke made Americans feel like they mattered, Mr. Gross — unintentionally, you could say — instilled in them the opposite belief.

Ms. Childs’s book is about the expansion of finance as a whole, told through the history of [*Bill Gross*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/14/books/review/bond-king-mary-childs.html)’s life’s work as the founder of what would eventually become the biggest bond fund in the world, PIMCO.

Mr. Gross, whom Ms. Childs portrays as a single-minded whiz-kid seeking to prove his worth to his parents and former classmates, chipped away at the notion that anyone could be an investor by criticizing the buy-and-hold strategy for bonds. He began studying tables of bond issues and “making money buying the better bonds and selling the worse ones.” This made big money for big organizations, but it also made everything more complicated, bringing about a rule of experts.

Mr. Gross got the bond market going just as the dollar was disconnected from a fixed price for gold, ending the last vestige of the gold standard. The financial system grew much more subjective and more hospitable to operations conducted on the largest scale possible.

Buying bonds was increasingly viewed as something that ordinary people just didn’t do. The technology to buy and sell them didn’t keep up with the technological innovations that brought stocks to life in the imaginations of retail investors. While no one was cut off from buying bonds, they weren’t regarded as fruitful investments for just anyone.

Eventually, Ms. Childs writes, Mr. Gross and his allies and competitors grew not just powerful, but arrogant. They seemed to feel that any means they could think of to serve their clients, regardless of their wider consequences for society, were justified. This was contemporary Wall Street culture taking shape. More and more, in every asset class, including stocks, the biggest gains were going to the biggest investors.

I was in the middle of Ms. Childs’s book when I began exploring posts on r/Superstonk. I soon noticed a paragraph of text that seemed to be repeated over and over again by a slew of different posters on the forum. It expressed joy at the defeat of “smug fine art collecting ‘high class’ billionaires” at the hands of Redditors who were “completely immune to all the psychological warfare” perpetrated against retail investors “for decades.”

The difference between the medium the Redditors chose for their rebellion and Mr. Gross’s area of expertise is important: Throughout his career, Mr. Gross generally viewed the stock market as a place where dumb money gathered. He never quite saw the point in participating in it. The Redditors would probably label this as snobbery, but the truth is the stock market is more susceptible to populist activity than the bond market.

Although the oft-repeated post was not referring to Mr. Gross specifically — he played no part in the Reddit rebellion — it was clearly a rallying cry for people like Jay Cooke’s “small subscribers” against the big financiers who took so much power away from the American public. Those ordinary people are now using the internet to try to get it back.

Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

Audio produced by Adrienne Hurst.

PHOTO: (PHOTOGRAPH BY Matt Chinworth FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** June 22, 2023

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[***Tillie Olsen***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:629N-XSX1-JBG3-62BM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 28, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section BR; Column 0; Book Review Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 2971 words

**Byline:** By A.O. Scott

**Body**

Through her rigorous depictions of ***working-class*** families, this mid-20th-century writer of fiction conveyed the costs of living for burdened mothers, wives and daughters.

Tillie Olsen's reputation rests principally on ''Tell Me a Riddle,'' a collection of three short stories and a novella published in 1961. It was her first book, but Olsen, who was born in 1912, had started writing many years before, and seems to belong, with respect to style and subject matter, as much to the Great Depression as to the Eisenhower Era or the '60s. The four pieces in ''Tell Me a Riddle'' are lyrical bulletins of ***working-class*** family life, charged with emotional detail and delivered with an attention to the rhythms of consciousness more rigorous and powerful than most of what is called realism.

In the first story, ''I Stand Here Ironing,'' a classic almost from the moment it appeared in ''Best American Short Stories of 1957,'' we don't just inhabit the mind of the narrator, a woman reflecting, in the midst of housework, on her daughter's childhood and her own experience as a mother. Her words, addressed directly to someone -- a social worker, a teacher or another well-meaning stranger -- land with an almost physical weight. ''All that compounds a human being is so heavy and meaningful in me that I cannot endure it tonight,'' she says. You can feel the gravity of the words, and the presence of the body that utters them.

The woman isn't named, and her situation is shorn of the kind of references that might situate her in a particular place or time. You could say that she speaks for generations of women who have faced poverty and disappointment. But there is nothing abstract or general about the story she tells -- which is mostly the story of how, in a period of hardship and domestic instability, she temporarily gave up custody of her firstborn child -- because the difficulty of telling it registers in every sentence. Whenever I reread this story, I'm startled by how little space it takes up: less than 10 pages in the most recent paperback edition, from the University of Nebraska Press. And yet it's somehow as dense, as rich, as packed with life and feeling and ''all that compounds a human being'' as something 10 or 100 times as long.

Is there a place in literature -- in our canons and course listings, in our criticism and theory -- for unwritten work?

The other parts of ''Tell Me a Riddle'' -- ''Hey Sailor, What Ship?,'' ''O Yes'' and the long title story -- are a bit looser and more discursive, with expansive dialogue and a wider range of characters, but they all share this sense of compression, of experience distilled to a piercing, concentrated essence.

A mother contemplates her own past and the future facing a child ''of anxious, not proud, love.'' A couple with young children make room for a beloved, difficult family friend who tests their patience and the limits of his charm. Two little girls, one Black and one white, find their friendship undermined as they move toward adolescence by the subtle pressures of social conformity as racial ''sorting.'' An elderly couple, their seven children grown and scattered, quarrel bitterly about how to spend the years that remain. The husband is full of plans and projects: He wants to sell their house and move to the ''happy communal life'' of a cooperative senior citizen residence, to join a reading circle, to visit children and grandchildren. His wife, who ''would not exchange her solitude for anything,'' experiences the need for peace and quiet as a kind of rage. ''Always a ravening inside, a pull to the bed, to lie down, to succumb.''

After a life of hard work, of maternal and conjugal love, she is tired, but the fatigue is felt as hunger, as ''tumult,'' as a state of restlessness. This weariness links the mothers in the four stories, some of whom may be the same woman encountered at different moments, though it's also possible that the matriarch in ''Tell Me a Riddle'' is the mother of the other three. They are all, in any case, always in motion and on their feet, busy with jobs, housework and emotional labor, their overtaxed attention parceled out among babies, toddlers, schoolchildren, teenagers and husbands. Their testimonies are not complaints. Olsen isn't rubbing the reader's face in misery, but rather giving an honest assessment of the psychological and physical costs of living. ''Oh why is it like it is and why do I have to care?'' a girl in ''O Yes'' asks her mother. The answer is unspoken: ''Thinking: caring asks doing. It is a long baptism into the seas of humankind, my daughter. Better immersion than to live untouched. ... Yet how will you sustain?''

In other words: How will you not be worn out? How will you not succumb? The moral and existential danger of tiredness is a widespread modern malady, but an unusual literary subject. The 20th-century novel is enchanted by ennui and seduced by alienation, perpetually fascinated by the stultifying, dehumanizing effects of modern life. But exhaustion of the kind that these women contend with -- the everyday burden of their unending busyness -- is rarely represented in fiction. The reason is suggested on the first page of ''I Stand Here Ironing'': ''And when is there time to remember, to sift, to weigh, to estimate, to total?''

It goes without saying that there is no time to write, and Olsen's career is built on sifting and weighing the forces that conspire to prevent writing from happening. Even though she was almost 50 when ''Tell Me a Riddle'' appeared, she wasn't exactly a late bloomer. Olsen came to her vocation early, embarking on a novel -- published in 1974 as ''Yonnondio: From the Thirties'' with a title borrowed from Walt Whitman -- when she was barely in her 20s. The themes and moods of ''Tell Me a Riddle'' are prefigured in ''Yonnondio,'' an episodic chronicle of a family chasing work and security in the mining camps and factory towns of the Great Plains.

The raw material was Olsen's own childhood. She was born Tybile Lerner in Omaha, one of six children of Jewish immigrant parents who had fled Russia after the failed revolution of 1905. Like many Americans of her generation and background, she spent the 1930s balancing -- or rather juggling, while riding a unicycle on a high wire -- radical politics, artistic ambition, wage labor and domestic life. With Jack Olsen, a printer and labor organizer, she raised four children while working various office and factory jobs. She was also a journalist and an activist, publishing (in an early issue of Partisan Review) a vivid account of the San Francisco general strike of 1934, during which she was briefly jailed. ''Listen, it is late,'' she wrote at the end of that dispatch. ''I am feverish and tired. Forgive me that the words are feverish and blurred. You see, If I had time, If I could go away. But I write this on a battlefield.''

The battle continued, even if the terrain shifted. Olsen was a writer her whole life -- she died in 2007 -- but she didn't write much. Not because she was blocked or lacked material. The blockage -- the obligation of earning a living and tending children, the ''immersion'' in caring that was a source of fulfillment as well as frustration -- was the subject matter. The silence that surrounds those stories is its own kind of statement.

Olsen's strongest belief was the idea that people should have the power to represent themselves.

Is there a place in literature -- in our canons and course listings, in our criticism and theory -- for unwritten work? The idea seems almost preposterous; it's hard enough to keep up with the books that have been written without worrying over the ones that haven't. But every writer knows the weight, the power, the literal, palpable reality of silence. It isn't just that negative space gives shape to words; it's an active presence, an animating ghost in the machine.

Literary ethics prompts us to attend to the unheard and the marginal; curiosity or impatience with the same old stuff sends us in search of the forgotten and the neglected. But what kind of attention do we owe -- what kind of attention is it even possible to pay -- to the unvoiced?

This isn't an epistemological question: It's a political question, having to do with privilege and visibility, with how the resources that make writing possible -- the time, the space, the confidence -- are distributed. The best-known articulation of the problem of unequal access to the tools of writing is surely ''A Room of One's Own,'' Virginia Woolf's clearsighted feminist polemic from 1929.

In ''Silences,'' an essay that appeared in Harper's in 1965, Olsen broadened the terms of Woolf's argument, surveying the gaps and lost years in various careers and the different reasons (censorship, illness, temperamental reticence) that even outwardly successful writers didn't write. But she homed in on a vaster silence of ''those whose waking hours are all struggle for existence; the barely educated; the illiterate; women. Their silence the silence of centuries as to how life was, is, for most of humanity.''

She included herself. ''Where the gifted among women (and men) have remained mute, or have never attained full capacity,'' she continued, ''it is because of circumstances, inner and outer, which oppose the needs of creation.'' And she concluded with a brief survey of the circumstances that accounted for her own silence and its occasional breaking: ''This was the time of festering and congestion. For a few months I was able to shield the writing with which I was so full, against the demands of jobs on which I had to be competent, through the joys and responsibilities of family. For a few months. Always roused by the writing, always denied. 'I could not go to write it down. It convulsed and died in me. I will pay.' My work died. What demanded to be written, did not. It seethed, bubbled, clamored, peopled me. At last moved into the hours meant for sleeping. I worked now full time on temporary jobs, a Kelly, a Western Agency girl (girl!), wandering from office to office, always hoping we could manage two, three writing months ahead. Eventually there was time.''

In her 40s, Olsen, who had never gone to college, was admitted to Stanford's creative writing program as a Wallace Stegner fellow. It was there that she found the physical and psychic room, and the material support, to finish three of the stories that would appear in ''Tell Me a Riddle.'' In the wake of that book's success, she was awarded one of the early fellowships at the Radcliffe Institute, which had been established to provide money, office space, collegiality and institutional backing for women scholars and artists. According to ''The Equivalents,'' Maggie Doherty's history of the institute's early years, Olsen arrived in Cambridge with the intention of producing ''the great proletarian novel,'' an epic of toil, oppression and resistance in the tradition of Tolstoy and James T. Farrell.

What she produced instead was ''Silences,'' which originated as a seminar presentation at Radcliffe. Doherty's account of it is one of the most exhilarating passages in her book, dramatizing how a rambling, two-hour talk coalesced around a radical idea, the vision of ''a world in which all people could explore their creative capacities and fulfill their ambitions without fear of going broke.''

The thesis of ''Silences'' had been implicit at least since ''Yonnondio.'' While the narrative dwells on the physical hardships endured by Jim and Anna Holbrook -- in particular ''the weariness'' and brutality that nearly destroy Anna -- the reader's attention gravitates toward Mazie, their older daughter, who is graced with the gifts of imagination and perception. A relatively prosperous neighbor recognizes her potential, giving her books (''Those fairy tales. Wilde's, And the Dickens and Blake, and that book of Greek myths'') and advice: ''Mazie. Live, don't exist. Learn from your mother, who has had everything to grind out life and yet has kept life.''

Mazie's father sells the books before she has a chance to read them, but it's still tempting to see her as a portrait of the artist as a young woman. A different kind of novel might have charted her awakening, her determination (to continue the Joycean paraphrase) to forge in the smithy of her soul the uncreated conscience of her class. But to hitch Mazie's aspirations to a fable of self-making would also be to sell her out, to risk betraying the numberless girls like her -- ''most of humanity,'' by Olsen's later estimate -- whose minds were just as quick and sensitive but who lacked the luck or the entitlement to be heard.

''Silences'' acknowledges many reasons that writers can't or don't write, so it's impossible to say for sure why Olsen's great proletarian novel never came into being. But her own work, and Doherty's shrewd rendering of her circumstances in the 1960s, offer some clues. At Radcliffe, she was both a cherished colleague -- especially close to the poets Anne Sexton and Maxine Kumin, the other principal characters in ''The Equivalents'' -- and an outlier. The other fellows were mostly younger, Eastern, middle-class, academically credentialed women. The standard account of American social mobility would herald the entrance into such company as an overcoming of obstacles, a personal transformation tinged with loss but nonetheless sealed in triumph.

That story, after all -- a story of self-making that is also assimilation -- is one of the dominant American narratives. It forms the template for countless coming-of-age stories, memoirs and novels, linking such ideologically disparate works as ''Black Boy,'' ''The Adventures of Augie March'' and ''Hillbilly Elegy.'' But that isn't the kind of story Olsen wanted to tell, even as it mirrored to some extent the arc of her own biography. (After Radcliffe, she went on to teach literature at other institutions, including Amherst College.)

Nor did she entirely trust the idea that a writer could give voice to the voiceless. The voices in her fiction feel very close to her own. To go further beyond the boundaries of self would involve an imaginative leap -- and an ethical risk -- that she was reluctant to take. Her strongest belief was the idea that people should have the power to represent themselves.

Doherty cites Marx's famous description of how communism ''makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner.'' Olsen, adding ''child-rearing to the mix,'' imagines a world in which writing (or other artistic creation) would be available to everyone because it would be an aspect of ordinary experience, as valuable and common as any other kind of work, care or play.

This utopian longing is perhaps most powerfully realized in a book that Olsen didn't write. In the early 1970s, she came across an old copy of ''Life in the Iron Mills,'' an 1861 novella by Rebecca Harding Davis (who is also mentioned in ''Silences''). Olsen persuaded the Feminist Press to publish a new edition, to which she contributed ''a biographical interpretation'' that is longer than Davis's original text. It's a tour de force of sympathetic scholarship, in which Olsen finds uncanny echoes of her own fiction in Davis's life and work.

Through Olsen's eyes, Davis becomes both an exemplary woman writer and a cautionary figure, continually wresting time and space for writing from the demands of marriage and motherhood, and trying to protect her intellectual integrity from the pressures of a fickle, commercially compromised and often hypocritical literary establishment. A prolific and popular author in the 1860s and '70s, Davis (who died in 1910) was hardly silent herself, but in ''Life in the Iron Mills'' she created an avatar of silence that could have sprung from Olsen's own notebooks.

Hugh Wolfe, Davis's protagonist, is a worker, first seen as part of an undifferentiated mass of men with ''brains full of unawakened power'' making their way through the smoke and noise of a factory town in western Virginia before the Civil War. He is also an artist. While his fellow workers spend their time off in the saloons and brothels, he makes sculptures out of korl, the waste product left behind by the smelting process. He is looked at with benevolent interest by some of the local elite, but his talent leads to ruin rather than triumph.

''Life in the Iron Mills,'' sold to The Atlantic Monthly as an exposé of working conditions in early industrial America, turns out to be a parable about art. And those subjects aren't as far apart as they might appear, at least if you read Rebecca Harding Davis through the lens of Tillie Olsen.

As a teacher, Olsen developed pioneering courses in feminist and ***working-class*** literature. She helped change the study of American literature, opening its canon to neglected voices and traditions. This project continues, not without controversy, and is sometimes faulted for politicizing art, for putting matters of gender, class and race in the way of supposedly more universal concerns.

Olsen's slender oeuvre delivers a mighty rebuke to that objection, since there is no experience more common -- and also, paradoxically, none more unique -- than dwelling in a body that desires, all at once, to work, to love, to create and to rest. This is the essence of both her weary, patient maternal wisdom and her radical criticism of the way things are. How to sustain?

Let her be. So all that is in her will not bloom -- in how many does it? There is still enough left to live by. Only help her to know -- help make it so there is cause for her to know -- that she is more than this dress on the ironing board, helpless before the iron.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/books/review/Tillie-Olsen-tell-me-a-riddle.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/books/review/Tillie-Olsen-tell-me-a-riddle.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY OLSEN FAMILY ARCHIVES) (BR1)

Tillie Olsen with her daughter Laurie. (BR24)

Tillie with her husband, Jack Olsen. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JILL KREMENTZ, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED) (BR25)

**Load-Date:** March 28, 2021

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[***Against the White Picket Fence; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6128-6FB1-JBG3-600K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 13, 2020 Tuesday 22:30 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 708 words

**Byline:** Liza Featherstone

**Highlight:** In “Brave New Home,” Diana Lind identifies the single-family home as the source of many social and economic problems.

**Body**

BRAVE NEW HOME

Our Future in Smarter, Simpler, Happier Housing

By Diana Lind

Diana Lind’s “Brave New Home” is one of those invaluable books that offer a new, revelatory window on familiar problems. Faced with a host of societal challenges — economic inequality, loneliness, housing precarity, environmental degradation — Lind convincingly argues that the single-family home is at least partly to blame.

This cultural obsession, she shows, was manufactured by 20th-century policymakers and real estate developers wanting to populate the suburbs, as well as media-fueled — often racist and elitist — panics over the unwholesomeness of cities for families. Lind rightly contends that the single-family home is an impossible dream for many, fueling inequality.

Even for those who can afford it, she finds, the single-family home is at best a mixed blessing, depriving its occupants of community in an age of increasing social isolation. It also lures many Americans into an unhealthy and environmentally abhorrent car-dependent lifestyle. And that’s only the beginning of her ecological indictment. The single-family home also gives its inhabitants far more space than they require, wastefully encouraging them to acquire unnecessary stuff and use far too much energy on heating, cooling and lighting.

Our dogged pursuit of this benchmark of middle-class adulthood can also create massive economic upheaval — recall that the Great Recession was caused by extraordinary numbers of foreclosures, as Americans who could not afford to buy homes were lured by predatory lenders into trying to do so anyway. And as a policy prescription, all the government incentives to build and buy single-family homes do nothing to solve housing insecurity and homelessness for the many who will never be able to achieve this dubious idyll.

Lind’s reporting leads her to tiny-home enthusiasts and co-living communities, as well as market-oriented policy tweaks. The media sometimes refers to co-living projects marketed to single people in cities as “adult dorms,” a phrase that rightly offends her — why should seeking community be treated as a symptom of immaturity? She visits a tranquil intentional community in Georgia where homes are designed to encourage neighbors to hang out with one another, and a cultural event is on offer nearly every night.

Her book asks the right question: How can we move beyond the corrosive and exclusionary dream of the white picket fence, and instead, safely and happily house all Americans? Yet considering Lind’s adventurous rejection of such a cornerstone of mainstream American thinking and life, her search for solutions is surprisingly provincial.

Even when her reporting demonstrates the limits of many market-driven solutions — a program to offer incentives for Los Angeles homeowners to host low-income renters in small cottages in their yards, for example, has, several years in, resulted in almost no new housing — this doesn’t seem to inspire her to think any bigger. She doesn’t explore how other countries house people on a large scale, perhaps because many successful strategies require investing heavily in public housing.

Lind exhibits only passing interest in social housing as a solution for this country, dismissing it as a “one size must fit all” strategy. But 80 percent of Singapore’s residents live in public housing, which consists not only of apartments but also of self-sustaining small communities with their own schools, hospitals, supermarkets and many other amenities. With the vast majority of the city-state in public housing, there is no stigma to it, and the system is popular. She also overlooks the rich history of middle- and ***working-class*** cooperative housing in New York City. Lind works for the Chamber of Commerce in Philadelphia, heading its Arts + Business Council. She is an inquisitive reporter and writer, but perhaps her colleagues in Philadelphia’s business community wouldn’t welcome an investigation of such left-wing traditions.

Liza Featherstone is the author, most recently, of “Divining Desire: Focus Groups and the Culture of Consultation.” BRAVE NEW HOME Our Future in Smarter, Simpler, Happier Housing By Diana Lind 257 pp. Bold Type Books. $28.

PHOTO: Diana Lind (PHOTOGRAPH BY COLIN LENTON)

**Load-Date:** November 17, 2020

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[***A Growing Number of Catholic Schools Are Shutting Down Forever***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:60S5-YW71-JBG3-640D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

September 5, 2020 Saturday 15:12 EST

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**Section:** US

**Length:** 1500 words

**Byline:** Giulia McDonnell Nieto del Rio

**Highlight:** About 150 Catholic schools have closed nationwide citing insurmountable financial pressures from the coronavirus pandemic.

**Body**

About 150 Catholic schools have closed nationwide citing insurmountable financial pressures from the coronavirus pandemic.

In more than four decades of coaching girls’ basketball at Lebanon Catholic High School in southeastern Pennsylvania, Patti Hower had led the team to three state championships and 20 district titles. This year, with four starting players returning, there were high hopes again.

But then in April came the news: the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg announced that the school, whose origins date to 1859, was permanently closing, citing insurmountable financial stress, exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic.

“We played our last game in March and had a postgame talk saying, ‘We’re looking forward to this upcoming year,’” said Ms. Hower, 68, who attended the school, like her father and granddaughters. “We never thought, ‘Hey, we’re never going to get on that court together again as a team.’”

As schools around the country debate how to reopen safely, a growing number of [*Catholic schools*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/27/nyregion/catholic-school-teacher-fired-same-sex-marriage.html) — already facing declining enrollments and donations from before the pandemic — are shutting down for good.

About 150 Catholic schools have closed, said Kathy Mears, the director of the National Catholic Educational Association, equal to about 2 percent of the 6,183 schools that were up and running last year. The number of closures is at least 50 percent higher this year than in previous years, Ms. Mears said.

In Boston, the archdiocese has had to close nine schools so far, and about two dozen others are on a “watch list,” said Thomas Carroll, superintendent of schools for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston. In early July, the Archdiocese of New York [*announced*](https://catholicschoolsny.org/announcements/) that it would be closing 20 Catholic schools.

As parents and families lost their jobs during the pandemic, many could no longer pay tuition at Catholic schools, even though fees are generally much less than at other private schools. And when churches began shutting down to curb the spread of the virus, that also ended a major source for donations — some of which would normally be allotted for parish schools.

For many schools after years of declining enrollments, the coronavirus became the mortal strike. “If a school was financially vulnerable, the pandemic was the thing that pushed them over the edge,” Ms. Mears said.

Enrollment at Catholic schools in the United States [*peaked at 5.2 million*](https://www.ncea.org/NCEA/Proclaim/Catholic_School_Data/Catholic_School_Data.aspx) nationwide in the early 1960s, according to the National Catholic Educational Association. But as the percentage of practicing Catholics has declined across the United States, so has the number of children enrolling in Catholic schools. Enrollment for the 2019-20 school year was down to about 1.7 million.

The closing of the parochial schools has etched a profound sense of loss among teachers and families, who face the abrupt disappearance of spaces that long served as focal points for personal relationships and family ties.

The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston reported the closure of four schools in April, saying that fallout from Covid-19 was the final blow for facilities long struggling to meet costs.

“The cataclysmic effects of this pandemic have left us with no options — which breaks our hearts,” Cardinal Daniel DiNardo said in a [*statement*](https://www.archgh.org/news-events/news/latest-news/latest-news/archdiocese-to-close-four-schools-assisting-students-families-and-teachers-with-upcoming-transition/).

One of those schools, St. Francis of Assisi, had been severely damaged by Hurricane Harvey in 2017, but community members had worked hard to support rebuilding efforts and welcome students back in the fall of 2018, said Sharita Palmer Mayo, whose two sons attended the school. Less than two years later, the closure has forced families to look elsewhere for schooling once again.

“We had literally just like built a little family there,” Ms. Palmer Mayo said. “I was in love with the school.”

Among the best-known Catholic schools shutting its doors is the Institute of Notre Dame, a renowned all-girls facility founded in Baltimore in 1847. School leaders said that the school was deeply in debt and facing a 43 percent enrollment decline over the past five years. In a letter they noted that the coronavirus “caused significant, added financial hardship.”

Prominent alumnae include the House speaker, Nancy Pelosi, and a former Democratic senator for Maryland, Barbara A. Mikulski.

“It was painful for everybody,” said Sister Patricia Murphy, the chair of the board of trustees at the school. Sister Patrica is part of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, a congregation of sisters who sponsor the Institute of Notre Dame. She added that she believed the decision to close the school was a necessary one.

Sister Patrica graduated from the school in 1962 and said that the education and the friendships forged there would forever stay close to her heart. “My classmates Zoom every other week,” she noted in an interview.

After graduating, Sister Patrica attended a public teachers’ college. When she told a male dean at the college that she wanted to be a high school history teacher, he responded: “‘What would a little thing like you want to do that for? Why wouldn’t you want to be an elementary schoolteacher?’”

But Sister Patrica would not stand for that after her education at the Institute of Notre Dame, she said. “I was stunned,” she said, and she still went on to become a high school history teacher.

At Notre Dame, girls “got a really good sense of what women could do,” Sister Patrica said.

Still, some alumnae are fighting to keep the school open, upset that school leaders, including the School Sisters of Notre Dame, have not pushed harder to avoid closure. Drena Fertetta, an alumna who graduated from Notre Dame in 1983, began a group called Saving IND Inc., dedicated to reopening the school next year, perhaps at a different site.

“There is just a sisterhood that happens to the girls who go to that school,” Ms. Fertetta said. “It’s not something we’re willing to just walk away from.”

For Isabel Romero, who was supposed to complete her senior year at the Institute of Notre Dame, the news of the closure was devastating, particularly since she was looking forward to special senior year traditions. At graduation, all the girls dress in identical white gowns, holding a dozen long-stemmed red roses, a custom that alums and students hold dear.

“There are times when reality sets in and it’s like, ‘Oh, I won’t be going there next year,’ and you just start to cry again,” Ms. Romero, 17, said.

“When I first stepped into I.N.D. it actually felt warm, friendly and comforting,” she said. She is not certain if she will feel the same sense of belonging at her new school, especially as she is attending classes online.

Parochial schools have provided an alternative to public schools for some low-income families, non-Catholics included, seeking both academic and spiritual development, school leaders say.

Catholic education was once seen as “the surest ticket out of poverty for generations of low-income families, but in particular immigrants,” Mr. Carroll, the superintendent in Boston, said. “Schools that got hit the hardest were schools that were low-income and ***working-class*** populations.”

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles — which runs the largest Catholic school system in the country, serving about 73,000 students — has had to close two elementary schools, one that served predominantly Latino children, many of them with ***working-class*** parents, said Paul Escala, the superintendent and senior director of Catholic schools for the archdiocese.

At present, Mr. Escala said, the church is trying to “avoid at all costs” shutting down additional schools, but the economic challenges are daunting.

“You get to a tipping point where the school may not be able to sustain itself any longer,” he said. “The consequences are going to come, the only question is really when.”

Facing school closures, families have scrambled to find new classrooms for their children. Some have turned to other Catholic schools; others have switched to public or charter schools.

Ms. Palmer Mayo, whose two children attended St. Francis of Assisi in Houston, sent them to the nearby public school where she works as a teachers’ assistant. Though Ms. Palmer Mayo is confident that her children will have some great teachers, “they won’t have that personal interaction” they received at St. Francis, she said.

Alyssa Loser would have been a senior this year at Lebanon Catholic in Pennsylvania, playing on Ms. Hower’s basketball team. The school had been a staple in her family. Her grandmother and her great-great-grandfather also attended the school.

Now she is attending a public high school, taking classes online apart from her friends. “I’m going into my senior year and I have to start all over somewhere else,” she said.

PHOTOS: The closing of parochial schools, like Quigley Catholic High School in Baden, Pa., top, has etched a profound sense of loss among teachers and families. Above, Charles Fabian, the facilities manager at Queen of the Rosary Catholic Academy in Brooklyn, sorted through classroom materials to be donated. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY JESSIE WARDARSKI/ASSOCIATED PRESS)

**Load-Date:** October 27, 2021

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[***‘You Have to Learn to Listen’: How a Doctor Cares for Boston’s Homeless***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:677V-NR11-DXY4-X1CH-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 5, 2023 Thursday 20:45 EST

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**Section:** MAGAZINE

**Length:** 9724 words

**Byline:** Tracy Kidder

**Highlight:** Lessons from Dr. Jim O’Connell’s long crusade to treat the city’s “rough sleepers.”

**Body**

Around 10 p.m. on a warm September night, the outreach van made a stop in South Boston, in the kind of neighborhood said to be “in transition.” On one side of the street was a new apartment building, its windows glowing, its sidewalk lit by artful imitations of old-fashioned streetlamps. On the other side, in murky light, stood an empty loading dock. A heap of blankets lay on the concrete platform. Someone passing by wouldn’t have known they were anything but discarded blankets. But when the driver of the van climbed up and spoke to them, saying he was doing a wellness check, a muffled curse came back from underneath, then a brief, fierce, “Go away.”

The driver turned and shrugged to Dr. Jim O’Connell, who was standing at the bottom of the steps. “Let me try,” the doctor said, and he walked up to the platform and knelt by the gray mound. Addressing the inhabitant by name, he said: “Hey, it’s Jim O’Connell. I haven’t seen you in a long time. I just want to make sure you’re all right.”

An earthquake in the blankets, then an eruption — tangled hair and a bright red face and a loud voice, saying in a Boston accent: “Doctah Jim! How the hell are ya?”

For the next half-hour, the man reminisced — about the alcohol-fueled adventures of his past, about old mutual friends, mostly dead. The doctor listened, laughing now and then. He reminded his longtime patient that the Street Clinic was still open on Thursdays at Mass General, as the Massachusetts General Hospital is known. He should come. That is, if he wanted to come.

And then the outreach van moved on to its next stop.

This was in 2015. Homelessness had been a major problem in Boston and all across the country since the 1980s. Dr. Jim — James Joseph O’Connell — had been riding on the van for three decades. During that time, he had built, with many friends and colleagues, a large medical organization, which he called the Program, short for the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program. It now had roughly 400 employees and looked after about 11,000 homeless people a year. O’Connell was its president, and also captain of the Street Team, a small piece of the Program, with seven members serving several hundred homeless people who shunned the city’s many shelters and, even in Boston’s winters, lived outside or in makeshift quarters — in A.T.M. vestibules, doorways, tents on the outskirts of cities. One patient of O’Connell’s slept in a rented storage locker.

About half of O’Connell’s administrative work now lay in managing the Street Team, and all his clinical work went to doctoring its patients, Boston’s “rough sleepers,” as he called them, borrowing a British term from the 19th century.

The van was a crucial tool for reaching those patients. It was financed in part by the state and managed by Pine Street Inn, Boston’s largest homeless shelter. Nowadays two vans went out from the Inn each night. They had become an institution, which O’Connell helped to foster in the late 1980s. Back then he used to ride two and sometimes three nights a week, usually until dawn. Now he went out only on Monday nights and got off around midnight.

I first met O’Connell the previous year, as a guest on the van. I was struck by the relationships between this Harvard-educated physician and the people the van encountered. His patients, and prospective patients, were sleeping on benches, arguing drunkenly with statues in parks. For me, the night’s tour was a glimpse of a world hidden in plain sight. In American cities, visions of the miseries that accompany homelessness confront us every day — bodies lying in doorways, women standing on corners with their imploring cardboard signs dissolving in the rain. And yet through a curious sleight of mind, we step over the bodies, drive past the mendicants, return to our own problems. O’Connell had spent decades returning, over and over, to the places that the rest of us rush by. Some months later, I contacted him and asked for another van ride. I followed him around with a notebook on and off for the next five years.

O’Connell was in his late 60s when I met him. He had a ruddy face and silver hair that fell almost to his collar and over the tops of his ears. On van rides and street rounds, he carried a small knapsack, his doctor’s bag, its contents refined and miniaturized over the years. It consisted mostly of basic first-aid gear and diagnostic equipment — a blood-pressure cuff that wrapped around the wrist, a pulse oximeter, an ear thermometer, a simple blood-glucose meter, a stethoscope. Among the losses he regretted was the pint bottle of whiskey he once carried for the times when a patient was in alcohol withdrawal and on the verge of seizure. “You couldn’t do that now,” he said. “It’s become a moral issue.”

For the van, he usually wore jeans or light-colored corduroy pants, a collared shirt and clogs. He was six feet tall and trim. He moved with an athlete’s self-assurance that makes a task look easy, and his voice was full of energy and cheer as he waited on the customers at the back of the van, dispensing sandwiches and condiments, cups of hot chocolate, coffee and soup. To me, he seemed like a composite portrait of the ages of man, youthfulness topped off with silver hair.

A thin man comes wandering out of an alley, into the light of a streetlamp.

“You got soup?” he asks.

“Yes!” says O’Connell, grabbing a Styrofoam cup and filling it from one of the vats.

“You got crackers to go with it?”

“Sure!”

“Isn’t there a doctor who goes with you guys?”

“I’m a doctor,” says O’Connell. Then he introduces himself, offering his hand.

“I want to change my doctor,” says the man. “I hear good things about you.”

“We’d be happy to take care of you,” says O’Connell. “We’d be thrilled.”

Jim O’Connell likes to say that he didn’t choose his job but was “conscripted” into it.

He was a gifted ***working-class*** kid. He set academic records in high school and graduated from Notre Dame as salutatorian of his class. He studied philosophy and theology at the University of Cambridge in England and afterward was chosen by Hannah Arendt to be one of her teaching assistants. He had many interests and opportunities and explored several paths before starting medical school — at Harvard, when he was 30. He relished his four years there and also his residency, in internal medicine at Mass General. He had just won a prestigious fellowship in oncology at Sloan Kettering in New York when, on a spring day in 1985, he was led to the office of John Potts, Mass General’s chief of medicine. There, Potts and another of the hospital’s eminent doctors asked O’Connell to take a brief detour in his career.

Since homelessness had begun rising in the 1980s, emergency rooms in Boston, as elsewhere, had become jammed with people who didn’t have homes or doctors. In response, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation began offering grants for creating programs that would integrate these poorest of the poor into a city’s mainstream medical care. Boston had applied for a grant. A doctor was required. Boston’s mayor, Ray Flynn, was trying to find one. The chief asked O’Connell if he would sign up to fill that slot for a year.

After three years of 110-hour weeks as a resident inside Mass General, O’Connell had absorbed both its general code — to pursue excellence in medicine — and also a corollary, which was not to mistake yourself for an ordinary doctor. It was one thing to treat the excluded and despised inside the great hospital, another to imagine doctoring them in dreary clinics elsewhere.

But these were his distinguished elders. They carried the weight of the institution. O’Connell couldn’t think of a way to refuse. This would cost him only a year, he remembered telling himself. It would be his year of “giving back.” Then he would get on with his life.

The day after he finished his residency, O’Connell boarded a train on Boston’s old elevated Orange Line, bound for his first assignment. He wore a collared shirt and a necktie and pressed slacks. He had his stethoscope in a back pocket and no idea of what awaited him. He’d been told to go to Pine Street Inn homeless shelter and report to the medical facility there, something called the nurse’s clinic. A colleague who knew O’Connell back then remembered him as athletic, with brown hair and keen blue eyes. “Handsome, of course,” she said. “And cheery, glad to see you.” He wasn’t cocky, she insisted, indeed quite the opposite — diffident, self-effacing to a fault. He was confident about medicine, though. At that moment in his life, he would have said, if pressed, that he didn’t know much about a lot of things, but he did know medicine.

He was resigned to this year of service, even looking forward to it now. It would be a break from the pressures of residency, he figured. The only thing that looked difficult was budgeting a life on the salary, which was $40,000 a year, at that time less than half the median salary of an M.D. in internal medicine. As for doctoring, he was eager to show the people in this nurses’ clinic how well he could do the job. Only a few days earlier, he was part of a team running Mass General’s I.C.U. The role of doctor in a clinic in a homeless shelter couldn’t possibly be as challenging.

The shelter’s lobby was a big room with a ceiling of pipes and heating ducts, air full of odors, a clamor of voices, people milling about with no one clearly in charge. He had to look around for the entrance to the nurse’s clinic, a swinging double door. He could have been entering a western saloon, unwarned and unarmed.

This clinic inside the Pine Street shelter was run by nurses and was independent from other medical institutions. It was in part the byproduct of a change in nursing that had begun with the feminist movement of the 1960s, a declaration of partial independence from doctors, and it was also a reaction to the callous treatment of homeless patients that many nurses had witnessed in Boston’s teaching hospitals.

The morning O’Connell arrived, the clinic was closed for a shift change, but half a dozen nurses were already inside, waiting for him. In the cramped space near the clinic’s front desk, metal chairs were arranged in a semicircle, with one chair in front, meant for him. In his memory, he sat there surrounded by nurses. Their faces were stern. They said they weren’t interested in investing their time to train a doctor who planned to leave in a year. And if that was what he planned to do — to play doctor to a bunch of homeless men, earn their trust, have them learn to rely on him and then desert them — it would be better if he didn’t come at all. He was probably looking for an interesting experience, they said. He probably thought he was doing a good deed.

They were warning him, in a way that made him feel accused of having committed those sins already — as he had, inwardly. He felt shocked, too shocked to feel offended.

When they finished with him, a nurse took his arm and led him outside to the lobby. Her name was Barbara McInnis. A number of people had told O’Connell that she was the person to know in the world of Boston homeless health care. He had imagined someone prepossessing, but the real Barbara McInnis was short and, to his doctor’s eye, a bit too heavy for good health. She was dressed not in a nurse’s uniform — she never wore one — but in a shapeless shift and sandals. He noticed that she had a turquoise cross tattooed on the inside of her wrist. He learned later that she was a lay Franciscan. That is, she believed in service and simplicity and in kindness to all creatures. She actually fed the mice in the alleys outside the shelter.

Her voice, though high and small, sounded gentle. The nurses had seemed hostile, but O’Connell shouldn’t take that to heart, McInnis said. Nurses created this clinic, and they were proud of it, and many of them would be happy never to see a doctor on the premises. She disagreed. Homeless people ought to have the benefit of doctors’ skills. “I really think we want doctors,” she said. “But you’ve been trained all wrong.” Most if not all of the clinic’s patients had experienced severe trauma, she explained, and the typical doctor’s approach often terrified them. So it would take time and patience and a lot of listening before O’Connell would even have the chance to act clinically. “You have to let us retrain you,” she said. “If you come in with your doctor questions, you won’t learn anything. You have to learn to listen to these patients.”

And then he heard her say: “Come on in now, and you’re going to soak feet. I’ll show you how.”

She led him back into the clinic. He hooked his stethoscope around his neck on the way. Then he saw McInnis shaking her head at him emphatically. She pointed at a drawer in a nearby table. He dutifully deposited the instrument there.

Why did he submit to all this? I asked him decades later. He told me: “I don’t know if it’s a weakness or not, but I’ve always had a hard time saying no. I remember wishing that I could say something like, ‘This is probably not appropriate.’” But once he saw what was going on, he said, “I was spellbound.”

Along the walls of the little clinic sat disheveled-looking men, their feet in plastic buckets, while nurses bent over them, speaking softly. This was strange enough, but especially strange because O’Connell recognized many of these homeless men. Over the past three years, he’d seen them in the Mass General emergency room, sullen, angry, snarling, resisting all treatment. Here they seemed so docile that they might have been drugged, via foot soaking.

McInnis showed him the technique. It was simple enough. You filled a plastic tub halfway up with Betadine and put the patient’s feet in it. And in keeping with an old rule left by the founder of Pine Street Inn, you always addressed the patient by his surname and an honorific — “Mr. Jones.”

The new job took O’Connell to many other places, but the Pine Street clinic was one of the principal sites. He spent three afternoons and evenings there each week, soaking feet and not doing much else for more than a month. Among the regulars was a very large elderly man usually dressed in three layers of coats, with wary eyes and a salt-and-pepper beard and a great wave of white-and-gray hair that seemed to be in flight. O’Connell knew him from Mass General’s emergency room. The police had taken him there repeatedly, because they didn’t know what else to do with him. He was classified as a paranoid schizophrenic, and his chart was thick, a record of 25 years of what is known in medicine as “noncompliance” — those habitually guilty of this are “treatment resistant.” The old man had always refused to take medications or to be admitted to the hospital.

At times O’Connell felt frustrated in that clinic, kneeling in front of patients, beginning to form silent diagnoses and not being allowed to act. But having already failed to get medicine into this treatment-resistant patient many times before, O’Connell felt a certain resigned contentment in merely soaking the old man’s feet. They were so huge and swollen that O’Connell had to prepare a separate tub for each.

The man didn’t speak to him for weeks. Finally, one evening, as O’Connell knelt on the floor filling the tubs, he heard the old man say, “Hey, I thought you were supposed to be a doctor.” He was looking down at O’Connell with the suggestion of a smile around his lips and amusement in his eyes.

In the last month, no one here had called O’Connell “doctor.” Yes! he said. Yes, he was indeed a doctor!

“So what the hell you doin’ soakin’ feet?”

O’Connell glanced around and saw McInnis and some other nurses standing nearby, obviously eavesdropping. He looked back up at the man. “You know what? I do whatever the nurses tell me.”

The old fellow nodded. “Smart man. That’s what I do.”

About a week later, he put his feet in the buckets and said to O’Connell: “Hey, Doc. Can you give me something to help me sleep?” He never slept for more than an hour, he said. Within about a month, O’Connell had him taking a variety of medicines for his many ailments. Foot-soaking in a homeless shelter — the biblical connotations were obvious. But for O’Connell, what counted most were the practical lessons, the way this simple therapy reversed the usual order, placing the doctor at the foot of the people he was trying to serve. As a doctor in training, he’d spent most of his time telling patients what he thought, saying, “We need to get that blood pressure down,” or, “I’m concerned about the results of your kidney tests.” This new approach was entirely different, and, he began to realize, it was much more effective clinically, at least with homeless people. Foot-soaking was a perfect way to begin.

These were, after all, men who wandered around all day on concrete and stood in lines for hours to get a bed or a meal. When they came into the clinic, they were usually exhausted, and their feet were sore. They’d let you look at their feet before they’d let you examine any other part of them. Cases of athlete’s foot, corns, toenails that had gone uncut for years and were coiled around and around themselves — all were uncomfortable and easily fixed, as was trench foot. A nurse taught him her honey-based treatment for the ailment. After he applied it, patients were always grateful for relief from the incessant itching, and many were willing then to talk about invisible things that were bothering them. Moreover, feet were often diagnostic in themselves. They could reveal important internal problems, such as neuropathies from drinking and vitamin B-12 deficiencies. Loss of feeling in the feet were an alarm telling O’Connell that he’d better try to coax the patient to a hospital. He could also read a patient’s likely future in the signs that frostbite leaves on toes. O’Connell and a colleague later made a small study of death records, which suggested that patients with a history of frostbite — or of trench foot — had a death rate seven times as high as other homeless people of the same age group.

Around the time of his success with the treatment-resistant old man, O’Connell’s internship at the Pine Street clinic ended, and McInnis let him use his stethoscope again.

The Program was conceived as a health care system tailored to the special needs of homeless people. Much of the initial funding went to salaries, which were uniformly skimpy. A standing committee selected the first seven medical personnel and left O’Connell to figure out how to deploy them. They were often rushed, sometimes fretful and unsure, but within a few months, O’Connell felt that they had made a start on what he envisioned — a citywide clinical practice, situated mainly inside homeless shelters and integrated with two major hospitals.

And then everything became more complex. First, there was an outbreak of drug-resistant tuberculosis at Pine Street, and when that was just coming under control, AIDS hit Boston’s homeless population. The project’s first “respite” — 20 adjacent beds inside a homeless shelter where patients could recuperate from medical procedures, illnesses or injuries — quickly became, in effect, an AIDS treatment ward. O’Connell visited regularly and would find the staff scrambling to treat whatever opportunistic infection came next — pneumonias they’d never seen before, cryptococcal meningitis, toxoplasmosis, Kaposi sarcoma. No matter what they did, everyone died.

The respite was the worst site imaginable for treating people with AIDS. Its patients shared the same huge, crowded room of 180 shelter beds, where homeless men with all sorts of maladies lay breathing and coughing. O’Connell tried to persuade hospital administrators to take in the respite’s homeless AIDS patients. He begged them not to discharge people with AIDS to the shelters or, even worse, to the streets. All to no avail. “The truth is we have nothing, no tools,” O’Connell remembered thinking. “It’s like we’re putting our fingers in the dike, but the dike is going to cave in soon.”

The days and nights ran together. Before he knew it, most of his one-year commitment had passed. O’Connell wrote to Sloan Kettering, asking that they defer his fellowship again.

He had worked at Boston’s two largest shelter clinics for more than a year, and for a while he imagined that he knew most of the city’s homeless population. But when he began riding the van three nights a week, he realized that he’d never met most of the people who slept outside — the rough sleepers. What were they doing to stay alive out there? What was it like to live under a bridge? To answer such questions, he had to win the trust of this homeless population. He worried that the task would be more difficult than in the clinics, where homeless patients typically felt safe and where he could trade on some of the popularity of McInnis and the other nurses. But the crews that ran the new, state-sponsored outreach vans soon became popular, too, and the food and clothes and blankets they provided never failed to draw rough sleepers from their hiding spots to the back of the van, where O’Connell met them with a bartender’s patience and a student’s sincere interest.

Once they got used to seeing O’Connell at their encampments, many rough sleepers would chat. He often asked why they preferred to sleep outside rather than in the shelters. The most common answer began with a question. Had Dr. Jim ever tried to sleep in a shelter, with a hundred other people in the same room? Well, they just couldn’t do it. Almost always, they would add that he shouldn’t think they chose to live outside. Offer them someplace else besides a shelter, and they’d gladly move in.

The most striking explanation came from a man who slept under one of the Storrow Drive bridges — a sweet, soft-spoken fellow who suffered from schizophrenia. O’Connell had met him half a dozen times and given him coffee and blankets and socks and treated him for a few minor ailments. In the middle of a very cold night, afraid the man might die of hypothermia, O’Connell begged him to come to the Pine Street shelter. But the man demurred. “Look, Doc, if I’m at Pine Street, I can’t tell which voices are mine and which are somebody else’s,” he said. “When I stay out here, I know the voices are mine, and I can control them a little.”

In the shelter clinics and on the van, O’Connell came face to face with dozens of people who hadn’t seen a doctor in years, let alone a psychiatrist or a dentist. He saw many with rotted teeth and many cases of scabies and maggots and lice. He came across people with AIDS who had been discharged from emergency rooms with no platelets, including a few who appeared in the lights of the outreach van with blood flowing from their ears and noses. O’Connell met an elderly man who looked fairly normal until he took off his hat at O’Connell’s request, revealing a grotesque-looking cancer that had invaded his head, paralyzing the left side of his face. That patient had been a professor at M.I.T., had suffered a psychotic break and had been living on the streets for years, no one noticing or caring to notice what must have started as a small, easily treated basal cell carcinoma, now metastasized into an overspreading, fatal growth that had reached his spine. At times, O’Connell imagined that he and his colleagues were practicing something like wartime or post-earthquake medicine. It was as if he had been parachuted into another world that modern technologies had never reached. The situation was appalling, the work overwhelming. And, if he was honest with himself, utterly fascinating.

O’Connell’s work consumed about 100 hours a week. He recalled thinking, Well, this is easier than residency. This was his first job as a full-fledged doctor, and he wanted to do it well. The hours were just what it took.

The clinical tasks were challenging. How do you treat H.I.V. in a person who has no place to live? How do you treat diabetes in patients who can’t even find their next meals? How do you treat physical illnesses in patients whose activities of daily living are completely determined by the consumption of alcohol or the search for narcotics? At medical school, questions like that hadn’t come up.

In this fledgling practice, patients taught O’Connell and his colleagues what terms like “patient centered” actually meant. For instance, the case of a small, thin man who had made Pine Street Inn his home. O’Connell first met him at the shelter’s clinic. He told O’Connell he couldn’t swallow his food, but until recently he’d been able to manage liquids. Now he couldn’t swallow his vodka. A person sleeping in a shelter, trying to survive out on the streets each day, tended not to pay attention to aches and pains or even hunger, not until some essential function was impaired — in this case, swallowing vodka.

It turned out that this patient had a very large untreatable cancer of the esophagus. O’Connell arranged for him to have a tube inserted into his stomach so he could take liquids. O’Connell also resolved that the poor fellow shouldn’t die in the strident chaos of Pine Street Inn. O’Connell spent the weekend writing up applications, insisting that his dying patient be admitted to a nursing home. The effort paid off. O’Connell picked him up at Pine Street and drove him to a first-class nursing facility and went home that night feeling pleased with himself.

About a week later, walking down the alley to Pine Street Inn’s front door, O’Connell heard, from up ahead, a cacophony of men’s voices, laughter and shouting of a high alcoholic content. Among the voices, he thought he recognized his dying patient’s voice, and when the drinking men came into view, there he was indeed, holding a bottle of vodka and pouring its contents down the tube in his stomach.

O’Connell approached him. What was he doing here?

The man said he appreciated what O’Connell had tried to do. “But I was in that nursing home and everybody was sittin’ in a chair, lookin’ out the window, starin’ into space and drooling or watchin’ TV, but nobody’s talkin’.” He gestured at the drinking crew. “These are my people, OK?”

This was O’Connell’s ratiocination: “He wanted to be around the people he knew. He was going to continue to drink his vodka and be with his friends. What I did for him didn’t seem right from the perspective of the person we were trying to serve.”

To deal with the emotional side of the work, O’Connell fell back on his medical-school training in compartmentalization — you’re in a hospital and you go into a room where the patient is very sick and failing, and then, when you enter the next room, you forget the tragedy unfolding in the previous one and concentrate on the person in front of you. Eventually, though, he couldn’t shut out any of the rooms. The problems in each would accumulate all week, and on Friday nights when the Pine Street clinic closed, many of the staff would drive out to Jamaica Plain and crowd into Doyle’s pub, and they’d drink and talk about how maddening it felt to witness deaths that could have been prevented, and how if you fixed one problem for a patient, that same patient was there again the next week, afflicted with a dozen additional problems. By midnight at Doyle’s, the effect of the talk and the beer was cathartic.

McInnis always came along to the pub on Friday nights. O’Connell would sit beside her at the bar and drive her home. Sometimes she and other staff members would stop at his place on the way, so that she could watch her favorite TV show, “Miami Vice.” He never quite figured out what she saw in it, but he enjoyed watching her enjoy it. Some nights at Doyle’s, he would rebel against his normal practice and rant a little to her. How could this country treat people this way? How could any Americans, homeless or not, never have had their own doctor? Never have been given a screening? Never have been given anything? How, for that matter, could a hospital send people out to the streets with no platelets in their blood?

McInnis would listen, and in her high but somehow calming voice she would tell him: “Jim, you’re a doctor. You’re not God. There are things you can’t fix. You just have to do your work.” It was always the same general message, and it had corollaries. One that became like a proverb for him concerned hiring for the Program: “We don’t want saints and zealots. We want flawed human beings who do their jobs. Just make this an ordinary job that people like to do.”

He had bought into that notion. He told himself that he was just going to dig in and work and not look beyond that. He recalled saying to himself: “This is what I was trained for. I wanted to take care of people who were sick. And, oh, my God, have I landed in a world where people are sick.”

Near the end of the second year of his enlistment, O’Connell called Sloan Kettering to say that he wouldn’t be coming after all.

The Program was one of 19 health care for the homeless projects funded by grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Pew Memorial Trust. At a meeting of administrators in the late 1980s, O’Connell met several people who still believed that when the grants ran out in 1989, the numbers of homeless people would have shrunk and mainstream medicine would have taken over the care of the remaining few. He heard some of the administrators saying, “We’re working our way out of this job.” He wished it were true.

By then, it was clear to him that homelessness was still growing, in Boston and the rest of the country — growing “inexorably,” he would say some years later. Many forces lay behind this: deinstitutionalization, gentrification, cuts in welfare programs, the AIDS epidemic. It was clear that creating a system for bringing decent care to homeless people was going to take a lot more than four years.

Mainstream medicine was evolving toward a corporate model. As the sociologist Paul Starr predicted, growing numbers of doctors would be required to meet “some standard of performance, whether measured in revenues generated or patients treated per hour.” The organization that O’Connell and his six colleagues were trying to create was obliged to invert that evolving norm, to practice what O’Connell called “upside-down medicine.” Not out of defiance but necessity. Unlike their counterparts in mainstream medicine, they had time to spend with their patients, but first, as a rule, they had to find the homeless people who needed care, and then persuade them to receive it — for free.

For instance, an elderly former philosophy professor — homeless for many years after suffering a psychotic break — who would simply walk away or pretend he was sleeping whenever O’Connell and his colleagues approached his favorite park bench. Then, one winter night, O’Connell found him at South Station shivering in the cold. O’Connell fetched him a coat from the van. A few days later, the professor came to the clinic that O’Connell’s team had established at Mass General, and he kept coming back, probably because O’Connell could talk with him knowledgeably about philosophers and literary critics whom the old professor claimed he had known personally (and really had known, as O’Connell discovered) — figures like Lionel Trilling and Carl Van Doren. He never allowed O’Connell to do so much as measure his blood pressure, but he regularly returned, and when his health began to fail some years later, O’Connell was able to spot the alteration and coax him into Mass General.

Once a patient was engaged, the first imperative wasn’t measuring vital signs, but rather emulating the family doctor of his childhood, who knew all the problems in their household and came when needed. A country-doctor approach for an urban population — this was the kind of doctoring that could bring in suspicious patients. Most had been bruised by hospitals and doctors, and if the Program ushered them in and out of an exam room quickly, most would never come back.

Because they had avoided doctors and hospitals, many homeless people had problems that couldn’t be handled with a brief office visit and a prescription. Many required complex, time-consuming interventions. This was true of every homeless person who had tuberculosis or AIDS, and of those with maladies grown dire from years of neglect, Virtually every patient also had social problems: women arriving at the shelter clinics with bruised faces and broken bones, whispering in tears about abusive boyfriends; men and women telling him they were sick of the drinking life and asking him to find a detox for them; dying patients who begged him to find their relatives and left him wishing the Program could afford to hire a detective.

During the first years, the small group of providers were free to practice without worrying much about cost and standard notions of efficiency, because they were financed by grants and received the same amount no matter how many patients they saw. When the grants ended, in 1989, they had to get their support from Medicaid, the state and federally financed plan intended to bring low-income Americans into the mainstream of American health care.

States have great latitude in determining how much money and care Medicaid provides. Many states put up little more than the minimum, but Massachusetts funded its version generously. When O’Connell went looking for money and guidance at the State House, he found a ready audience in the president of the Massachusetts Senate, who expressed astonishment that an actual doctor was focusing on homeless people.

The Program’s income increased under Medicaid and fueled the Program’s growth. At the start, in 1985, a handful of clinicians saw 1,246 homeless patients. By 1996, the annual budget had grown from $550,000 to roughly $7 million, and clinicians were seeing more than 6,000 patients — many of them on a regular basis, and all of them eligible to receive specialty care at Mass General and the Boston Medical Center.

By then, the Program’s future seemed secure. O’Connell gave up day-to-day administrative duties. Some turmoil followed, incited partly by disputes over efficiency, but the Program survived and resumed its growth. O’Connell retained some oversight duties and the title of president, but he had time now to focus on the care of rough sleepers, the smallest but most vulnerable group. He found the money for a Street Team, which over the years came to include psychiatrists, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, case managers, recovery coaches, volunteers. In 2002, the team created a Thursday Street Clinic at Mass General, tailored to the needs of rough sleepers. They invited rough sleepers to make use of the Program’s new respite facility. And they greatly increased the percentages of rough sleepers who received preventive tests and whose vital signs, like blood pressure and blood sugar, were brought to acceptable levels.

But it wasn’t enough. Proof of this arrived in the form of a photograph that a patient had taken in 1999 — 11 rough sleepers, seated together, all but one of them men. In the photo, they look vigorous, high-spirited. You wouldn’t be surprised if they got up and changed into jackets and ties and went looking for jobs. Their average age was 36. All received primary care from the Program and specialty care at Mass General, one of the world’s great hospitals. And yet six years later, when O’Connell first saw that photograph, all but one of the 11 had died. The revelation was shocking, but not exactly surprising. It crystallized what the Street Team had encountered in many of their patients — histories of horrifying childhood abuse, followed by fatal sequels of alcoholism, drug addiction, disease, underlying varieties of mental disorders.

Around that time, in 2005, the team received the use of what seemed like a possible solution — 24 housing vouchers for rough sleepers. It was part of a pilot project to test a new approach to addressing homelessness, known as Housing First. In the old prescription, people who were “chronically homeless,” who spent most of a year in shelters or on the streets, had to be treated and stabilized before they qualified for publicly financed housing. In practice, most rarely got stabilized enough to qualify. But studies of shelters in New York and Philadelphia had shown that only 10 percent of users were chronically homeless, and they cost more than all the rest. Why not house the chronically homeless people first, then tend to their problems? Surely this would improve their health and welfare and save the public money.

O’Connell was enthusiastic. Only partly in jest, he wrote an order on his official Mass General prescription pad for a studio apartment that would cure the ills of one John Doe, presently living under the Storrow Drive bridges. The actual results were disappointing. During the next decade and a half, housing proved to be a miracle cure for some of the Street Team’s patients, and a modest success for some others. But for many, it led to relocation after relocation to avoid eviction. The rough sleepers’ finely honed skills for outdoor living didn’t help them indoors. O’Connell remembered a patient who pitched a tent in his apartment. Another made a tape recording of sounds of the street, which he used as his lullaby, his antidote to indoor insomnia. Many had forgotten or never learned the basic domestic arts. Some didn’t know how to turn on a TV.

For O’Connell, the failures didn’t negate the moral imperatives of Housing First. But too often, in Boston and elsewhere, housing for chronically homeless people came without sufficient support — not enough treatment for the problems they brought with them, too little in the way of lessons on how to live indoors. And in some cases the wretched nature of the housing was also to blame.

As the years went on, the impediments grew. By 2018, Boston didn’t have enough affordable housing to accommodate people of middling income, let alone the city’s homeless people, whose numbers were still rising.

The Program’s main fund-raising event, its Gala, was a rite of Boston’s charitable springtime — a vast hotel ballroom, dresses and suits, photographers, speeches and pledges. At the end of the 2018 version, O’Connell took the stage and told two stories. The first was cheery, about a patient who was about to be housed, in a subsidized, well-managed apartment building, after three decades on the streets.

The second story was somber. “Not quite as nice in the end,” O’Connell warned the audience. It was about a long-term patient. She had lived many years outside on the waterfront with a hard-drinking, crack-smoking crew, and then she decided to change her life. She went voluntarily into detox and quit drugs and alcohol for good. All on her own, without public assistance, she found both an apartment and a job in a laundromat. For nine years she paid her own rent, providing room and board for her boyfriend and a child he had with another woman. I once visited her apartment. For décor and tidiness, it would have met the standards of a Dutch housewife.

“The problem was,” said O’Connell from the podium, “one day she came to our clinic with shoulder pain — ” It was a symptom of lung cancer in a late stage. Mass General treated her. She was plucky and determined, given to saying, “Heaven don’t want me, and Hell’s afraid I’ll take over.” She had survived for nearly four years. But just a few weeks ago she was told that the cancer was finally unstoppable. In the meantime, she’d also been told that she was being evicted from her apartment.

Gentrification was transforming Boston. Real estate developers had bought the building in the ***working-class*** neighborhood where the ailing woman lived. They planned to turn the place into condos, O’Connell recalled. They offered to sell her the apartment for $245,000. She’d actually tried to find a way to raise the money, but failed. The day she received her official eviction notice, she paged O’Connell, but when he called her back, she was crying so hard she couldn’t speak. At that moment, O’Connell realized that her apartment stood for everything she’d accomplished in her life. And now it was being taken away. If she had been housed with public assistance instead of paying her rent by herself, she would have kept her housing voucher, and the city would have prevented the landlord from kicking her out until she found another apartment.

“In the end, she died frantic that she was going to lose housing,” O’Connell told the silent crowd.

He paused. At every talk he gave, I sensed that whether it was asked or not, the question of what was to be done hung in the air. He addressed it now:

“This is a complicated problem. Homelessness is a prism held up to society, and what we see refracted are the weaknesses in not only our health care system, our public-health system, our housing system, but especially in our welfare system, our educational system, and our legal system — and our corrections system. If we’re going fix this problem, we have to work together to fix the weaknesses of all those sectors.”

It was a bleak assessment, implying that the only cure for homelessness would be an end to many of the country’s deep, abiding flaws.

Homelessness is fed by income inequality, racism and a cascade of other related forces. These include insufficient investments in public housing, also tax and zoning codes that have spurred widespread gentrification and driven up real estate prices, thereby reducing the already insufficient supply of affordable housing. Getting the millions of visibly and invisibly homeless people housed is the first, most obvious solution to the current problem. Most homeless people fall only briefly into the condition and are far less needy than the Street Team’s patients. They could manage housing without a great deal of support, O’Connell figured. And yet, for everyone, dilapidated and poorly situated housing can be a poverty trap and a way back to homelessness, or to an early death.

A study in Boston, from 2012, showed that average life expectancies varied drastically between rich and poor neighborhoods, by 30 years in one pairing. The environments in which people lived their lives could be destiny in neighborhoods where violence was common and residents lacked access to anything except fast food and convenience stores. One Street Team patient had been receiving a great deal of social support from a caseworker, and yet the patient was spending most of her nights and days on the streets again because she had been placed in an apartment building where someone routinely stole her electricity and Social Security checks — and because one day a neighbor broke through the screen in her ground-floor window and stabbed her with a butter knife, leaving her with a collapsed lung. I stood with O’Connell outside that building one day, watching rats scurry around the garbage pails. “This is where the city is placing people and claiming victory,” he said.

He had seen much better examples of housing projects, in Denver and San Francisco, for instance, and yet in both cities, as in Boston, the cost of housing had risen outlandishly while the pool of homeless candidates for housing kept growing. On a recent trip to Southern California, O’Connell was given a tour of the 50-square-block section of Los Angeles known as Skid Row, where about 2,000 people were living on pavement in terrible squalor. Tens of thousands more were living under freeways and beside riverbeds in the greater Los Angeles area. When he returned, O’Connell told the Street Team: “L.A. makes me feel like we’re playing in a bathtub here in Boston. The dimension of the problem is beyond all imagination. Tents and encampments all over the place. L.A. would have to create housing for at least 66,000.”

In 2016, the City of Los Angeles conceived an ambitious new project — to develop or acquire, in the course of 10 years, 10,000 units of housing for homeless people. To pay for this, it floated a $1.2 billion bond, which would be used to leverage about $2.8 billion more from private and other public sources. In 2022, the city controller reported “mixed results.” Housing was being created, but the cost for each unit was rising “to staggering heights” — on average, roughly $600,000 per unit in construction.

The chasm was widening between Americans who could afford the necessities of life and the millions left in poverty. But the Los Angeles project showed that the problem of homelessness had become too large, too visible, too offensive to be ignored — and that wide public support for remedies could be marshaled. Seventy-six percent of voters in Los Angeles had approved that $1.2 billion bond, and the voters of Los Angeles County had also approved an increase in their sales tax, to finance support services for the newly housed. Promising partial remedies were underway in many other locales: the conversion of hotels, motels and vacant apartment buildings into housing for homeless people; programs providing rental assistance and job training and a large menu of other support services.

O’Connell especially admired the work of an old friend named Rosanne Haggerty. She founded an organization called Community Solutions as a vehicle for helping willing cities and counties toward “functional zero” — defined as “a future where homelessness is rare overall, and brief when it occurs.”

The central tenet behind Haggerty’s strategy held that homelessness was a function of fragmentation among social-service agencies, both public and private. Part of the cure, she believed, lay in creating systems made up of all the relevant agencies in a city or region. These coalitions would share responsibility for each homeless individual within their jurisdiction, making sure that each person was known by name. The system would constantly improve itself through an “iterative cycle” — tackling a problem, studying the results, then doing the job better. Haggerty described the strategy as “a public-health approach — science-based, data-driven, collaborative, prevention-oriented.” By 2018 the organization was assisting dozens of cities and counties, with measurable success. In 2021, [*the MacArthur Foundation gave the group $100 million to accelerate its work.*](https://www.macfound.org/press/article/community-solutions-awarded-$100-million-to-end-homelessness)

O’Connell emphatically agreed with Haggerty when she said that the term “homelessness” failed to capture the complexity of the problem. He agreed with what seemed like her fundamental goal: “Each person we see in the shelters and out on the streets, somebody has to own responsibility for knowing that person and getting them housed.” He imagined that was possible now in many American communities. But he had his doubts when it came to the most afflicted places, and also to Boston, because of its real estate boom: “You could change all the zoning laws in Boston right now and create a more coherent system, and because of the costs it would still take us years and years and years to build enough affordable housing for everyone who needs it.”

O’Connell remembered McInnis telling him, “We’re way down on the solution scale.” Housing wasn’t just complicated. He found that if he mused too long about the problem, on the forces ranged against great progress and the disagreements among allies, he grew hungry for the clinic, his colleagues, his patients. “I don’t get despairing,” he told me. “But it’s much easier to just go take care of people.” For all its limitations, that work felt full and rich and edifying, and real. Some allies in the struggle against homelessness criticized the Program for using resources that should have gone to housing. O’Connell’s reply was plain: “This is what we do while we’re waiting for the world to change.”

Haggerty told me, “Jim is doing exactly what he should.” Medicine alone couldn’t solve homelessness, she said. “This is really about accountability, system design, performance. Until that’s fixed, Jim is basically standing at the bottom of a cliff, trying to save people.”

By 2019, the Program’s budget had grown to about $60 million a year, and the landscape of its system was like a subway map of the city — some 30 clinics, one for each of the city’s shelters and two affiliated with Mass General and the Boston Medical Center. It had also acquired its own headquarters, with a busy ground floor like a train-station concourse: a large dental clinic, a pharmacy that filled 1,500 prescriptions a day, a soundproofed room where people in the throes of drug overdoses could be treated and counseled if they chose. Also the headquarters of various teams — the Street Team and a team that served unhoused transgender people and a mobile team that focused, with extraordinary success, on the treatment of AIDS and hepatitis C. The Program’s latest respite hospital, the Barbara McInnis House, occupied the three floors above the lobby. It had 104 beds and a large nursing staff, a jewel of a place.

O’Connell had recently turned 70. Riding on the van one quiet night that winter, watching the city go by in the dappled, semidarkness of the cabin, I said to him, “You could drive the van when you retire.”

I meant this as a joke, but for him the idea was resonant. He said: “I have this vision of like, the old bus of Ken Kesey, and picking up our patients and going on trips. You know, to the zoo, to the movies, to the beach, just gather everybody and go, three days a week go and do something.”

He had begun to call himself “redundant,” a now-unnecessary part of the Program. But he still had roles to play as president and, until he found a replacement, as captain of the Street Team. And he still had doctoring to do. Many longtime patients — “the old classics,” he called them — had died. He felt obliged to help serve the ones who remained — “to stand with them in the darkness, if need be,” as McInnis had said. (She died in 2003, from a fatal interaction between anesthesia for minor surgery and a drug she took for diabetes. He still quoted her often, and once in a while invented things he felt she would have said.)

Dozens of old classics still relied on O’Connell. They were a colorful group, many housed, many precariously. There was Kevin, a former bank robber who would describe his heists and trade secrets while O’Connell examined him. There was Frankie, an ordained minister who used to preach on the Boston Common but now was losing track of time. He would page O’Connell at all hours of the night and be forgiven in the morning. There was a former pop singer, Susie, who had belonged to a band that once opened for B.B. King. She was a college graduate and suffered from the same problem with alcohol as most of the old classics. “I like my beverages, Jim. You know that.” She refused to have the Street Team counsel her about her drinking or to admit it was the cause of her many ailments. She often called, but usually at times when O’Connell was in his office. He could put her on speaker and catch up with his email while listening: “Holy socks, Jim! I haven’t seen you since Moby Dick was a minnow.”

And there was a new patient growing more interesting by the day. He had washed up on the Street Team’s shore in 2017, a tall and physically powerful man nearing 50. He had spent nearly 20 years in state prison, and now he was trying to go straight, to find a purpose for himself, a place in the world. He was a rough sleeper out of necessity. He couldn’t bear to stay in the shelters after two decades in prison, and because of his record, he was having a hard time finding housing. And yet he was inventing an occupation: self-appointed deputy to O’Connell. He was turning himself, with O’Connell’s tacit approval, into a social director when he was sheltering in McInnis House, and had become a protector and caretaker of the weak when he was out on the streets.

The Program had improved many lives. It had transformed some. For instance, Joanne Guarino, who had spent 30 years in and out of homelessness and now served on the Program’s board of directors. Among her other duties, she delivered a yearly lecture to the new crop of Harvard medical students. She would tell them her story and answer their questions and usually close with this last piece of advice: “Don’t be a shithead doctor.”

I imagined that O’Connell would go on growing old with his patients for some time to come. In 2019, though, he began to experience his own medical problems, in a cascading pattern that reminded him of elderly patients. A shoulder surgery led to the discovery of an anomaly in his heart’s electrical conduction system, which required a pacemaker. After the procedure, he spent a night under observation, isolated in the Mass General I.C.U. Not even his wife, Jill, was allowed in. When he woke up the next morning, however, a familiar voice asked, “How ya feelin’?”

A small, wiry man had pulled the visitor’s chair over to the bedside. It took O’Connell a moment to realize this wasn’t a doctor, but rather one of the old classics, Billy Bianchino.

Billy was smiling. “We’ve all been real worried about ya, Dr. Jim, and I thought I’d come and see aboutchya.”

O’Connell wanted to ask Billy how he’d managed to get in, but he didn’t let himself. The rough sleepers’ devious ways were more amusing and miraculous left unknown, like the mechanics of a magic trick. O’Connell often coached the Street Team on the importance of visiting patients when they were languishing in the hospital, lonesome and afraid. Once the surprise wore off, he realized that he himself had been feeling lonely, and he was very glad to see Billy sitting there.

The first flood of Covid infections was large and lethal in Boston, especially inside nursing homes and jails and among people in low-income neighborhoods, many of whom went out to work in dangerous, low-paying jobs and came home to crowded apartments. Everyone expected catastrophe for the city’s homeless people. But by the fall of 2020, when the virus’s first wave had abated, the rough sleepers — the most vulnerable of populations in normal times — remained largely uninfected. Perhaps outdoor living and their untouchable status had protected them. And while the virus did spread among 30 to 40 percent of the people sleeping inside the city’s two largest homeless shelters, most of the illnesses had been mild.

Boston’s response on behalf of homeless people was impressively collective — the city’s hospitals, the city and state public-health departments, the mayor and governor’s offices, the shelter organizations, all collaborated. The Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program ran testing in the shelters, converted a floor of McInnis House into a special Covid isolation unit, equipped and staffed two medical tents that the city erected for quarantine and isolation and later helped to run 500 beds in a field hospital in the city’s convention center. Everyone on the Street Team pitched in, except for O’Connell.

He was obliged to listen and watch from a distance. He had come down with yet another new ailment, an autoimmune disorder of unknown origin, causing inflammation of the blood vessels. His colleagues at Mass General had put him on a long course of medications, and when Covid arrived, they advised him into quarantine.

He had a small summer house on the Rhode Island shore. He retreated there, conferring with his colleagues by phone and computer and looking out to sea during the first season of Covid. We spoke often by phone. His voice always sounded cheerful, even when his thoughts had a melancholy cast. On one call, he said, “I think of this as my rehearsal for complete irrelevance.”

I began to think he really was about to retire, but when I suggested as much, early in the summer of 2021, he said: “Oh, no! I’m coming back! I’ve got six more months of these damn shots and stuff, and then I’m coming back!”

In November, a second season of Covid descended on Boston, but O’Connell returned to the city — to join the Street Team for its Thursday meetings and to resume his weekly daytime street rounds, wearing a surgical mask. I joined him one late fall afternoon.

Downtown, a familiar mixture of new patients and old classics were camped with their importuning signs at their usual venues, in doorways and beside streetlamps and mailboxes. O’Connell made many stops to chat with them, home visits as it were. He would approach them exuberantly, greeting old friends by name, offering a hand to new prospects. Watching him, I was struck again by his manner: saying little, but actively listening, tilting slightly forward, his eyes attentive, a suggestion that he was about to break into a smile. And rarely ending a conversation himself, but rather allowing almost all of them to talk for as long as they wanted, as if he had all the time in the world.

Tracy Kidder is the author of numerous books of narrative nonfiction, including “The Soul of a New Machine,” “House” and “Mountains Beyond Mountains.” He has won the Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award. Cole Barash is a visual artist whose current work focuses on the relationship between humans and nature. His monograph, “When the Wind Blows North,” is scheduled to be published in 2023.

PHOTOS: Dr. Jim O’Connell examining Stephen, who has lived on the streets for many years. Stephen and his friend James encountered O’Connell on a subway platform as he conducted rounds. (MM20-MM21); Charmaire, newly homeless for the first time, checking in at a clinic at the Boston Medical Center that is run by the Boston Health Care for the Homeless Program. (MM23); O’Connell in an outreach van in November. (MM24); O’Connell checking on a patient’s wound. (MM25); At the Program’s foot clinic at St. Francis House. (MM26); Lisa having her blood pressure checked by Dr. Alison May at the Boston Medical Center clinic. Lisa was born and raised in Boston and worked as a cook. Formerly homeless, she is now in housing. (MM27); Rickey having head wounds dressed at the Program’s clinic at Mass General. He has lived in the Boston area his entire life and has known O’Connell for over 30 years. He is an Army veteran and worked as a baker at the Omni Parker House hotel. (MM28); Beds at Pine Street Inn, Boston’s largest homeless shelter. The plexiglass barriers were installed in response to the pandemic. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY COLE BARASH OF THE NEW YORK TIMES) (MM29) This article appeared in print on page MM20, MM21. MM22. MM23. MM24, MM25, MM26, MM27, MM28. MM29, MM45, MM46, MM49.

**Load-Date:** January 5, 2023

**End of Document**



[***All Hail the Scorching Labor Market***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654B-87V1-JBG3-620S-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 1, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1674 words

**Byline:** By Talmon Joseph Smith

**Body**

Harry's Wonder Bar is a trusted old dive in Nebraska's capital, frequented by office clerks, construction workers and graduate students alike: the sort of wood-paneled place with a pool table in the back where phones generally stay in pockets, second fiddle to casual conversation, and beer mugs come frosted regardless of the season.

As a half-dozen or so happy hour patrons gathered at the bar on a recent afternoon, most had something remarkable in common: Everybody seemed to know somebody who had earned a significant raise, or multiple raises, in the past year -- and many, if not all, had received a jump in pay themselves.

That included the bartender on the early-evening shift, Nikki Paulk, an easygoing woman with a flash of pink hair. ''I'm in hot demand, baby,'' she said, mentioning ''desperate'' employers with a burst of a grin. ''I've worked at like six bars in the last six months because I just keep getting better offers I can't turn down.''

The unemployment rate in Nebraska was 2.1 percent in February, tied with Utah for the lowest in the nation and near the lowest on record for any state. In several counties, unemployment is below 1 percent. Even taking into account adults who have left the work force, the share of the population 16 and older employed in Nebraska is around 68 percent, the nation's highest figure.

After decades of wage and income stagnation, the seesaw of power between managers and their workers looks to at least temporarily be tilting in the direction of labor, with employers in competition for workers instead of the other way around. Unemployment in states including Indiana, Kansas, Montana and Oklahoma is almost as low as in Nebraska, testing the benefits and potential costs of an economy with exceptionally tight labor markets.

Ms. Paulk, 35, graduated from college with a graphic design degree during the Great Recession, when jobs were scarce. She remembers working 60-hour weeks near minimum wage in Illinois, ''being excited to find a quarter'' that could go toward laundry. In 2013, she moved to Nebraska and took a job in medical data entry for $12 an hour.

She started bartending in 2018, and since then, she says, her overall pay has more than doubled to $25 (and sometimes $30) an hour, including tips.

The nationwide jobless rate in February was 3.8 percent, nearly back to prepandemic levels that were the lowest in a half-century. The particularly low unemployment in Nebraska is partly attributable to its higher-than-average high school graduation rate, and the dominant role of industries like manufacturing and agriculture that are less volatile than the service or energy sectors during downturns. Even at the peak of Covid-19 lockdowns in the spring of 2020, the state unemployment rate was 7.4 percent, half the national number.

Yet the labor market in Nebraska may also be a harbinger for the country at large. Most economists expect overall unemployment to continue ticking downward this year. Job openings are near record highs, and jobless rates in January were lower than a year earlier in 388 of the 389 metropolitan areas evaluated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Many business analysts contend that if labor remains scarce, wages will grow too rapidly and employers will continually pass on that increased expense to consumers. At least for now, evidence of such a spiral is sparse: Federal Reserve data shows that median annual pay increases are well within the range -- 3 to 7 percent -- that prevailed from the 1980s until the 2007-9 recession.

The Fed, still concerned, has begun raising interest rates to cool off the economy and tame inflationary pressures. Supply chain challenges that arose during the pandemic have persisted, and the war in Ukraine is further complicating the outlook for inflation as well as overall economic growth. Consumer spending remains buoyant, yet surveys reflect dour economic sentiment among the public.

In the meantime, even as price increases nag household budgets, burying the value of some new wage gains, a noticeable mass of employees and job seekers are gaining more leverage regarding benefits and conditions.

During a virtual summit about the local economy held in February by the nonprofit group Leadership Lincoln, Eric Thompson, the director of the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, argued that the labor market might be simply rebalancing.

''Obviously, it's still always better to be the employer than the worker, or at least usually it is,'' he said. But the current environment does enable some employees to switch jobs or more easily vie for higher-level positions. Local employers are dropping degree requirements for a range of midlevel and entry roles.

Many fast-food restaurants, struggling to staff locations near the $9 minimum wage in the state, have begun to offer starting wages of $14. Evidence of automation is just as rampant as Help Wanted signs: Some pharmacies dotting the main roads and highways appear to have more self-checkout kiosks than employees at a given hour.

Mr. Thompson said such moves were not necessarily ominous for the ***working class*** but rather a reflection of the need for businesses to adapt while workers find jobs that can ''maximize their skills and potential.''

Tony Goins, a former senior vice president at JPMorgan Chase who was appointed by Gov. Pete Ricketts in 2019 as director of Nebraska's Department of Economic Development, said the tight labor market could prompt managers to become more flexible and innovative.

''At the end of the day, the market is dictating that I have to pay employees more money,'' said Mr. Goins, a small-business owner himself with a cigar lounge in Lincoln. ''So, I mean, how are you going to offset that?'' To stay competitive in hiring, he said, managers need to improve culture, leadership, employee retention and recruiting.

He spoke of his son, an assistant men's basketball coach at Boston College -- a position that he says requires continued outreach as well as the dual promise of ''the chance to play for a winning program'' and gaining personal development. ''That's not what C.E.O.s are used to,'' he said.

Businesses aiming to grow have begun to offer incentives beyond pay. The Japanese company Kawasaki Motors is spending $200 million to expand the 2.4-million-square-foot site in northern Lincoln where it makes Jet Skis, all-terrain vehicles and rail cars. It is increasing its 2,400-member work force by over 500 employees, with jobs primarily in fabrication, welding and assembly.

The company is becoming more flexible about hiring and work styles in order to pull it off. ''It used to take a couple of weeks to get hired at Kawasaki,'' said Bryan Seck, its chief talent management strategist in Lincoln. ''Now, it's down to four hours.''

With the knowledge that many parents remain on the sidelines of the work force because of child care duties, Kawasaki recently created a 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. shift tailored for those who need to retrieve children from school and day care in the early afternoon. Starting wages are $18.10 an hour, Mr. Seck said, with benefits including health care and a 401(k) plan.

In addition to increasing wages to retain employees, Todd Heyne, the chief construction officer at Allo Communications, a cable company based in Lincoln, said management decided that easing in-person work requirements could expand the pool of available workers. That led the company to allow many of its customer service representatives and technical support employees to train and work farther afield as it prepares to expand beyond Nebraska and Colorado.

Not all problem-solving is easy. The added labor costs come on top of supply chain pressures that have increased the price of crucial materials like fiber optic cable by as much as 30 percent. Vendors are often charging 20 percent more for their contracted tasks. As a result, the company has taken steps like hiring its own trucking staff.

In the end, ''combined with some automation efficiencies, our team will see sizable wage increases with less rudimentary work,'' Mr. Heyne said, reducing manual paperwork, centralizing back-end systems and doing more to fix customers' network issues remotely. So despite the cost challenges, ''I've never been more optimistic about where we're sitting, our position in the market, how we compete against our competitors, and our technology,'' he added. ''Which is strange.''

For many, the opportunity of this economic moment is tinged with worry. They include Ashlee Bridger, a 30-year-old student at the Lincoln campus of Southeast Community College who works in administration for the nearby firm Huffman Engineering after being recruited from a job fair.

Ms. Bridger left her job as a nurse to pursue a career in human resources because she felt confident enough to bet on herself: ''Of course, it was a risk. Leaving any career is.'' But in the current job market, she said, ''I knew I would be able to work my way up easier.''

She has also had a series of life milestones fall into place. She will graduate in May with an associate degree and will start bachelor's degree work in the fall at Nebraska Wesleyan University. The managers at Huffman have told her that she is welcome to continue working there when her schedule allows, and that they would like to hire her in a more senior role after she completes her studies.

Last year, she got married in summer, then moved with her husband into a newly built house in Lincoln in August. Though they feel financially stable, she half-joked that they were lucky the home was mostly built before lumber prices soared. With prices up across the board now, ''I'm more cautious about my spending,'' she said.

Ms. Paulk, the bartender at Harry's thriving off better pay, has friends and customers who are upset about recent inflation. ''But it's something controlled out of our hands anyway,'' she said with a shrug.

''All I know,'' she added, ''is now I'm not broke anymore -- it's great. Life is good.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/business/economy/nebraska-economy-unemployment-labor.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/01/business/economy/nebraska-economy-unemployment-labor.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Nikki Paulk, a bartender at Harry's Wonder Bar in Lincoln, Neb., served drinks on St. Patrick's Day. A college graduate, Ms. Paulk started bartending in 2018. Her pay has more than doubled, to as much as $30 an hour, since then. (B1)

Tony Goins, Nebraska's economic development head, above, and Todd Heyne, the chief construction officer at Allo Communications, below. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TERRY RATZLAFF FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (B5)

**Load-Date:** April 1, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Racial Turmoil Mars Signs of Progress at the U.S. Mint***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KD-TG01-JBG3-64D2-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 21, 2022 Friday 22:39 EST

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**Section:** US; politics

**Length:** 1451 words

**Byline:** Alan Rappeport

**Highlight:** A new internal report found that Black employees felt marginalized at the Treasury agency that produces the nation’s coins.

**Body**

A new internal report found that Black employees felt marginalized at the Treasury agency that produces the nation’s coins.

WASHINGTON — The United States Mint celebrated a milestone this month when it announced the first shipment of a new batch of quarters [*bearing the image of the writer and poet Maya Angelou*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/11/us/maya-angelou-quarter.html), the first Black woman to be depicted on the 25-cent coin.

The announcement came weeks after President Biden said he would nominate Ventris C. Gibson to lead the Mint, where, if confirmed, she would serve as its first Black director.

But beneath the public signs of social progress is an agency that has struggled for years with racial tension, with Black employees saying they feel threatened, marginalized and professionally disadvantaged. While instances of racism at the Mint have surfaced in previous years, a new internal report that was reviewed by The New York Times depicts an institution rife with tumult over allegations of racist behavior.

A draft of the report, which was commissioned by the Mint [*last year*](https://www.usaspending.gov/award/CONT_AWD_2031JG21P00073_2044_-NONE-_-NONE-) and produced by an independent human resources consulting firm, determined that the agency, which is part of the Treasury Department, had a “culture problem” and that staff members felt a “lack of psychological safety.” The report described a workplace with “implicit bias” and “microaggressions” toward people of color.

Participants in a survey conducted by the consulting firm, which included more than 200 staff members, senior managers and executives, said race was a divisive issue at the Mint. Many people at the agency expressed concerns that hiring and promotions for people of color were not handled fairly and said they feared reprisal for making formal complaints.

In interviews with the firm that were quoted in the report, some managers at the Mint appeared dismissive of the racial concerns. Comments made by managers included saying that “we need a model minority” and that “if we put a minority as a U.S. Mint assistant director, the minorities will see we are not racist or sexist.”

The firm, TI Verbatim Consulting, said in the report that its findings “point to potential root causes for the racial divide” at the Mint. The report cited outdated policies, cliques, ambiguous promotion practices and the perception of favoritism. Although some members of the Mint’s work force described a positive environment, others said there had been a noticeable “downward spiral” in recent years amid growing racial tension and as acts of overt discrimination surfaced.

“The work force does not feel that the organization lives up to its values,” said the report, which surveyed a mix of white employees and people of color.

Concerns about a culture of discrimination at the Mint garnered national attention in 2017 after a white worker at a facility in Philadelphia tied a rope used for sealing coin bags into a noose and left it on the workstation of a Black colleague. In [*a letter in 2020*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2020/09/18/business/stock-market-today-coronavirus/steven-mnuchin-requests-a-review-of-claims-of-rampant-racism-at-the-us-mint) to Steven Mnuchin, who was the Treasury secretary, staff members at the Mint said that another noose had surfaced and that the N-word had been written across walls in restrooms. They also said a white Mint official had referred to a Black leader at the agency as a “zoo keeper” in an instant message conversation.

The allegations were referred to the Treasury Department’s inspector general, Richard K. Delmar. He found no evidence of racial animus surrounding the Philadelphia noose incident, but his inquiry into other allegations continues. Mr. Delmar declined to comment on the review that is underway.

The day after the noose was found, the employee in question was removed from his job. He challenged his removal before the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, which reviews cases of government employees who are contesting their termination, and said his job involved tying knots. The Mint later agreed to a settlement with the employee after the Justice Department declined to take any action; a Mint spokesman said the settlement had been made in an effort to end the dispute and ensure that the employee would not be reinstated.

The revelations of racial turmoil come as the Mint is at a potential turning point. Mr. Biden has made racial equity a centerpiece of his agenda, and he announced in December that he would nominate Ms. Gibson to be the agency’s director. She is the Mint’s deputy director and has been leading the agency on an acting basis.

Ms. Gibson, who needs to be confirmed by the Senate, has vowed to improve the Mint’s culture. Last month, she led a diversity briefing during a senior managers’ meeting, and she is planning to create new career development programs to help make the promotion process more transparent.

“Our work force comes from diverse backgrounds, and I am committed to ensuring that we respect, honor and leverage that diversity,” Ms. Gibson said in a statement. “We must ensure that there are no barriers to the success and advancement of any employee at the Mint.”

She added, “We at the senior leadership level must make concerted efforts to always treat our employees with fairness and integrity, and to restore faith in those basic tenets of good leadership and exemplify genuine care for the work force.”

But there are lingering concerns within the Mint’s staff about her commitment and ability to bring change to an organization where cultural problems have festered for so long.

Staff members inside the Mint are fearful that symbols of change may not necessarily lead to tangible cultural change at the 1,600-person agency, which was established by the Coinage Act of 1792. That includes the decision to put Ms. Angelou on the quarter.

“It’s a distraction,” said Rhonda Sapp, the president of the Mint workers’ union, who questioned the value of putting Ms. Angelou on a coin “when you mistreat the people, some of whom are people of color, who are making the coins.”

Ms. Sapp, who said she had not seen the consulting firm’s report, said shifting the agency’s culture would require more sweeping changes among the Mint’s leadership.

“What good is it to have the first Black female director, if she is confirmed, when you have all of these people who have these behaviors and mind-sets undermining her at every turn?” Ms. Sapp asked.

Others are more optimistic that Ms. Gibson will be able to foster a culture of inclusion.

“Ventris brings years of human resources experience at large organizations,” said Rosie Rios, who served as treasurer of the United States during the Obama administration. “I’m sure she will do a fine job with the Mint.”

The report credited the Mint’s leadership for commissioning the assessment of its culture and allowing respondents to speak freely about the agency. It said that “tremendous opportunity exists for real change.”

Before Mr. Biden announced her nomination to lead the Mint, Ms. Gibson was appointed in October as the agency’s deputy director. At the time, Wally Adeyemo, the deputy Treasury secretary, hailed her selection as a sign of progress.

“Her historic appointment reflects our ongoing commitment to building a qualified, diverse work force at Treasury and its bureaus that will serve the American people well,” he said.

The Mint historically was a place that pioneered diversity but did not always prioritize healthy working conditions. In 1795, it became the first federal agency to employ women when it began hiring them to work in the so-called [*adjusting room*](https://www.usmint.gov/learn/history/women-at-work), a poorly ventilated space where they would weigh and file down blank coins.

The agency has facilities in Philadelphia; Denver; San Francisco; West Point, N.Y.; and Fort Knox, Ky. Through the 1960s, the staff around the country was largely white and ***working class***, but in recent decades it became more diverse. At the Mint’s administrative headquarters in Washington, where around 300 people work, those in leadership and higher-paying roles are mostly white, while employees on the lower end of the pay scale are mostly people of color, according to the report.

In recent years, bringing diversity to the imagery on America’s coins has been a priority for the Mint. The bipartisan Circulating Collectible Coin Redesign Act of 2020, which President Donald J. Trump signed into law the week before he left office, initiated the addition of notable women, such as Ms. Angelou, on quarters through 2025.

The findings of the report have yet to be released publicly. They are expected to be shared more widely within the Mint’s staff this month, Ms. Gibson said in her statement.

PHOTOS: Ventris C. Gibson is poised to become the first Black director of the U.S. Mint, which just released quarters depicting Maya Angelou. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TREASURY DEPARTMENT; BURWELL AND BURWELL PHOTOGRAPHY/FOR THE UNITED STATES MINT, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) (B4)

**Load-Date:** January 21, 2022

**End of Document**



[***The C.E.O. of a Running Company Who Can No Longer Run; corner office***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:654C-K9P1-DXY4-X0JV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 1, 2022 Friday 10:45 EST

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**Section:** BUSINESS

**Length:** 1452 words

**Byline:** David Gelles

**Highlight:** Jim Weber, the chief executive of Brooks Running, was a devoted distance runner. Then came cancer.

**Body**

Jim Weber, the longtime chief executive of Brooks Running, was for many years a devoted runner. The hours spent racking up the miles were more than exercise for him. They were a chance to meditate on life, to devise strategy about business, and to ruminate on the thorny problems that come with operating a company with more than $1 billion in annual sales.

Then, a few years ago, Mr. Weber got cancer. He had to step away from running the business, endured difficult rounds of treatment and emerged cancer-free — but missing a lung.

Though Mr. Weber can no longer run, he is still active, walking laps around Brooks’s new headquarters in Seattle. The company, which is part of Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway conglomerate, is profitable and growing quickly.

And Mr. Weber, who has been C.E.O. for more than two decades — steering it from near bankruptcy, through private equity ownership, out from being a subsidiary of Fruit of the Loom, and into being a stand-alone part of Berkshire Hathaway — is still enjoying what he calls his “dream job,” with no plans to retire.

This interview was condensed and edited for clarity.

Tell me about growing up in Minnesota.

I was one of six kids within eight years of each other in a ***working class*** suburb of St. Paul, and it was a very chaotic and busy house. My dad was an alcoholic and he was never happy, and almost a bully at times. He had so much negative energy that I just ended up avoiding him. So I was pretty independent, and I decided I wanted to be a glass-half-full kind of person. I wanted to sort of break out and be happy and pursue being good at something and not being bitter. So I poured myself into hockey, but my Plan B was to run a company.

One of the things I’ve gotten perspective on, though it’s really kind of tricky, is that I was born a white male in the Midwest. Everybody is dealt so many cards when they are born, and I was born with a good hand. That’s a broader lens now that I have in life.

What was your first job and what did you learn from it?

My first job was a commercial banking officer at Norwest Bank in Minneapolis, and I learned how to financially analyze a business, from a profit and loss balance sheet to cash flow. I became a really good financial analyst in that first banking job, but I knew I wanted to be on the other side of the table at some point and run a company.

There were layoffs at some Berkshire Hathaway companies during the pandemic. How did you manage to avoid having them at Brooks?

When you don’t know what’s going to happen, the conventional wisdom of all the C.E.O. peers I talk to and most private equity people I know, and most bankers, is to hunker down, batten down the hatches, and throw stuff overboard you don’t need. Shed costs, because it’s about first and foremost survival, and not only survival, but protecting profits.

But we didn’t have a brand that we were protecting. We were creating a brand, we were adding new customers. We’re in an entrepreneurial mode, have been now for 20 years. So in April 2020, when everybody’s laying off people, my own board was saying, Jim, you know, you’re probably going to have to lay off people.

But we had a thought that in stressful times, running is convenient. It’s cheap. People might go running. So we paused, and as soon as we saw runners running and digital demand picking up, we turned back on our supply chain, and I think we probably did it at least eight weeks before anybody else did. It’s hard to describe how meaningful that was. We kept our marketing spending going. We didn’t lay off one person, and we grew 31 percent last year. And this year, without our supply chain issues, we’d be up over 30 percent.

When did you realize Brooks had the potential to compete with big companies like Nike in the running market?

When the Great Recession hit in 2008 and 2009 and the world was ending, economically speaking, it just crushed apparel. We did a layoff at that point. But by February of 2009, shoes started selling.

Nike is one of the greatest brands ever built, and it’s about competitive, athletic achievement and breaking the tape on the podium. It’s just so powerful. But we saw running as the most unique sport in all the world, and we had this “Run Happy” ethos, which was unique.

Running is maybe the original sport from a competitive standpoint, with cross country, track and field, the Olympics, road racing, trail running and ultramarathons. But it transcends sport, because it’s an investment in yourself. One hundred and fifty million people have running as part of their fitness, health and wellness, meditation regimen. It’s a tool to invest in themselves. So we positioned our brand right in the middle of the running lifestyle. We’re doing something no one else has ever done, and creating this unique brand that’s only about running. And it’s the biggest category of sporting goods.

It’s rare to be a C.E.O. for 20 years. Why haven’t you left to take other jobs?

All the heroes I had in business had built incredible brands and fantastically dominant businesses. So once I got on to Brooks and I saw that it could be a great business, and that you could attract a customer for life and sell them three pairs of shoes a year, I saw it, that flywheel in the business.

I almost left a couple of times. But I love building things. And here’s the other thing about Berkshire: This is the closest thing to owning this business. I’m the chief culture officer, I’m the chief strategy officer, I’m the chief risk officer. I’m accountable for everything short term, medium term, long term. I have a dream job. So that’s what’s kept me. I knew this was a gem.

What do you think is the biggest misconception about good leadership today?

I think that the whole command and control thing is a relic. It’s about engaging people and creating a North Star, a purpose, so that the team is going to give as much as they get.

So what’s the misconception? The misconception is that you can command and control your way to really creating value in culture. If you want to attract great talent, you’ve got to create purpose and mission and an opportunity for those people.

How do you manage your stress as a chief executive?

Running became absolute therapy for me. Once I quit playing competitive hockey in college, I ran three to five days a week and I’ve done marathons and all that. But mostly I ran by myself and, mostly without music because I processed. If I had a notepad with me, I’d process big decisions and puzzles and problem solve. It truly was meditation for me.

I got cancer a couple of years ago, and I can’t sustain a running heart rate, so I can’t do these six-mile-long runs anymore. It’s killing me, but I’m still active. I can do intervals, I can do walk-runs and the gym. But running has just been absolutely my best processing time throughout my entire life.

Besides affecting your running, how else did cancer affect your professional life?

It was not great. It was a four-year thing and the surgery was brutal. I have one lung now. But I learned what I really value and the way I want to live life. I want to live every day and I want to get the most out of every day. I don’t want to be the cancer survivor and do speeches on that. I want to be a C.E.O., and a dad, and a papa and a runner. That’s who I am. So I just determined I was going to beat this thing, and I’m cancer-free today.

Did you ever think about stepping down when you were sick?

No. And in fact, on Day 3 of my diagnosis, I called Warren and I told him, “I’m going to fight this thing. It might take a while. I might have to leave for six to eight months. And my biggest fear is I get healthy and eight months from now, I have no job and no team and nothing to do.”

He said, “Don’t worry, Jim. Brooks will be there when you get healthy.”

Am I defined by my job? Yeah. I love this job and I love this team and this brand. And so that was a huge fear of mine because I don’t have a retirement plan. I don’t want to do something else. I’m doing exactly what I want to be doing, and I didn’t want to change that.

Do you think Brooks is basically the company it needs to be right now, or is it still growing and changing?

We just put together a 2030 vision for Brooks to continue this path to be a leader in performance running, focused on runners, and we think that niche 10 years from now is absolutely a $4 billion company. We’re building something in a category that is bigger than outdoor or fitness. Running is bigger than all of that. I don’t know when I’m going to retire, but I’m not going to do another gig.

David Gelles is the Corner Office columnist and a business reporter. Follow him on LinkedIn and Twitter: @dgelles.

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY STUART ISETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Racial Strife Mars Gains At U.S. Mint***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64KM-FDH1-DXY4-X36J-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 22, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section B; Column 0; Business/Financial Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1424 words

**Byline:** By Alan Rappeport

**Body**

A new internal report found that Black employees felt marginalized at the Treasury agency that produces the nation's coins.

WASHINGTON -- The United States Mint celebrated a milestone this month when it announced the first shipment of a new batch of quarters bearing the image of the writer and poet Maya Angelou, the first Black woman to be depicted on the 25-cent coin.

The announcement came weeks after President Biden said he would nominate Ventris C. Gibson to lead the Mint, where, if confirmed, she would serve as its first Black director.

But beneath the public signs of social progress is an agency that has struggled for years with racial tension, with Black employees saying they feel threatened, marginalized and professionally disadvantaged. While instances of racism at the Mint have surfaced in previous years, a new internal report that was reviewed by The New York Times depicts an institution rife with tumult over allegations of racist behavior.

A draft of the report, which was commissioned by the Mint last year and produced by an independent human resources consulting firm, determined that the agency, which is part of the Treasury Department, had a ''culture problem'' and that staff members felt a ''lack of psychological safety.'' The report described a workplace with ''implicit bias'' and ''microaggressions'' toward people of color.

Participants in a survey conducted by the consulting firm, which included more than 200 staff members, senior managers and executives, said race was a divisive issue at the Mint. Many people at the agency expressed concerns that hiring and promotions for people of color were not handled fairly and said they feared reprisal for making formal complaints.

In interviews with the firm that were quoted in the report, some managers at the Mint appeared dismissive of the racial concerns. Comments made by managers included saying that ''we need a model minority'' and that ''if we put a minority as a U.S. Mint assistant director, the minorities will see we are not racist or sexist.''

The firm, TI Verbatim Consulting, said in the report that its findings ''point to potential root causes for the racial divide'' at the Mint. The report cited outdated policies, cliques, ambiguous promotion practices and the perception of favoritism. Although some members of the Mint's work force described a positive environment, others said there had been a noticeable ''downward spiral'' in recent years amid growing racial tension and as acts of overt discrimination surfaced.

''The work force does not feel that the organization lives up to its values,'' said the report, which surveyed a mix of white employees and people of color.

Concerns about a culture of discrimination at the Mint garnered national attention in 2017 after a white worker at a facility in Philadelphia tied a rope used for sealing coin bags into a noose and left it on the workstation of a Black colleague. In a letter in 2020 to Steven Mnuchin, who was the Treasury secretary, staff members at the Mint said that another noose had surfaced and that the N-word had been written across walls in restrooms. They also said a white Mint official had referred to a Black leader at the agency as a ''zoo keeper'' in an instant message conversation.

The allegations were referred to the Treasury Department's inspector general, Richard K. Delmar. He found no evidence of racial animus surrounding the Philadelphia noose incident, but his inquiry into other allegations continues. Mr. Delmar declined to comment on the review that is underway.

The day after the noose was found, the employee in question was removed from his job. He challenged his removal before the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, which reviews cases of government employees who are contesting their termination, and said his job involved tying knots. The Mint later agreed to a settlement with the employee after the Justice Department declined to take any action; a Mint spokesman said the settlement had been made in an effort to end the dispute and ensure that the employee would not be reinstated.

The revelations of racial turmoil come as the Mint is at a potential turning point. Mr. Biden has made racial equity a centerpiece of his agenda, and he announced in December that he would nominate Ms. Gibson to be the agency's director. She is the Mint's deputy director and has been leading the agency on an acting basis.

Ms. Gibson, who needs to be confirmed by the Senate, has vowed to improve the Mint's culture. Last month, she led a diversity briefing during a senior managers' meeting, and she is planning to create new career development programs to help make the promotion process more transparent.

''Our work force comes from diverse backgrounds, and I am committed to ensuring that we respect, honor and leverage that diversity,'' Ms. Gibson said in a statement. ''We must ensure that there are no barriers to the success and advancement of any employee at the Mint.''

She added, ''We at the senior leadership level must make concerted efforts to always treat our employees with fairness and integrity, and to restore faith in those basic tenets of good leadership and exemplify genuine care for the work force.''

But there are lingering concerns within the Mint's staff about her commitment and ability to bring change to an organization where cultural problems have festered for so long.

Staff members inside the Mint are fearful that symbols of change may not necessarily lead to tangible cultural change at the 1,600-person agency, which was established by the Coinage Act of 1792. That includes the decision to put Ms. Angelou on the quarter.

''It's a distraction,'' said Rhonda Sapp, the president of the Mint workers' union, who questioned the value of putting Ms. Angelou on a coin ''when you mistreat the people, some of whom are people of color, who are making the coins.''

Ms. Sapp, who said she had not seen the consulting firm's report, said shifting the agency's culture would require more sweeping changes among the Mint's leadership.

''What good is it to have the first Black female director, if she is confirmed, when you have all of these people who have these behaviors and mind-sets undermining her at every turn?'' Ms. Sapp asked.

Others are more optimistic that Ms. Gibson will be able to foster a culture of inclusion.

''Ventris brings years of human resources experience at large organizations,'' said Rosie Rios, who served as treasurer of the United States during the Obama administration. ''I'm sure she will do a fine job with the Mint.''

The report credited the Mint's leadership for commissioning the assessment of its culture and allowing respondents to speak freely about the agency. It said that ''tremendous opportunity exists for real change.''

Before Mr. Biden announced her nomination to lead the Mint, Ms. Gibson was appointed in October as the agency's deputy director. At the time, Wally Adeyemo, the deputy Treasury secretary, hailed her selection as a sign of progress.

''Her historic appointment reflects our ongoing commitment to building a qualified, diverse work force at Treasury and its bureaus that will serve the American people well,'' he said.

The Mint historically was a place that pioneered diversity but did not always prioritize healthy working conditions. In 1795, it became the first federal agency to employ women when it began hiring them to work in the so-called adjusting room, a poorly ventilated space where they would weigh and file down blank coins.

The agency has facilities in Philadelphia; Denver; San Francisco; West Point, N.Y.; and Fort Knox, Ky. Through the 1960s, the staff around the country was largely white and ***working class***, but in recent decades it became more diverse. At the Mint's administrative headquarters in Washington, where around 300 people work, those in leadership and higher-paying roles are mostly white, while employees on the lower end of the pay scale are mostly people of color, according to the report.

In recent years, bringing diversity to the imagery on America's coins has been a priority for the Mint. The bipartisan Circulating Collectible Coin Redesign Act of 2020, which President Donald J. Trump signed into law the week before he left office, initiated the addition of notable women, such as Ms. Angelou, on quarters through 2025.

The findings of the report have yet to be released publicly. They are expected to be shared more widely within the Mint's staff this month, Ms. Gibson said in her statement.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/us/politics/us-mint-racial-turmoil.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/21/us/politics/us-mint-racial-turmoil.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Ventris C. Gibson is poised to become the first Black director of the U.S. Mint, which just released quarters depicting Maya Angelou. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TREASURY DEPARTMENT

BURWELL AND BURWELL PHOTOGRAPHY/FOR THE UNITED STATES MINT, VIA ASSOCIATED PRESS) (B4)

**Load-Date:** January 22, 2022

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[***Your Thursday Briefing: Pfizer’s Booster and Omicron.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6483-WWH1-JBG3-61NN-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 8, 2021 Wednesday 16:23 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1279 words

**Byline:** Melina Delkic

**Highlight:** The booster protects, and two shots may not be enough.

**Body**

The booster protects, and two shots may not be enough.

We’re covering tests of Pfizer’s booster vaccine against the Omicron variant and a new chapter in Germany after 16 years under Angela Merkel.

Pfizer says its booster protects against Omicron

Pfizer and BioNTech said Wednesday that two doses of their Covid vaccine “may not be sufficient to protect against infection” by the new Omicron variant, but lab tests suggested that [*three doses offered significant protection*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/omicron-variant-covid#pfizer-says-blood-samples-showed-a-third-dose-of-its-vaccine-provides-significant-protection-against-omicron).

The companies said that blood tests from people who received only two doses found much lower antibody levels against Omicron compared with an earlier version of the virus.

Blood samples obtained from people one month after a booster shot showed neutralizing antibodies against Omicron, comparable to the levels of antibodies against a previous version of the virus after two doses, the companies said.

Big takeaway: These experiments, done with blood samples in the lab, cannot determine for sure how the vaccines will perform in the real world. But the results seem to underscore the importance of booster shots.

What’s next: Pfizer’s chairman said the company started developing a version of its vaccine targeting Omicron last month, and that it could be produced within 95 days. Moderna is on a similar path.

Here are [*the latest updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/omicron-variant-covid) and [*maps of the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-cases.html).

In other developments:

* A study suggested that Omicron might cause more breakthrough infections but [*not necessarily more severe illness*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/health/omicron-variant-pfizer-vaccine.html).

1. [*Cities are canceling crowded events*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/07/world/covid-omicron-vaccine/cities-around-the-world-are-canceling-dec-31-parties-amid-omicron-fears)over Covid risks, including Christmas markets in Germany and New Year’s Eve parties in Rio de Janeiro.
2. Some students and parents in South Korea are protesting the government’s plan to [*shut unvaccinated students out*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/omicron-variant-covid#south-koreans-protest-vaccine-passes-as-cases-hit-record-levels) of private cram schools and study rooms.

A new era in Germany

Angela Merkel handed over the chancellery to Olaf Scholz, [*beginning a new chapter*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel) for Europe’s largest democracy.

Scholz will lead the first center-left government in 16 years and will be in the difficult spot of trying to live up to the high expectations set by Merkel.

Several crises demand his immediate attention, chief among them the coronavirus pandemic and a possible Russian military invasion of Ukraine. Scholz is also working to [*win back a* ***working-class*** *base*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel/can-olaf-scholz-win-back-a-working-class-base).

End of an era: Under Merkel, Germany became Europe’s leading power for the first time in modern history. We looked at [*Merkel’s tenure in photos*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel/in-pictures-angela-merkels-tenure-through-the-years).

Swearing-in: Scholz [*omitted the “so help me God”*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel#scholz-takes-god-out-of-his-oath) of the traditional oath. The transition was harmonious, with kind words from Merkel and Scholz to each other. In her farewell remarks, Merkel called the chancellorship “one of the most beautiful duties there are.”

Firsts: Turkish people are Germany’s largest immigrant group. Germany elected its [*first Turkish-German minister*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel/turks-are-germanys-largest-immigrant-group-now-the-country-has-its-first-turkish-german-minister). Also, Scholz’s incoming cabinet will have [*more women than ever before*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/08/world/germany-scholz-merkel?name=styln-germany-government&amp;region=TOP_BANNER&amp;block=storyline_menu_recirc&amp;action=click&amp;pgtype=LegacyCollection&amp;variant=0_Control&amp;is_new=false#germany-olaf-scholz-cabinet-women). Half, to be exact.

Countries join diplomatic boycott of Olympics

Britain, Australia and Canada were among the latest countries to join the U.S. in [*pulling their top officials from the 2022 Beijing Olympics*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/uk-china-olympics-diplomatic-boycott.html). Their athletes will still be allowed to compete.

The move allows the countries to register their disapproval of China over its human rights abuses. The nations hope to send a message to China about the internment of Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang and other issues of concern.

Iain Duncan Smith, a member of Prime Minister Boris Johnson’s Conservative Party, said Johnson’s move was “not at all strong enough.”

China’s response: The word “boycott” appeared to have been banned in online searches. A spokesman for the Chinese embassy said, “The Beijing Winter Olympics is a gathering of Olympic athletes and winter sports lovers across the world, not a tool of political manipulation for any country.”

Analysis: Our columnist writes that the [*diplomatic boycotts are a start*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/sports/olympics/diplomatic-boycott-2022-winter-olympics.html), but they do not go far enough. Corporations sponsoring the events should also act, he writes.

Olympics viewing guide: Speedskating, curling and [*monobob*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/monobob-winter-olympics.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-beijing-winter-olympics&amp;variant=show&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&amp;block=storyline_top_links_recirc): [*Here’s a look at every sport*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/winter-olympics-sports.html?action=click&amp;pgtype=Article&amp;state=default&amp;module=styln-beijing-winter-olympics&amp;variant=show&amp;region=MAIN_CONTENT_1&amp;block=storyline_top_links_recirc) that will be contested at the 2022 Winter Games.

THE LATEST NEWS

* Gen. Bipin Rawat, India’s highest-ranking military official, [*died in a helicopter crash*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/asia/helicopter-crash-india-top-general.html) along with his wife and 11 others. He had led efforts to modernize India’s armed forces.

1. The death toll from a volcanic eruption in Indonesia rose to 34. [*Rescuers are searching for survivors buried under ash*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/world/asia/indonesia-volcano-eruption.html?campaign_id=51&amp;emc=edit_mbe_20211208&amp;instance_id=47233&amp;nl=morning-briefing%3A-europe-edition&amp;regi_id=85409517&amp;segment_id=76359&amp;te=1&amp;user_id=830c70cfae7761a29eee4dd9c5919d12).
2. Twenty minutes was all it took for China’s censors to mobilize after Peng Shuai, the tennis star, accused a former vice premier of sexual assault. [*This is how they did it.*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/08/world/asia/peng-shuai-china-censorship.html)
3. Yusaku Maezawa, a Japanese billionaire, [*arrived at the International Space Station*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/science/yusaku-maezawa-space-station.html) for a 12-day stay.
4. Serena Williams [*bowed out of the Australian Open*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/sports/tennis/serena-williams-australian-open.html), saying, “I am not where I need to be physically to compete.”

* A former air traffic controller in Minsk [*has been telling Polish investigators*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/belarus-poland-ryanair-plane-dissident.html) what he knows about the diversion of the plane carrying a Belarus dissident in May.

1. French authorities released a Saudi man who shared the name and age of a suspect in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, [*saying it was a case of mistaken identity*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/world/europe/france-khashoggi-arrest-mistaken-identity.html).
2. The U.S. House of Representatives [*passed a $768 billion defense bill*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/us/politics/defense-budget-democrats-biden.html) — roughly $24 billion more than what President Biden had requested.
3. Instagram’s [*chief executive testified*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/technology/adam-mosseri-instagram-senate.html) at a U.S. congressional hearing about leaked research that showed the platform was harming young users.
4. Chile became the 31st country to [*legalize same-sex marriage*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/world/americas/chile-gay-marriage.html).
5. The global supply chain is in upheaval, with little end in sight. [*How did we get here*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/05/business/economy/supply-chain.html)

The idea that Yoko Ono doomed the Beatles has long been criticized. Amanda Hess, a critic at large for The Times, writes that in “The Beatles: Get Back,” a new eight-hour documentary, [*Ono’s presence is a sort of artistic performance in itself*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/arts/music/yoko-ono-beatles-get-back.html). “Ono simply never leaves,” Hess writes. “She refuses to decamp to the sidelines, but she also resists acting out stereotypes.”

Lives Lived: Hyun Sook Han was 12 when she fled her home during the Korean War. She dedicated her life to an adoption program for Korean orphans. Han [*died at 83*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/hyun-sook-han-dead.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

10 firsts of 2021

We rounded up 21 things that happened for the first time this year — some are surprising trends, others are serious events. Here’s an excerpt, [*or see the full list.*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/special-series/2021-year-in-review.html)

1. An African woman led the World Trade Organization.

2. A purely digital artwork sold at auction for millions.

3. A human brain was wirelessly connected to a computer via a transmitter device.

4. Mexico elected its first transgender lawmakers.

5. The world’s first 3-D-printed school opened in Malawi.

6. El Salvador became the first country to make Bitcoin a national currency.

7. NASA’s Perseverance rover made oxygen on Mars.

8. National Geographic cartographers recognized the Southern Ocean as the world’s fifth ocean.

9. SpaceX launched the first all-civilian crew into space.

10. Sales of zero-emission vehicles surpassed diesel sales in Europe.

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

Endlessly adaptable, this is one version of [*aloo anday*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1022789-aloo-anday-potatoes-and-scrambled-eggs), a Pakistani dish of spicy scrambled eggs and potatoes.

Five minutes that will [*make you love the organ*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/arts/music/classical-music-organ.html).

Here’s how to [*use your phone’s privacy protection tools*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/08/technology/personaltech/phone-privacy-protection-tools.html).

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Speaking platform (four letters).

And here is [*today’s Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

[*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

That’s it for today’s briefing. See you next time. — Melina

P.S. The Times is [*debuting an iPhone audio app*](https://www.axios.com/new-york-times-audio-app-a5f5ce12-cca4-4f2d-ae76-03515ae9ca94.html) for podcasts and more.

The latest episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about Ukraine.

You can reach Melina and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing+pm@nytimes.com?subject=Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: A nurse draws the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine into a syringe during a vaccination clinic in San Antonio, Texas, in September. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Matthew Busch for The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 8, 2021

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[***William P. Barr’s Memoir Is Part Lawyerly Defense, Part Culture-War Diatribe***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64WC-C6S1-JBG3-623G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 27, 2022 Sunday 22:26 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS

**Length:** 1660 words

**Byline:** Jennifer Szalai

**Highlight:** In “One Damn Thing After Another,” the former attorney general suggests that Republicans move past Donald Trump and his “madcap rhetoric,” but saves his harshest words for the former president’s critics.

**Body**

In “One Damn Thing After Another,” the former attorney general suggests that Republicans move past Donald Trump and his “madcap rhetoric,” but saves his harshest words for the former president’s critics.

ONE DAMN THING AFTER ANOTHER

Memoirs of an Attorney General

By William P. Barr

Illustrated. 595 pages. William Morrow/HarperCollins Publishers. $35.

“It was a lie,” the former attorney general William P. Barr writes early on in his new book — a “fabrication” that “was repeated and amplified in media coverage throughout the election and is still repeated.” Barr isn’t referring in this instance to Donald Trump’s [*insistent lie*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/02/09/us/trump-voter-fraud-election.html) about “massive election fraud” in 2020, but to an event that happened nearly 30 years earlier, when Barr was doing his first tour as the attorney general, for President George H.W. Bush. The media misleadingly described Bush marveling at a supermarket scanner as if he had never encountered the technology before.

The suggestion that the first President Bush was some elitist patrician who didn’t know his way around a modern grocery store continues to rankle Barr three decades later. He parses the event in minute detail in “One Damn Thing After Another,” letting loose an extravagant pique that makes sense when you realize that being seen as out of touch is the kiss of death for establishment conservatives, especially now, when right-wing populism is ascendant.

Barr takes care in this book to present his childhood as more hardscrabble than a rarefied prep school education and an apartment on New York City’s Riverside Drive would have anyone believe. In Barr’s telling, it’s Democrats who are invariably the “smug elites,” while Republicans are the true defenders of “ordinary middle- and ***working-class*** Americans.”

“One Damn Thing After Another” is an intemperate culture-war treatise smuggled into a lawyer’s memoir: a seemingly sober recitation of events that’s periodically interrupted by seething tirades about “militant secularism” and a “Maoist” American left. He compares Trump’s opponents to “guerrillas engaged in a war to cripple a duly elected government” and calls the pandemic restrictions adopted by some states the most “onerous denial of civil liberties” in American history, second only to slavery.

Barr famously [*resigned as attorney general*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/14/us/politics/william-barr-attorney-general.html) in December 2020, after he failed to find any evidence of substantial voter fraud, despite what he chronicles here as his assiduous efforts to “look into it.” (He calls allegations about voting machines “an idiotic theory that had no basis in reality.”) He ends his book by describing Trump’s postelection behavior as “puerile,” perhaps even “dangerous.” Still, as much as Barr was “disgusted” by the rampage on the Capitol, he’s “under no illusion about who is responsible for dividing the country, embittering our politics and weakening and demoralizing our nation,” he writes. “It is the progressive Left and their increasingly totalitarian ideals.”

Such eruptions go a long way toward explaining why he was willing to join the Trump administration in the first place, when the buttoned-up Barr, comfortably ensconced in retirement and the Republican old guard, didn’t quite fit the mold of those upstarts hoping to gain some capital (political or otherwise) by hitching themselves to the Trump train. (Barr had initially supported his former boss’s son, Jeb [*“please clap”*](https://www.nytimes.com/politics/first-draft/2015/11/11/in-iowa-jeb-bush-tries-to-capitalize-on-latest-debate-performance/) Bush, in the primaries.) You might also wonder how Trump, an ostentatious, thrice-married reality television star who bragged about grabbing women’s genitals, could have been anything but repellent to Barr, a staunch Roman Catholic whose idea of a good time is playing the bagpipes.

But the two men happened to share one thing in common: [*a maximalist view of presidential power*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/01/magazine/william-barr-attorney-general.html). “I agreed to join the besieged Trump administration as it careened toward a constitutional crisis,” Barr writes. He had already written an unsolicited memo voicing his skepticism about the Mueller investigation into the 2016 election, which Barr believed was consuming President Trump’s attention and distracting him from all the important work he would otherwise be eager to do.

Barr doesn’t make much of an effort in this book to counter assertions by his critics that even before reading the Mueller report he had mostly made up his mind. Barr says the investigation was “not so different from a witch hunt,” and the question of whether the Trump campaign sought to benefit from Russian interference in the election was “manufactured,” “phony,” “bogus”: “Russiagate specifically, and the resistance generally,” he writes, “were mendacious and fraudulent attempts to invalidate the legitimate election of an American President.”

A number of chapters are devoted to issues that Barr says are crucial to him, including “taking on big tech” and “securing religious liberty” (“the civil rights issue of our time”). A chapter titled “Bringing Justice to Violent Predators” offers Barr’s thoughts on the death penalty — he thinks it’s good, and his Justice Department [*rushed to execute 13 federal inmates*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/01/us/politics/executions-pause-merrick-garland.html) in the seven months before Trump left office. As a point of comparison, the federal government had executed a total of four people in the preceding 60 years.

Barr offers an extended apologia that tries to square his position on putting people to death with his religious faith. Pope Francis’s revision of the Catholic Church’s Catechism, denouncing the death penalty as “inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person,” sends Barr into a paroxysm of hairsplitting: “The term inadmissible has no established meaning in moral theology, and is certainly too vague and indirect to be read as an attempt to extinguish this vast body of established teaching, even assuming it could be.”

This is a pattern in Barr’s book: He nitpicks his way to desired conclusions by carefully navigating a lawyerly path around finely drawn distinctions, all the while lobbing bomblets at anyone he defines as an enemy. “For all his urbane affect, Obama was still the left-wing agitator who had patiently steered the Democratic Party toward an illiberal, identity-obsessed progressivism,” Barr writes; no doubt actual “left-wing agitators,” who have regularly denounced Obama for centrism, would like to have a word.

Barr’s version of Trump, meanwhile, contains multitudes: The former president may have “an imprecise and discursive speaking style,” even a tendency for “madcap rhetoric,” but Barr also believes Trump has “a deep intuitive appreciation of the importance of religion to the health of our nation.” Barr muses that “the country would have benefited and likely seen more of the constructive, problem-solving style of government that President Trump previewed on election night,” if only he “had been met by a modicum of good faith on the other side.”

By “good faith” Barr is perhaps imagining something like his own generous interpretations of Trump’s behavior, which he goes to great and often tortuous lengths to rationalize in his book. When Barr learned about the consequential phone call between Trump and Volodymyr Zelensky, who was then Ukraine’s President-elect, Barr said he argued for the swift release of the transcript — largely because it showed that Trump, according to Barr, had ultimately done nothing wrong on the call.

Yes, Barr allows, telling Zelensky that American military aid was conditional on a Ukrainian investigation of the Bidens was “foolish,” but “a quid pro quo is inherent in almost all diplomacy.” Besides, even if such an investigation into the president’s opponent would have yielded “political benefits” for Trump, it “would also arguably advance America’s anticorruption agenda,” Barr says. Making room for such intricate rhetorical contortions is partly why this book is nearly 600 pages long.

There are also numerous places where Barr offers what looks at first to be a blizzard of detail but nevertheless makes some strange omissions. He devotes page upon page to the question of voter fraud, which he repeatedly declares to be a real threat, with nary a word about [*voter suppression*](https://www.nytimes.com/article/voting-rights-tracker.html). He characterizes the inspector general’s report on the Mueller investigation as “damning” while neglecting to discuss that [*the same inspector general’s report*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/09/us/politics/barr-durham-ig-report-russia-investigation.html) declared that the F.B.I. had adequate reason to investigate ties between the Trump campaign and Russia. Barr also stays mum on the fact that a bipartisan report from the Republican-led Senate Intelligence Committee [*concluded the same thing*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/18/us/politics/senate-intelligence-russian-interference-report.html).

By the end of “One Damn Thing After Another,” it’s clear that Barr has something else in common with Trump — a shrewd ability to recognize when certain people are no longer useful for his purposes, and a willingness to dispense with them accordingly. Barr slips in a description of Robert Mueller’s “trembling” hands and “tremulous” voice, wondering if Mueller “might have an illness” — a striking (and expedient) bit of gossip for Barr to float about an old friend. The last chapter has Barr throwing Trump under the bus, albeit gently and with the utmost decorum. Barr laments Trump’s stubborn problems of “tone,” faulting him for “needlessly” alienating “a large group of white-collar suburbanites,” and declares that it’s time to move on from the loser of the 2020 election by recovering “something like the old Reagan coalition.”

But Barr faces a quandary, which is to explain how Republicans can ditch Trump while keeping his fervent base. The result is like the deus ex machina moment in an ancient Greek play, when a hopeless situation is resolved by the sudden appearance of a god on a crane. “The Republicans have an impressive array of younger candidates fully capable of driving forward with MAGA’s positive agenda and cultivating greater national unity,” a wistful Barr insists. “MAGA’s positive agenda” combined with “national unity”? Until I got to that point in his book, I wouldn’t have pegged Barr as someone so thirsty for a fairy-tale ending.

PHOTO (C8)

**Load-Date:** March 6, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Art That Finds Clarity in South Africa’s Fraught Terrain***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65B4-G381-DXY4-X4FT-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 28, 2022 Thursday 17:08 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; design

**Length:** 1759 words

**Byline:** Siddhartha Mitter

**Highlight:** Igshaan Adams and Bronwyn Katz use abstraction and humble materials to make sense of their country at the Venice Biennale.

**Body**

Igshaan Adams and Bronwyn Katz use abstraction and humble materials to make sense of their country at the Venice Biennale.

CHICAGO — On a recent afternoon, the artist [*Igshaan Adams*](https://blankprojects.com/Igshaan-Adams) instructed me to pull up Cape Town on Google Earth on my phone. We thumbed away from the waterfront and the verdant enclaves that hug the iconic Table Mountain, and over to the [*sprawling Cape Flats*](https://earth.google.com/web/search/cape+flats+cape+town/@-34.0216676,18.5889169,34.95028077a,857.71985561d,35y,0h,45t,0r/data=Cn8aVRJPCiUweDFkY2M0NWMwZGY1MTdjMzE6MHgzMGVlOWZiMTZjMzIyMTBmGQCxAAHGAkHAIcuPCULDljJAKhRjYXBlIGZsYXRzIGNhcGUgdG93bhgCIAEiJgokCcKU_FUo9kDAEYn9sKTI9kDAGbN0lJIScDJAIUk--Iv2bDJAKAI), all dusty brown.

This was where the apartheid regime forcibly relocated nonwhite people into commuter suburbs, designated by race. Adams, who is “Coloured” by that rubric — a holdover term that remains widely employed as a cultural designation for South Africa’s mixed-race communities — grew up in a place called Bonteheuwel.

We found his block, low houses cheek by jowl. Across the tracks lay Epping, a big industrial zone of factories and hangars. In between was open land. We zoomed in and saw them: the paths formed by people trekking between the two zones.

“I almost died there once,” Adams said. Urban planners call such tracks [*desire lines*](https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/oct/05/desire-paths-the-illicit-trails-that-defy-the-urban-planners) — a poetic technical term. But these ones got crossed by necessity. “I’ve been robbed there many times,” Adams said. “You knew going there that it was dangerous but you had to; you had to go and find a job or whatever you needed.”

We were at the Art Institute of Chicago, where Adams was installing his solo exhibition, “[*Desire Lines*](https://www.artic.edu/exhibitions/9626/igshaan-adams-desire-lines).” His work features exquisite tapestries woven with thousands of beads — glass, stone, shell, acrylic, wood. The works are at first view entirely abstract. Yet they are thick with references — to home, to community, to the land. Many, indeed, retrace his own footfall.

Adams, 39, is currently in the [*main exhibition*](https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/adams-igshaan) at this year’s Venice Biennale, with an immense woven piece, “Bonteheuwel/Epping,” with greenish and cream accents over pink dominant tones, in the Arsenale. Three broad diagonal streaks reproduce ones on the section of open land that he showed me. The tapestry is a stylized land-use document, a kind of map.

But the land is never neutral, especially in South Africa, where colonization, mining and apartheid produced extreme inequality — white people form nine percent of the population but still own 72 percent of arable land. So what you can do in the terrain hews close to what you can do in life.

“When I was growing up, there was a set ceiling for a Coloured person — you could become a manager at a shop, that was the height your aims could reach,” Adams told me. “Everyone had a clear path that was laid out for you. And so the desire line represents finding your own path.”

An Artistic Kinship

The sculptor [*Bronwyn Katz*](https://blankprojects.com/Bronwyn-Katz) also grew up in South African terrain where the land was heavily punctured: Kimberley, a mining hub, notably for diamonds. “There were all these holes in the landscape,” Katz told me. One, called the [*Big Hole*](https://thebighole.co.za/), was a 700-foot open mine in the city center, now a tourist attraction. Mine dumps strewn around town polluted water and gardens.

Like Adams — with whom she is good friends — Katz is Coloured: in her case Indigenous Khoe, which the racist bureaucrats filed into that broader category. Though “born free” after apartheid, as the South African saying goes, in 1993, she too grew up in a Coloured area, Greenpoint, where people had mining-related jobs; her father is a metalworker.

Katz is also in the [*Venice Biennale*](https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/bronwyn-katz), and at 28, one of the fastest-rising stars in South Africa’s art scene. She had a solo exhibition at the [*Palais de Tokyo*](https://palaisdetokyo.com/exposition/bronwyn-katz-a-silent-line-lives-here/) in Paris in 2018, just three years out of art school at the University of Cape Town; recently her work appeared in the [*New Museum Triennial*](https://www.newmuseum.org/exhibitions/view/2021-triennial-soft-water-hard-stone).

And, like Adams, she works with household and mass-market objects to make works that are formally abstract yet charged with memories and histories of people in South Africa simply trying to exist on the land.

Her work in Venice, “Gõegõe,” is made from bed-spring metal and pot scourers rendered into a bristling, geometric form. At the New Museum, she showed “Xãe,” a mini-forest of cylinders made of pot scourers and steel wool. “Gõegõe” is inspired by Khoe myth, Katz told me by video from her studio in Cape Town. There was a river snake with a diamond for an eye. One day it awoke to find that a man had stolen its eye, and it entered a blind destructive rage. “The story has many layers,” she said.

Using hydrochloric acid, she instigated a slow rusting that will result in the sculpture shedding flakes. “It takes me a while to figure out the intentions of the work,” she said. “What I know for sure is that this work speaks about extraction, our relationship with extraction, and the destruction that extraction causes.”

Adams and Katz are not the only South Africans in the Biennale. The international exhibition also includes the film and installation artist [*Simnikiwe Buhlungu*](https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/milk-dreams/simnikiwe-buhlungu), and separately the [*South Africa pavilion*](https://artthrob.co.za/2022/01/28/south-africa-at-the-59th-venice-biennale/) features Roger Ballen, Lebohang Kganye and Phumulani Ntuli. Even these form only a slice of the dynamic South African scene.

Still, Adams and Katz have affinities. “They have this energy, which is not of chaotic assemblage, but to turn something mundane into something beautiful,” said [*Cecilia Alemani*](https://www.labiennale.org/en/art/2022/statement-cecilia-alemani), the curator of the Venice Biennale.

Tandazani Dhlakama, a senior curator at the [*Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa*](https://zeitzmocaa.museum/) in Cape Town, told me that Adams and Katz joined a current of South African artists who buck expectations that art from the country should be figurative or explicitly political. “They are finding poetic ways to talk about personal narrative, history and land,” she said.

And [*Khanyisile Mbongwa*](https://www.biennial.com/news/khanyisile-mbongwa-announced-as-curator-for-liverpool-biennial-2023), who curated the [*2020 Stellenbosch Triennale*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/25/arts/design/stellenbosch-triennale.html), emphasized the intimacy in their work, the journey within. “These are deep conversations with their cultures, with childhood memories and dreaming,” she said.

Ancestral Knowledge

Near the end of art school, Katz asked her grandparents in Kimberley to write her letters.

“I was lucky that my grandparents really enjoyed telling stories,” she said. They wrote to her about ghosts and talking birds; details of the family lineage; and the tale of the gõegõe snake with the diamond eye that inspired her Venice work.

“There’s an overwhelming perception in South Africa that Khoe people are dead,” Katz said. Yet her own family proved that Indigenous culture persisted.

Not far from Kimberley were sites of [*rock carvings*](https://artsandculture.google.com/story/YwXhR9jLSd-bpw) dating back thousands of years, symbolic and patterned — early abstraction, Katz said, noting their inspiration.

Katz studies !Ora, the Khoe language most closely linked to her roots. (The exclamation mark denotes a type of [*click*](https://www.britannica.com/topic/click-languages).) It informs many of her titles, together with Afrikaans, the Coloured lingua franca. Her smaller sculptures — wall-hung wire curtains, glyph-like montages of bent steel and iron ore — represent efforts, she told me, while “archiving” !Ora, to simultaneously script some new “language that I don’t have a name for.”

Adams too has partial Indigenous ancestry, with Nama grandparents from the inland Karoo. Along with tapestries he makes suspended sculptures, tangled but graceful cloud-like forms made from wire, spray-painted in silver, pink or copper tones. In the Chicago show these hang very low, hovering over a huge tapestry on the floor.

Their inspiration is the [*rieldans*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bce-VIq6F60), an Indigenous folk dance in which participants kick up dust clouds. Adams read the dance as a metaphor: Sometimes you can’t see a path, he said. But you can tell it is being made when you see “dust particles rising up from the floor.”

Coming to Terms

Adams did not have an easy route. Family circumstances, he said, veered between ***working-class*** and outright poor. His parents were alcoholic. One grandfather was a police officer. The grandmother who raised him, though illiterate, worked at the Pollsmoor prison — during apartheid, Coloured people often found themselves both victims and enforcers.

His family included Muslims and Christians. Racial trauma was deeply internalized, he said. An older brother who could pass for white got better treatment. “There was no equality even in the family,” Adams said.

Also, he was gay. “I always felt in this in-between space,” he said. His early 20s, he said, were “very destructive” — drugs, alcohol, lack of direction. “I wanted to know what it feels like to have that internal peace that Islam speaks about. Is this actually possible?”

His path passed through a woman-led Sufi community, graphic design studies at a technical college, and eventually an art-school diploma. By then much had changed. For his graduation show he recreated his grandmother’s living room; she came and sat there, “watching her soapies” on TV beneath his embroidered self-portraits.

The Chicago show includes a hall tiled with linoleum squares he collected from homes in Bonteheuwel. Many families, even poor one, replace their linoleum every Christmas, he said. “That act I find quite hopeful. But a part of me also identifies with things being of no value, and making them valuable.”

[*Hendrik Folkerts*](https://www.artic.edu/authors/35/hendrik-folkerts-2), a former Art Institute curator who organized the show (he is now at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm), said that Adams’s art has grown outward, coming to terms with the home first and gradually the world. “He has gone from a very interior space to the actual land,” Folkerts said.

Their land is fraught but to them it is compelling. Although Cape Town is known to Black South Africans for its unbothered white privilege, in comparison to Johannesburg, Katz, who has tried both cities, said she found it necessary to stay there. “It’s important to take up space in Cape Town,” she said.

As for Adams, though his desire lines have taken him far, he has never truly left his Bonteheuwel community, where for every social ill there was also some offsetting mechanism of solidarity. Now it’s his turn. His atelier employs friends, neighbors, aunties. His studio manager, Morné Roux, is a childhood pal who got his first passport for the trip to Chicago.

At the atelier, they call Adams “Pa,” or father. He can’t stand it; they won’t stop. “It’s a beautiful community,” he said. If his output is prolific, it’s also because he’s looking after his people. “It’s a massive responsibility,” he said, no complaint in his tone. “I can’t drop the ball.”

PHOTOS: Igshaan Adams, above left, with “Epping II,” and Bronwyn Katz, above right, in her studio. Katz’s “Gõegõe,” below, is inspired by an Indigenous tale. Adams’s “Desire Lines,” bottom, includes cloudlike forms and a hall tiled with linoleum squares. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE AGYEI FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; SAMANTHA REINDERS FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; GUS POWELL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO)

**Load-Date:** May 3, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Your Tuesday Briefing***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:647T-G1R1-JBG3-6503-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

December 7, 2021 Tuesday 00:55 EST

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**Section:** BRIEFING

**Length:** 1364 words

**Byline:** Natasha Frost

**Highlight:** Early reports on Omicron.

**Body**

Early reports on Omicron.

Early reports suggest Omicron may be less severe

The Omicron variant spreads quickly, but the resulting infection may be less severe than other forms of the coronavirus. Researchers in South Africa said that their Covid-19 wards were [*almost unrecognizable from previous phases of the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/world/africa/omicron-coronavirus-research.html), with few patients on oxygen machines.

A report from doctors at a major hospital complex in Pretoria, South Africa’s administrative capital, said that coronavirus patients with the variant were less sick than those they had treated before. Most of their infected patients were admitted for other reasons and had no Covid symptoms. The findings are preliminary, however, and have not been peer-reviewed.

Scientists cautioned against placing too much stock in either the potential good news of less severity, or bad news like early evidence that previous infection offers little immunity to Omicron. The variant was discovered just last month, and hospitalizations and deaths often lag outbreaks considerably. Still, Covid deaths have not yet risen in South Africa despite surging case numbers.

By the numbers: Of the 166 patients with the coronavirus admitted from Nov. 14 to Nov. 29 to the hospital complex, the average stay was 2.8 days, and fewer than 7 percent died. Over the previous 18 months, the average stay for such patients was 8.5 days, and 17 percent died.

Here are [*the latest updates*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/06/world/omicron-variant-covid) and [*maps of the pandemic*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/world/covid-cases.html).

In other developments:

* New York City announced a sweeping coronavirus vaccine mandate [*for all private employers*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/nyregion/nyc-vaccine-mandate-deblasio.html).

1. France is [*closing its nightclubs for four weeks*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/06/world/omicron-variant-covid/france-closes-nightclubs-for-four-weeks-but-rejects-adding-other-major-restrictions) and tightening some virus rules in primary schools, mostly around masks.
2. The Chinese government aims to vaccinate 160 million children [*by the end of the year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/business/china-covid-vaccine-children.html).

* Disruptions to the highly intricate global supply chain continue. [*Here’s how the crisis has unfolded*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/12/05/business/economy/supply-chain.html).

Can Olaf Scholz revive Europe’s center-left?

Olaf Scholz will be sworn in tomorrow as [*Germany’s ninth postwar chancellor*](http://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/world/europe/germany-olaf-scholz-chancellor.html), the first Social Democrat in 16 years to hold the position. He will lead a three-party coalition government with the progressive Greens and the libertarian Free Democrats.

Defying polls and pundits, Scholz led his 158-year-old party from the precipice of irrelevance to an unlikely victory. Now, he wants to show that the center-left can again become a political force in Europe and to further repair the bridge between the Social Democrats and the ***working class*** in Germany. Just over 800,000 voters who had abandoned the party for the far left and far right returned in the last election.

Across the E.U., Social Democrats govern in nine of the 27 member states, and lessons from Germany are already proving influential. In France, the Socialist mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, who recently announced her own long-shot presidential bid, has evoked the “respect” theme that became the centerpiece of the Scholz campaign.

Background: Once a fiery young socialist who joined his party as a teenager, Scholz has gradually mellowed into a post-ideological centrist. Today he is considered to be to the right of much of the party’s base, not unlike President Biden, with whom he is sometimes compared.

Cabinet: The [*incoming German cabinet*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/world/europe/germany-olaf-scholz-cabinet-women.html) will, for the first time, have gender parity, with eight women and eight men.

A high-stakes Biden-Putin video call

President Biden will attend a video meeting today with Russia’s leader, Vladimir Putin, in what is most likely the U.S. president’s highest-stakes leader-to-leader conversation since his term began. The conversation [*may set the course for Ukraine’s fate as a fully independent nation*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/biden-putin-call-ukraine.html).

Biden will tell the Russian president that if he orders his forces to invade Ukraine, Western allies may move to cut off Russia from the international financial system, administration officials said.

In recent weeks, Ukrainians have warned that Russia is [*erecting the architecture for significant military action*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/world/europe/ukraine-russia-war-front.html), even a full-fledged invasion. U.S. intelligence officials have assessed that Moscow has drawn up plans for an offensive involving an estimated 175,000 troops to begin as early as next year.

Battle plan: If a full-on attack occurs, Ukrainian forces are as ready to face it as they’ve ever been, a Ukrainian commander said. But without significant assistance from Western countries, specifically the U.S., they will not be able to hold off the Russian military.

THE LATEST NEWS

Around the World

* Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Myanmar’s former civilian leader who was detained by the country’s military in a Feb. 1 coup, was convicted and sentenced on charges of [*inciting public unrest and breaching Covid-19 protocols*](https://www.nytimes.com/live/2021/12/05/world/myanmar-coup-verdict-aung-san-suu-kyi). She faces nine other charges.

1. The Biden administration said it would not send an American delegation to the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, making official a long-rumored diplomatic boycott in an effort [*to pressure China for human rights abuses*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/olympics-beijing-boycott.html).
2. Three more hostages from a group of 17 missionaries kidnapped in Haiti in October [*have been released*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/world/americas/hostages-haiti.html).

News From Europe

* Karl Nehammer, Austria’s former interior minister, has become [*the country’s third chancellor in a year*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/world/europe/austria-chancellor-nehammer-kurz.html) after the resignation of Sebastian Kurz amid an investigation into corruption and influence-peddling.
* At least some of the ransom money paid by American companies to online extortionists [*passed through a prestigious business address in Moscow*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/world/europe/ransomware-russia-bitcoin.html), investigators found.

1. Pope Francis may meet for a second time with the head of the Russian Orthodox Church. He said that he would be [*willing to travel to Moscow for the encounter*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/world/europe/pope-russian-orthodox-church.html).

What Else is Happening

* The automaker Tesla [*may have undermined safety*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/technology/tesla-autopilot-elon-musk.html) in designing its driver-assistance system to fit the vision of its chief executive, Elon Musk, former employees say.

1. The Justice Department sued Texas, arguing that its redistricting maps [*hurt voters of color*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/us/politics/texas-voting-rights-redistricting.html).

A Morning Read

The Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard can seem both ethereal and eternal to visitors. But climate change all but guarantees [*an eventual collapse of its vulnerable ecosystem*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/travel/svalbard-climate-change-tourism.html).

ARTS AND IDEAS

The best movies of 2021

The Times’s chief film critics, A.O. Scott and Manohla Dargis, put together their lists of the best movies of the past 12 months — films that, in the words of Scott, “reward your attention, engage your feelings and respect your intelligence.” Here’s a selection from their picks.

“Summer of Soul,” a music documentary by Questlove, features performance footage from a series of open-air concerts in Harlem in 1969 along with interviews with musicians and audience members. It’s “a shot of pure joy,” Scott writes.

Dargis recommends watching “The Power of the Dog,” Jane Campion’s long-awaited feature, especially on the big screen. “Like all the movies I love, ‘The Power of the Dog’ got under my skin,” she writes. “I watched it, fell into it, felt it. And like all the movies I care most about, it is far more than the sum of its finely shaped story parts.”

With “West Side Story,” Steven Spielberg and Tony Kushner — and an energetic young cast of Jets and Sharks — pulled off a surprising cinematic coup. “Respecting the artistry and good intentions of the original stage musical, they turned it into something urgent, modern and exciting,” Scott writes.

Read more about [*the year’s best movies*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/movies/best-movies.html).

PLAY, WATCH, EAT

What to Cook

Dinner tonight could be [*pasta and cannellini beans with a sauce of beurre blanc*](https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1020546-cannellini-bean-pasta-with-beurre-blanc). It’s easy and luxurious and comes together fast.

What to Watch

“Licorice Pizza,” Alana Haim’s film debut, establishes the musician as [*a revelatory and magnetic screen presence*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/06/movies/alana-haim-licorice-pizza.html).

What to Listen to

Five minutes that will [*make you love the pipe organ*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/03/arts/music/classical-music-organ.html).

Now Time to Play

Here’s [*today’s Mini Crossword*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords/game/mini), and a clue: Collect what you sow (four letters).

And here is [*the Spelling Bee*](https://www.nytimes.com/puzzles/spelling-bee).

[*You can find all our puzzles here*](https://www.nytimes.com/crosswords).

That’s it for today’s briefing. Thanks for joining me. — Natasha

P.S. [*Ellen Barry*](https://www.nytco.com/press/ellen-barry-moving-to-science-desk/), a Pulitzer Prize-winning Times correspondent, is joining the Science desk to report on mental health.

The latest episode of “[*The Daily*](https://www.nytimes.com/thedaily)” is about Jeffrey Epstein’s associate Ghislaine Maxwell.

You can reach Natasha and the team at [*briefing@nytimes.com*](mailto:briefing@nytimes.com?subject=Europe%20Briefing%20Feedback).

PHOTO: A vaccination site last week in Johannesburg, South Africa. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Joao Silva/The New York Times FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** December 7, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Ode to the Last Cherry Tree***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65H7-NXS1-DXY4-X0S7-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 22, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section ST; Column 0; Style Desk; Pg. 1

**Length:** 1837 words

**Byline:** By Alex Vadukul

**Body**

Now guarding trees in Lower Manhattan, the poet and author of ''Chelsea Girls'' says: ''Things that might have once been corny to me don't feel corny anymore.''

On a rainy spring morning, an old cherry tree was beginning to blossom in a little park along Cherry Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Several protesters surrounded the tree to protect it from the New York City workers who were about to cut it down. Police officers moved in, arrested the activists, and the sound of a chain saw filled the air. The tree went down.

''There it goes, the last cherry tree on Cherry Street,'' said the 72-year-old poet Eileen Myles, who stood in the drizzle bearing witness to the scene. ''There's been cherry trees here for hundreds of years. But not anymore.''

For more than a year, Myles, the author of more than 20 books of poetry, fiction and essays, including the cult-hit novel ''Chelsea Girls,'' has been an ardent crusader in the fight between a group of Lower East Side residents and the city's powers that be. At issue is the contentious demolition of East River Park, the 50-odd acre urban waterfront green space that runs alongside the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, and the cherry tree was chopped down to accommodate the city's plans.

Myles, who uses the pronoun ''they'' and was wearing tinted spectacles, lightly ripped jeans and a brown trucker's cap, took a picture of the arboreal carnage with their cellphone and posted it on Instagram, where they have more than 30,000 followers.

''The trees have been talking to each other,'' they said. ''They've been talking through their roots. This tree knew this was coming.''

The city started tearing down East River Park last year as part of the East Side Coastal Resiliency Project, a plan that aims to improve the area's flood protection capabilities. Once the current park is demolished, the city plans to raise it eight to 10 feet by covering it with landfill, in effect building it anew.

The activists don't dispute the need for some kind of climate-driven action, but they oppose the city's strategy of razing a park beloved to generations of Lower East Siders who appreciate its scruffy athletic fields, rusty barbecue pits and concrete chess tables.

Huddled beside Myles in the rain was Sarah Wellington, an artist in her 30s who wore a Democracy Now! tote bag and took video of the workers with her phone. ''We believe these cherry trees were between 80 and 100 years old,'' she said. ''This is Indigenous land that was stolen back in 1643 and now it's happening all over again.''

''I didn't know so much about Eileen Myles until recently,'' she added, ''but I know Eileen is a bolt of lightning. You should see Eileen run.''

The prior morning, Myles was arrested after they had dashed across the same site in an attempt to defend a tree from getting chopped down. They ended up spending much of the day at the nearby Seventh Precinct. ''You need the time to get arrested and I had little to do yesterday,'' they said. ''But it felt good to get arrested. This is civil disobedience.''

These days, Myles enjoys the status of esteemed downtown New York cultural figure. Their career has included a poetry collection published on a mimeograph machine in the 1970s and a memoir funded by a Guggenheim Fellowship in recent years, and they are now often stopped on the street by young and deferential writers who wish to express appreciation for the work Myles produced in a grittier city that lives on only in myth. Protecting that vanishing New York is part of the reason Myles has become one of the park's guardians.

A resident of the same rent-stabilized East Village apartment since the 1970s, Myles toiled on the margins for decades before experiencing a mainstream revival upon the 2015 reissue of their 1994 autobiographical novel, ''Chelsea Girls.'' It won new admirers, suddenly appearing tucked inside tote bags at bookish Brooklyn coffee shops, and a character based on the author appeared on the show ''Transparent.''

But throughout the years of obscurity and literary fame, East River Park was the writer's dependable urban oasis. Myles scribbled poems while smoking cigarettes and sitting on its benches. They stretched their legs on the same tree for 40 years before going on runs. And during the bleakest chapters of the pandemic they found solace by watching the river.

So when the city engaged its plan, Myles sprang into action. They've used their appearances at literary events to broadcast the message and they wrote an impassioned essay defending the park for Artforum. They have organized a march that brought out New Yorkers like Chloë Sevigny and Ryan McGinley, and they helped found an activist group, ''1000 people 1000 trees.'' And although the demolition is well underway, they have protested persistently at the site, snapping pictures of chain-saw-wielding workers to post on Instagram with captions like ''Tree killer.''

Thunk.

Thomp.

After the last of the cherry tree was thrown into a chipper, workers began mowing down a London plane, and its hacked limbs were now cascading to the ground. One activist let loose a harrowing shriek. Myles locked arms with three protesters and started chanting to the tree.

''Things that might have once been corny to me don't feel corny anymore,'' Myles said as they began peddling their bike back to the East Village. ''Ever since this all started for me over a year ago it has become my heart. My girlfriend at the time told me, 'I feel I've lost you to the park.'''

The demolition of East River Park, which Robert Moses built in the 1930s, dates back to the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in 2012, when Lower Manhattan was devastated by flooding.

The F.D.R. Drive became part of the East River, and there was an explosion at the Con Ed plant on 14th Street that created a blackout. Older residents of the public housing projects that surround the park, including Baruch Houses and the Jacob Riis Houses, were trapped in their buildings for days because of the deluge. Implementing flood protection into Lower Manhattan became a priority, and the city's attention turned to East River Park.

Initially, there was a plan that the activists wholeheartedly supported. It proposed that a giant berm be built along the site's western side, relying on East River Park as a natural sponge, without the need of radically altering the park itself. In 2018, however, when the de Blasio administration was expected to finalize the project, the city declared that plan infeasible and moved forward with its current strategy. Many community members were outraged. An opposition group, East River Park Action, sued the city last year but has been largely unsuccessful in court.

''We're certainly familiar with Eileen Myles and have seen what they think of and have written about the park,'' said Ian Michaels, a spokesman for the city's Department of Design and Construction. ''The protesters have their right to protest. The timeline was affected by some lawsuits but the project is continuing.''

Some of the phone-wielding activists have had to contend with accusations that they are practicing the brand of civic selfishness that goes by the term Nimby-ism. ''Some have said we're just white lefty tree-huggers,'' Myles said. ''How is it that after 44 years here, though, I'm still just an interloper?''

On the recent spring morning, as city workers chopped down the Cherry Street trees, a longtime resident of a nearby housing complex, Elizabeth Ruiz, 55, was walking her Shih Tzu past the protesters. Known in the neighborhood as DJ Dat Gurl Curly, Ms. Ruiz performed house and disco sets at the park's amphitheater for years until the band shell was bulldozed last December.

''At the end of the day, I'm not so mad at gentrification and change,'' she said. ''But I don't get why they have to destroy the trees and everything else in the park. If you knock down a tree here, then you knock me down, too.''

After the bike ride back to the East Village, Myles sat down to breakfast at Veselka and began reminiscing about coming to New York at age 24 in the 1970s with aspirations of becoming a poet -- a time when the very notion of the city pumping money into a ramshackle downtown park would have been farcical.

Myles, who grew up in a ***working-class*** Roman Catholic household near Boston, found the scene they were searching for in the old East Village church that houses the Poetry Project. There they befriended greats like Alice Notley, Ted Berrigan and Allen Ginsberg, and writers smoked cigarettes in the back rooms while they talked craft. To make the rent, Myles waited tables at the Tin Palace, a jazz and poetry club on the Bowery, and worked as a librarian, a bouncer, a bike messenger and a clerk at Bleecker Bob's, the Greenwich Village record store. Driving around town in a pink truck while working for a radical lesbian newspaper distribution company, they also delivered stacks of gay male pornography magazines and music publications.

''When I finally got here I was like, 'Wait, you mean this city is actually real?''' Myles said. ''Bob Dylan was here. Andy Warhol was here. Everyone who drove a cab was writing a novel. Every waitress was a dancer. It was astonishing to me that people in New York were actually who they said they were.''

In the 1980s, as the AIDS crisis ravaged downtown New York, Myles watched as close friends died. Spurred to embrace sobriety, Myles formed a bond with the park: jogging past litter and needles along the East River at dusk, they blasted Maria Callas singing ''Aida'' on a Walkman to honor an opera-loving friend who had died of the disease.

''I stopped drinking and drugging, and that's when I began running in the park,'' Myles said. ''It became my ritual and has remained so for years. It became my tool for sanity. The park became the best writing studio I've ever been in.''

As Myles sees it, the park is also a downtown time capsule, a green urban ruin that preserves a city that has all but perished.

''There was time to make lots of mistakes back then,'' Myles said. ''There was time to waste, and that's the thing everybody deserves. And the park is wasted space. Uncontrolled vernacular space. So the city said, 'This can't be.'''

After Myles left Veselka, they got ready to speak at the Strand bookstore that evening with the novelist Colm Tóibín. During the event, they mentioned their fight for the park. The next day, they were off to Marfa, Texas, where they had bought a home some years ago. They would be joining their rescue pit bull, Honey, and finishing an assignment for The New Yorker; in the story, they intended to sneak in a reference to the park.

In fact, the park now seeps into Myles's work constantly, especially the poetry. A recent poem, ''120 Years and What Did You See,'' ends like this:

I look up, you're shaking

meeting, you're bigger you're wiser you're stronger

than me, and always will be. Each of us walking

around and blessing

you today

And you

will always

be TREE

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/18/style/eileen-myles-watches-over-an-ever-changing-new-york.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/18/style/eileen-myles-watches-over-an-ever-changing-new-york.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Eileen Myles hugged a favorite tree in East River Park, which is being demolished. (ST1)

Eileen Myles, third from right, and others don't dispute the need for climate-driven action but they oppose the city's altered plans. (ST2)

Eileen Myles, the author of ''Chelsea Girls'' and more than 20 other books, called East River Park ''the best writing studio I've ever been in.'' (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA MESSINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST3)

**Load-Date:** May 22, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Adams Backs Development On Banks of Gowanus Canal***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63C9-0101-JBG3-61F4-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 14, 2021 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 1053 words

**Byline:** By Sadef Ali Kully and Sarah Maslin Nir

**Body**

Eric Adams said he would support one of the signature development plans of Mayor Bill de Blasio, as long as spending to repair public housing is included.

A long-delayed development project that would transform the banks of Brooklyn's notoriously filthy Gowanus Canal into the home of thousands of new apartments and scores of shops appears poised to move forward under a new mayor -- as long as nearby public housing developments also receive hundreds of millions of dollars for repairs.

At a news conference on Friday, Eric Adams, the Brooklyn borough president and heavy favorite to succeed Mayor Bill de Blasio, conditionally gave the project his blessing. Mr. de Blasio has championed the project as an important step in helping to solve the city's housing crisis.

All told, the redevelopment would add 8,000 units of housing and shops, and remediate blighted areas. But critics of the plan, including a vocal neighborhood coalition, have raised environmental and economic concerns, and said it would push out poorer residents from an already relentlessly gentrifying pocket of Brooklyn.

Mr. Adams's show of support for the project added a sense of promise to an initiative to revamp the area that has stuttered for years. It has been stalled by concerns ranging from the industrial area's toxicity -- in 2010 the canal was designated a Superfund site, and some areas are polluted with coal tar -- to an emboldened push by progressive activists against the impact a flood of new, expensive apartments could have on the area's racial diversity.

By tying the Gowanus plan to support for New York City Housing Authority repairs in the area, Mr. Adams appeared to be acknowledging those complaints while seeking to preserve what was among Mr. de Blasio's most ambitious development goals.

''NYCHA needs to be part of the prosperity of the city and borough,'' Mr. Adams said at a news conference outside the Gowanus Houses on Friday. ''So as we look to re-envision the future of public housing, residents cannot be left behind.''

Mr. Adams said he would support the rezoning that is required to go forward with redevelopment if the city can fund $274 million to repair Gowanus Houses and Wyckoff Gardens, another public housing development nearby.

Brad Lander, a Democratic city councilman who represents parts of Brooklyn and has long championed the development, said on Friday that Mr. Adams's announced support of the project -- including the public housing funds -- was a significant boost for its future and for the neighborhood. Mr. Lander won the Democratic nomination to be the city's next comptroller in the June primary.

''We both support the concept of rezoning whiter, wealthier neighborhoods with a significant commitment to making sure that housing is genuinely affordable, and real opportunities are created for Black and brown and ***working class*** families,'' Mr. Lander said of Mr. Adams.

A review of the plan commissioned by the City Council and the Fifth Avenue Committee, a local housing nonprofit, found that the initiative could redistribute the racial balance of the Gowanus neighborhood -- currently one of the city's whitest -- to one more in line demographically with the rest of the city.

Mr. Adams and Mr. Lander are both heavy favorites to win their respective elections in November, but their appearance together on Friday bridged an ideological gulf in the city's Democratic Party. Mr. Lander, in his primary, ran significantly to the left of Mr. Adams, and was endorsed by progressive figures including Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who has criticized Mr. Adams.

The rezoning, which would span 82 blocks of the Gowanus neighborhood, a hodgepodge of vacant lots, artists' studios and eclectic businesses, will include new parks and a waterfront esplanade; of the new housing units, about 3,000 of them will be classified as affordable housing.

It is part of the de Blasio administration's ambitious affordable housing plan to create or preserve an estimated 300,000 affordable housing units by the year 2026. The Gowanus development, the city says, could end up bringing about 20,000 residents to the neighborhood.

But the proposed project has recently been hamstrung by some progressives, who are skeptical about initiatives that would significantly boost private interests: Sandwiched between the wealthy enclaves of Carroll Gardens and Park Slope, the area could be a cash cow for developers. They have been emboldened by the dissolution of other major development initiatives, like the commercial and office space expansion proposed for Industry City and Amazon's failed headquarters in Long Island City.

That resistance culminated in a lawsuit filed by opponents of the plan, including the resident group Voice of Gowanus, which argued that the virtual public hearings on the proposal necessitated by the pandemic were inaccessible. But a judge allowed the process to move forward, and in April, the public Uniform Land Use Review Procedure, or ULURP, resumed. The City Planning Commission will vote on it in September. It is likely to come before the City Council for a vote in October.

Jack Riccobono, a filmmaker and member of Voice of Gowanus, said that Mr. Adams's endorsement did not change his group's position. Remediation on the Superfund site just began last year, and the neighborhood group believes a more thorough environmental impact study of the plans is required, Mr. Riccobono said.

''This rezoning is premature,'' said Mr. Riccobono, 39. ''The city has created a faulty and incomplete and legally insufficient environmental review.''

But tethering the rezoning to funding for public housing, which a Brooklyn community board voted to do in June and which Mr. Adams pledged to do on Friday, could win over some residents. Of the $274 million being sought for repairs, $132 million are considered urgent, according to NYCHA.

Linda Jewel, a retired city employee who has lived in Gowanus Houses since 1959, said the capital repairs to her home were imperative. Gas outages are frequent, according to tenants, and the water sometimes shuts off for hours.

''The elevators are a nightmare,'' said Ms. Jewel, who uses a walker to get around. ''They break down all the time.''

Mihir Zaveri contributed reporting.Mihir Zaveri contributed reporting.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/13/nyregion/gowanus-redevelopment-eric-adams.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/13/nyregion/gowanus-redevelopment-eric-adams.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: A long-delayed development project on the banks of the filthy Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn would create thousands of apartments. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMIR HAMJA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** August 14, 2021

**End of Document**



[***Macron Shuts Elite College To Overhaul Public Service***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62D7-8VD1-JBG3-601P-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 9, 2021 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2021 The New York Times Company

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

**Length:** 816 words

**Byline:** By Roger Cohen

**Body**

The institution had become a symbol of privilege in a society where social mobility has broken down.

PARIS -- There are elite schools and then there is ENA, the small French graduate college that has turned out presidents and prime ministers with such cookie-cutter consistency that it is no exaggeration to say France has been run by its ''enarques.''

President Emmanuel Macron attended the Strasbourg-based finishing school for top civil servants. So did the two prime ministers he has appointed. So did his predecessor, François Hollande. So did Jacques Chirac. At a time of growing social fracture, no other institution has symbolized a clubby, mostly male French elitism as vividly as the Ecole Nationale d'Administration.

Now, it's gone. Mr. Macron announced on Thursday the closure of ENA, and its replacement by a new Institute of Public Service, or ISP, as part of what he called a ''deep revolution in recruitment for public service.''

The decision, one year ahead of a presidential election, is intended to signal Mr. Macron's determination to democratize opportunity and create a public service that is more transparent and efficient. Earlier this year, he deplored the fact that France's ''social elevator'' had broken down and worked ''less well than 50 years ago.''

A statement from the presidency said that the closure of ENA was part of the ''the most important reform of the senior public service'' since the creation of the school and other public institutions by Charles de Gaulle in 1945. At the time, a France destroyed by war and shamed by Vichy collaboration with the Nazis needed to rebuild its democratic state in its entirety.

How much the new institute will be ENA by another name remains to be seen.

The statement said that future graduates would have to be more mobile, going to work initially in regional jobs to gain on-the-ground experience before taking up positions of ''direction, control or judgment.'' Promotions would no longer be based on length of experience but on performance and demonstrated willingness to move around the country.

ENA has been widely criticized as a private club offering life membership to the initiated. Only 1 percent of the last graduating class of 80 had a ***working-class*** parent.

Future ''enarques'' came mainly from affluent, professional families; they passed into a gilded world of opportunity in both the private and public sectors. Mr. Macron is the wunderkind of this process, becoming president at the age of 39, after graduating from ENA 13 years earlier.

But the violent Yellow Vest protests that began in late 2018, an uprising of the marginalized, demonstrated how sharp French social tensions had become. Outside a hyper-connected metropolitan world, many French people felt ignored. Denied opportunity, they were somehow invisible.

Mr. Macron embarked on a national debate to fathom the causes of the revolt, and on April 25, 2019, announced for the first time that his alma mater would be eliminated. It was a powerful symbolic gesture, but it met opposition and two years went by without any follow-up. ENA, it seemed, would survive after all.

Earlier this year, during a visit to Nantes, the president announced a program called ''Talents'' designed to ensure that, when it comes to elite schools for senior public service positions, ''no kid from our republic ever says that this is not for me.''

Among the measures announced then was the designation of several spots a year at ENA for students from underprivileged backgrounds, particularly the dismal projects on the outskirts of big cities where many Muslim immigrants are concentrated. Thursday's statement made clear this program would continue at the new institute.

Mr. Macron has made the modernization of the French state a priority, pushing to eliminate excessive bureaucracy and create a more efficient, performance-based public service. It is a work in progress.

The president has been criticized for focusing his energy on attracting voters to the right of the political spectrum in a bid to head off a challenge from the rightist leader Marine Le Pen. In that context, honoring a decision initially taken in response to the Yellow Vest movement and intended to promote social mobility and greater diversity in senior state posts appeared important.

''Among the vital problems in France, there is one that you are aware of every day: It's the complete fracture between the base of society -- people who work, who are retired, who are unemployed, young people, students -- and the supposed elite,'' Francois Bayrou, a political ally of Macron, told France Inter radio.

It remains to be seen whether some deep reform takes place, so that officials at the summit of the state begin at last to look a little more like a diverse French society.

Constant Méheut contributed reporting from Paris.Constant Méheut contributed reporting from Paris.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/08/world/europe/france-macron-ena-closing.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/08/world/europe/france-macron-ena-closing.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron attended the Ecole Nationale d'Administration, as did predecessors François Hollande and Jacques Chirac. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Yoan Valat/EPA, via Shutterstock FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2021

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[***North Africa Feels Pain Of Ukraine War as Prices Soar for Wheat Imports***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64W3-D2P1-JBG3-60K0-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 26, 2022 Saturday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1551 words

**Byline:** By Vivian Yee and Aida Alami

**Body**

Egypt imports most of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine, and is looking for alternative suppliers. And Tunisia was struggling to pay for grain imports even before the conflict.

CAIRO -- On the way to the bakery, Mona Mohammed realized Russia's war on Ukraine might have something to do with her.

Ms. Mohammed, 43, said she rarely pays attention to the news, but as she walked through her ***working-class*** Cairo neighborhood of Sayyida Zeinab on Friday morning, she overheard a few people fretting about the fact that Egypt imports most of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine.

War meant less wheat; war meant more expensive wheat. War meant that Egyptians whose budgets were already crimped from months of rising prices might soon have to pay more for the round loaves of aish baladi, or country bread, that contribute more calories and protein to the Egyptian diet than anything else.

''How much more expensive can things get?'' Ms. Mohammed said as she waited to collect her government-subsidized loaves from the bakery

Russia's invasion of Ukraine this week threatens to further strain economies across the Middle East already burdened by the pandemic, drought and conflict. As usual, the poorest have had it the worst, reckoning with inflated food costs and scarcer jobs -- a state of affairs that recalled the lead-up to 2011, when soaring bread prices helped propel anti-government protesters into the streets in what came to be known as the Arab Spring.

In a region where bread keeps hundreds of millions of people from hunger, anxiety at the bakeries spells trouble.

In Egypt, the world's top importer of wheat, the government was moving in the wake of the Russian invasion to find alternative grain suppliers. In Morocco, where the worst drought in three decades was pushing up food prices, the Ukraine crisis was set to exacerbate the inflation that has caused protests to break out. Tunisia was already struggling to pay for grain shipments before the conflict broke out; the war seemed likely to complicate the cash-strapped government's efforts to avert a looming economic collapse.

Between April 2020 and December 2021, the price of wheat increased 80 percent, according to data from the International Monetary Fund. North Africa and the Middle East, the largest buyers of Russian and Ukrainian wheat, were experiencing their worst droughts in over 20 years, said Sara Menker, the chief executive of Gro Intelligence, an artificial intelligence platform that analyzes global climate and crops.

''This has the potential to upend global trade flows, further fuel inflation, and create even more geopolitical tensions around the world,'' she said.

After years of mismanaging their water supplies and agricultural industries, countries like Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco cannot afford to feed their own populations without importing food -- and heavily subsidizing it. In recent years, the number of undernourished people in the Arab world has increased because of the overreliance on food imports, as well as a scarcity of arable land and rapid population growth.

Beyond its effect on the price of bread, the uncertainty and turmoil brought on by the war will push up interest rates and lower access to credit, which, in turn, would quickly force governments to spend more to service their high debts and squeeze essential spending on health care, education, wages and public investments, said Ishac Diwan, an economist specializing in the Arab world at Paris Sciences et Lettres university.

He predicted a rise in economic pressure on Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco, warning that Egypt and Tunisia in particular could see peril to their banking sectors, which hold a large share of the public debt.

Egypt is also heavily dependent on tourism from Russia, which has helped its tourism industry recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, giving the country extra cause for alarm.

Global inflation and supply chain issues stemming from the pandemic have also raised the price of pasta in Egypt by a third over the last month. Cooking oil was up. Meat was up. Nearly everything was up.

But most important, bread, the cost of which had already risen by about 50 percent at non-subsidized bakeries over the last four months; a five-pound note (about 30 cents) now buys only about seven loaves of bread, down from 10, bakery employees said.

Egyptians, about a third of whom live on less than $1.50 a day, rely on bread for a third of their calories and 45 percent of their protein, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization, a United Nations agency.

Government officials said on Thursday that Egypt had enough grain reserves and domestically produced wheat to last the country until November. But because of rising import prices President Abdel Fatteh el-Sisi last year announced that Egypt would raise subsidized bread prices this year, risking public fury.

''Of course I'm worried,'' said Karim Khalaf, 23, who was collecting and stacking baladi loaves as they slipped out of the oven, steaming slightly, in a bakery in Sayyida Zeinab on Friday morning. ''My salary hasn't changed, but now I'm spending more than I'm making.''

Morocco, where the all-important agriculture sector employs about 45 percent of the work force, is facing an economic crisis precipitated by global inflation, a surge of food and oil prices, and the worst drought in three decades.

Anti-government protests that erupted on Sunday suggested that many Moroccans have lost patience with their six-month-old government as they struggle to make ends meet two years into a pandemic that annihilated the once-lucrative tourism industry.

''I hustled for a long time and I was patient, but I am left with nothing,'' said Mina Idrissi, 48, who attended a protest in the capital, Rabat, and who works several jobs, including as a housekeeper, in the nearby city of Sale. ''For two weeks, I couldn't even afford to buy cooking oil. Does this government not realize that we are suffering?''

In the weeks before the protests, a series of videos circulated on Moroccan social media that only served to heighten the sense of distress. One video showed people rioting over food prices in a market in the city of Kenitra near Rabat.

Morocco's was a foreseeable crisis, experts said. Located in a climate change hot spot, the country's rainfall has dwindled dramatically in recent years, and may decline by 20 to 30 percent by the end of the century, according to the World Resources Institute.

''It's a simple reality that has been ignored for decades,'' said Najib Akesbi, an economist in Rabat.

The government has reacted with Band-Aids.

Last week, the royal court announced a $1 billion plan to alleviate the impacts of the drought on farmers by providing financial aid, water management and livestock food supply.

But analysts said such measures would not compensate for decades of misguided economic management that prioritized water-intensive industries and produced food for export while leaving the rest of the country dependent on imported wheat -- some of it from Russia and Ukraine -- and other food.

No Middle Eastern nation wants to become like Lebanon, which has seen its currency and economy undergo catastrophic collapse since late 2019. Lebanon imports more than half of its wheat from Ukraine, and is already talking to other countries like India and the United States about wheat purchases, the country's economy minister, Amin Salam, told Reuters on Friday.

Recent turmoil in the country has already jacked up the price of bread. To help mitigate the effects of the economic implosion, the government has reduced subsidies on a range of goods, including bread, some types of which now cost five to nine times more than they did in summer 2019, according to government statistics.

Some analysts have warned that growing economic pressures could leave Arab governments vulnerable to the kind of social unrest that roiled the region during the Arab Spring.

In Tunisia, where food prices have climbed as public finances wobble, President Kais Saied is struggling to maintain his popularity after seizing power last summer with promises to fix Tunisia's economy. The government is desperate for an International Monetary Fund bailout, but such a deal would likely force it to take unpopular measures like cutting public wages and subsidies.

Egyptians ground down by the economy attempted to rebuke Mr. el-Sisi in a series of anti-government demonstrations in September 2019, only to be met with a swift crackdown. Still, years of government repression have persuaded many to make their peace with how things are, however hard.

''We'll have to resort to welfare, which is basically begging,'' said Osama Ezzat, 60, a day laborer who was pushing cardboard boxes in a hand cart past the Sayyida Zeinab bakery on Friday. ''It's tough, but when you compare us to countries around us, at least we're stable.''

Vivian Yee reported from Cairo and Aida Alami from Rabat, Morocco. Nada Rashwan contributed reporting from Cairo, Ben Hubbard and Hwaida Saad from Beirut, Lebanon and Ana Swansonfrom Washington.Vivian Yee reported from Cairo and Aida Alami from Rabat, Morocco. Nada Rashwan contributed reporting from Cairo, Ben Hubbard and Hwaida Saad from Beirut, Lebanon and Ana Swansonfrom Washington.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/world/middleeast/in-north-africa-ukraine-war-strains-economies-weakened-by-pandemic.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/25/world/middleeast/in-north-africa-ukraine-war-strains-economies-weakened-by-pandemic.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: Baking bread in Saqqara, near Giza, Egypt. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Shokry Hussien/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Why Officials on the Texas Border Are Joining the G.O.P.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VW-FK21-DXY4-X18V-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 25, 2022 Friday

Late Edition - Final

Copyright 2022 The New York Times Company

**Section:** Section A; Column 0; National Desk; Pg. 13

**Length:** 1463 words

**Byline:** By J. David Goodman

**Body**

SANDERSON, Texas -- In a remote corner of West Texas along the Rio Grande, where cactuses far outnumber residents and the closest grocer is an hour's drive, a quiet political upheaval has been taking place.

First, the Democratic county judge said she would seek another term -- as a Republican. Then the county clerk and the treasurer decided that they too would abandon the Democratic Party, which has long held sway in local elections, and run this year as Republicans.

A county justice of the peace felt the urge to switch parties as well, but she did not want to disappoint her parents, who raised her as a Democrat.

''It took me a while to realize that my thoughts are more Republican,'' said the justice of the peace, Corina Arredondo, particularly on the issues of abortion and border security. ''Even though I'm still on this side, I'm kind of looking over there and thinking, hey, that's where I belong.''

The transformation of local politics in Terrell County -- a ***working-class*** border community of fewer than 1,000 people -- provides an ominous signal for Texas Democrats: Conservative Hispanics are not only realigning in presidential elections, but also in contests much closer to home.

''Being of a Hispanic background, we were always told, you're a Democrat,'' said the county treasurer, Rebecca Luevano, 44, who was raised in Sanderson, where most county residents live. ''Everybody was a Democrat the last time I ran.''

Split political allegiances had held in the small town for much longer than in other parts of the country. Even as residents voted overwhelmingly for President Donald J. Trump in both 2016 and 2020, continuing their support for every Republican presidential candidate since George W. Bush, its top local officials remained with the Democratic Party.

The party was deeply connected to the upbringing of many residents, raised in a grid of modest homes in a canyon valley about 20 rough miles from the Mexican border. Many worked at the railroad depot that fueled the town's growth, or had relatives who did, before it closed more than two decades ago.

''My mother's dad worked for the railroad and he always said that the Democratic Party is for the working man,'' said Les Chandler II, the chair of the county party. ''That's why I've been a Democrat my whole life.''

But the shift is evident all around Sanderson, from the Trump signs on some buildings to the reticence with which the remaining Democrats talk about their beliefs. Beto O'Rourke, the former El Paso congressman and Democratic candidate for governor, passed through last month -- spending the night at a local motel -- but he did not linger.

Sanderson survived a devastating flash flood in 1965, when a sudden wall of water crashed through the desert town, flattening buildings and killing 26 people. But after the closure of the railroad depot, the town withered.

Many houses and storefronts still sit vacant and derelict. Residents either travel long distances for work, some in the Permian Basin oil fields about 150 miles away, or take part in the town's limited economy of government jobs: the school, the county government and the growing apparatus of border security.

''We aren't a main stop like we used to be,'' said the county judge, Dale Lynn Carruthers, 53, a rancher and former bank manager whose grandfather came from Mexico and whose father was sheriff. ''Now we're a hub -- a hub of homeland security.''

Politics in Sanderson have been shaped, in recent months, by the sharp increase in the number of people crossing the border from Mexico.

Not only are more people being caught as they move through the county, but Ms. Carruthers said that many more appear to be dying in the harsh terrain: 16 migrants were found dead last year. In recent years, the county averaged about two deaths.

One of the migrants, a young man from Mexico, was found deep inside Ms. Carruthers's own 17,000-acre ranch last spring. ''He was right over here,'' she said, pointing to an area by two cedar trees where a hunter found the man near a water trough, shoes off, backpack under his head like a pillow.

The county, with only a few dozen employees and a $2 million annual budget, was ill-prepared to handle the number of dead. Officials did not even have their own cadaver bags, and the $5,000 set aside for autopsies and burials quickly ran out.

Terrell County is now set to receive far more than that from the state, about $8 million, as part of Gov. Greg Abbott's push to increase law enforcement along the border.

Mr. Abbott has taken an interest in the county and its shifting political winds, featuring Ms. Carruthers at an event in McAllen last month to officially announce his run for a third term. The night before, she sat at Mr. Abbott's table during a private steak-and-salad dinner.

''The governor gave me the nickname Yellowstone,'' Ms. Carruthers recalled, referring to a popular television series. ''He said, my goodness, you're true grit, you remind me of my favorite show.'' Also at the dinner, seated with the governor's wife, were the Terrell County treasurer, Ms. Luevano, and the county clerk, Raeline Thompson.

Mr. Abbott's campaign has been aggressively targeting Hispanic voters in border counties and has pledged to spend $3 billion on state and local law enforcement to increase border security. State police and sheriffs in many border counties have been increasingly focused on tracking migrants.

''It's like I'm still on Border Patrol,'' said the Terrell County sheriff, Santiago Gonzalez, who worked as a Border Patrol agent for more than 30 years.

Migrants attempting to cross through the county often succumb to hypothermia on frigid nights, or dehydration on hot summer days. ''This is rough terrain and it's dangerous,'' said Sheriff Gonzalez, whose mother crossed illegally as a teenager. In addition to the weather, he said, there are ''mountain lions, black bear, scorpions, black widows -- not to mention the cactus that will stab you as you walk through.''

When Travis Roberts, 60, a former antiques importer from Dallas, arrived in town two decades ago, the town was so empty that he said he could buy a home for as little as $2,000. ''I bought 39 houses,'' he said, smoking a cigarette in a cluttered office space of the largest store in Sanderson, which sells hardware, Mexican pottery and, for the right price, a huge metal Tyrannosaurus rex. Over the years, he was able to resell all the homes.

''We came for the school,'' said Mr. Roberts, the store's owner, whose three sons went to Sanderson schools and then to Rice University.

Mr. Roberts, who grew up in nearby Marathon, complained about the effect that hardening the border had had on neighboring communities. ''It used to be you could put them to work,'' he said of men coming from Mexico. ''Now it's against the law to employ them, so we only get the bad, and none of the good.''

The town is also undergoing a different kind of change as the economy of West Texas tourist attractions -- Big Bend National Park, the art haven of Marfa -- widens its reach. The local motel has been renovated. Since December, there is even a place to get a cup of coffee besides the gas station.

''We love coffee, but we've never owned a coffee shop,'' said Jake Harper, 41, a contractor and glass blower who moved from San Antonio with his wife, Hannah, a Pilates instructor, and their three children. They started the coffee shop, Ferguson Motors, inside a former Ford dealership. ''There's this misconception that the border is dangerous. But this is the safest place to be. The community is open and giving.''

There are few voices of dissent. Mr. Chandler, a part-time pastor and among the few openly gay residents of Sanderson, said he had spoken up at local meetings, challenging officials over rhetoric about migrants that he found ''dehumanizing.'' But he has been mostly alone.

''The Democrats here are kind of closeted Democrats,'' said Mr. Chandler, 64, who became the party chair last year after answering an ad in the post office. The political shift in county government came as a surprise, but not a shock.

Still, when it came time to make a decision about switching parties last fall, Ms. Thompson, the county clerk, said she was apprehensive. So was Ms. Luevano, the treasurer. They went together -- ''kind of like sisters,'' Ms. Thompson said -- to make the change in a community building. Both Mr. Chandler and Sharon Wolfe, the Republican chair, were there.

''We waited until the last day, the last hour,'' Ms. Thompson said. ''We go in there and I turned to Miss Wolfe and said, 'I'm running Republican,' and she goes -- 'Oh!' They had no idea.''

Both women are unopposed in the March 1 primary. Neither will have a Democratic opponent in November.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/us/texas-border-security-immigration.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/24/us/texas-border-security-immigration.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: REBECCA LUEVANO, Terrell County treasurer, one of the officials who have switched parties

Jose Juarez, deputy sheriff of Terrell County, Texas, near an abandoned building where an immigrant was found dead last year. A sharp rise in people crossing from Mexico has reshaped county politics.

DALE LYNN CARRUTHERS, county judge

A renovated motel, left, and a restaurant, right, in Sanderson, the town where most of the county's residents live. At a Terrell County ranch, center, a man who crossed the border died last summer. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TAMIR KALIFA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 25, 2022

**End of Document**



[***In North Africa, Ukraine War Strains Economies Weakened by Pandemic***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VY-CNJ1-JBG3-64W6-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 25, 2022 Friday 20:41 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; middleeast

**Length:** 1555 words

**Byline:** Vivian Yee and Aida Alami

**Highlight:** Egypt imports most of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine, and is looking for alternative suppliers. And Tunisia was struggling to pay for grain imports even before the conflict.

**Body**

Egypt imports most of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine, and is looking for alternative suppliers. And Tunisia was struggling to pay for grain imports even before the conflict.

CAIRO — On the way to the bakery, Mona Mohammed realized Russia’s war on Ukraine might have something to do with her.

Ms. Mohammed, 43, said she rarely pays attention to the news, but as she walked through her ***working-class*** Cairo neighborhood of Sayyida Zeinab on Friday morning, she overheard a few people fretting about the fact that Egypt imports most of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine.

War meant less wheat; war meant more expensive wheat. War meant that Egyptians whose budgets were already crimped from months of rising prices might soon have to pay more for the round loaves of [*aish baladi*](https://www.madamasr.com/en/2021/12/22/feature/politics/bread-subsidies-the-history-of-a-red-line/), or country bread, that contribute more calories and protein to the Egyptian diet than anything else.

“How much more expensive can things get?” Ms. Mohammed said as she waited to collect her government-subsidized loaves from the bakery.

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine this week threatens to further strain economies across the Middle East already burdened by the pandemic, drought and conflict. As usual, the poorest have had it the worst, reckoning with [*inflated food costs*](https://www.mei.edu/publications/fragile-state-food-security-maghreb-implication-2021-cereal-grains-crisis-tunisia) and scarcer jobs — a state of affairs that recalled the lead-up to 2011, when soaring bread prices helped propel anti-government protesters into the streets in what came to be known as the Arab Spring.

In a region where bread keeps hundreds of millions of people from hunger, anxiety at the bakeries spells trouble.

In Egypt, the world’s [*top importer of wheat*](https://enterprise.press/hardhats/makes-nutrient-rich-food-hard-access-egypt/), the government was moving in the wake of the Russian invasion to find alternative grain suppliers. In Morocco, where the worst drought in three decades was pushing up food prices, the Ukraine crisis was set to exacerbate the inflation that has caused protests to break out. Tunisia was [*already struggling to pay for grain shipments*](https://www.thenationalnews.com/mena/tunisia/2022/02/22/tunisias-public-sector-salary-crisis-could-threaten-saieds-rule/) before the conflict broke out; the war seemed likely to complicate the cash-strapped government’s efforts to [*avert a looming economic collapse*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/03/world/middleeast/tunisia-economy-kais-saied.html).

Between April 2020 and December 2021, the price of wheat increased 80 percent, according to data from the International Monetary Fund. North Africa and the Middle East, the largest buyers of Russian and Ukrainian wheat, were experiencing their worst droughts in over 20 years, said Sara Menker, the chief executive of Gro Intelligence, an artificial intelligence platform that analyzes global climate and crops.

“This has the potential to upend global trade flows, further fuel inflation, and create even more geopolitical tensions around the world,” she said.

After years of mismanaging their water supplies and agricultural industries, countries like Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco cannot afford to feed their own populations without importing food — and heavily subsidizing it. In recent years, the number of undernourished people in the Arab world has increased because of the overreliance on food imports, as well as a scarcity of arable land and rapid population growth.

Beyond its effect on the price of bread, the uncertainty and turmoil brought on by the war will push up interest rates and lower access to credit, which, in turn, would quickly force governments to spend more to service their high debts and squeeze essential spending on health care, education, wages and public investments, said Ishac Diwan, an economist specializing in the Arab world at Paris Sciences et Lettres university.

He predicted a rise in economic pressure on Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco, warning that Egypt and Tunisia in particular could see peril to their banking sectors, which hold a large share of the public debt.

Egypt is also heavily dependent on [*tourism from Russia*](https://www.madamasr.com/en/2022/02/24/news/u/as-russia-invades-ukraine-conflict-has-already-dealt-blow-to-egypts-tourism-sector/), which has helped its [*tourism industry*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/24/world/middleeast/egypt-tourism-covid-mummies.html) recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, giving the country extra cause for alarm.

Global inflation and supply chain issues stemming from the pandemic have also raised the price of pasta in Egypt by a third over the last month. Cooking oil was up. Meat was up. Nearly everything was up.

But most important, bread, the cost of which had already risen by about 50 percent at non-subsidized bakeries over the last four months; a five-pound note (about 30 cents) now buys only about seven loaves of bread, down from 10, bakery employees said.

Egyptians, about a third of whom live on less than $1.50 a day, rely on bread for a third of their calories and 45 percent of their protein, according to the [*Food and Agriculture Organization*](https://www.fao.org/3/cb4902en/cb4902en.pdf), a United Nations agency.

Government officials said on Thursday that Egypt had enough grain reserves and domestically produced wheat to last the country until November. But because of rising import prices President Abdel Fatteh el-Sisi last year announced that Egypt would raise subsidized bread prices this year, risking public fury.

“Of course I’m worried,” said Karim Khalaf, 23, who was collecting and stacking baladi loaves as they slipped out of the oven, steaming slightly, in a bakery in Sayyida Zeinab on Friday morning. “My salary hasn’t changed, but now I’m spending more than I’m making.”

Morocco, where the all-important agriculture sector [*employs about 45 percent*](https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/morocco-agricultural-sector) of the work force, is facing an economic crisis precipitated by global inflation, a surge of food and oil prices, and the worst [*drought*](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1z0hdz3xuU8e0ogvev3grFsC_jhwHc85L&amp;ll=27.665998892145495%2C-8.796558108910356&amp;z=5) in three decades.

Anti-government protests that erupted on Sunday suggested that many Moroccans have lost patience with their six-month-old government as they struggle to make ends meet two years into a pandemic that annihilated the once-lucrative tourism industry.

“I hustled for a long time and I was patient, but I am left with nothing,” said Mina Idrissi, 48, who attended a protest in the capital, Rabat, and who works several jobs, including as a housekeeper, in the nearby city of Sale. “For two weeks, I couldn’t even afford to buy cooking oil. Does this government not realize that we are suffering?”

In the weeks before the protests, a series of videos circulated on Moroccan social media that only served to heighten the sense of distress. One [*video showed people rioting*](https://www.h24info.ma/maroc/video-des-speculateurs-provoquent-des-accrochages-dans-un-souk-hebdomadaire-a-kenitra/) over food prices in a market in the city of Kenitra near Rabat.

Morocco’s was a foreseeable crisis, experts said. Located in a climate change hot spot, the country’s rainfall has dwindled dramatically in recent years, and may decline by 20 to 30 percent by the end of the century, according to the World Resources Institute.

“It’s a simple reality that has been ignored for decades,” said Najib Akesbi, an economist in Rabat.

The government has reacted with Band-Aids.

Last week, the royal court announced a $1 billion plan to alleviate the impacts of the drought on farmers by providing financial aid, water management and livestock food supply.

But analysts said such measures would not compensate for decades of misguided economic management that prioritized water-intensive industries and produced food for export while leaving the rest of the country dependent on imported wheat — some of it from Russia and Ukraine — and other food.

No Middle Eastern nation wants to become like Lebanon, which has seen its currency and economy undergo catastrophic collapse since late 2019. Lebanon imports more than half of its wheat from Ukraine, and is already talking to other countries like India and the United States about wheat purchases, the country’s economy minister, Amin Salam, told Reuters on Friday.

Recent turmoil in the country has already jacked up the price of bread. To help mitigate the effects of the economic implosion, the government has reduced subsidies on a range of goods, including bread, some types of which now cost five to nine times more than they did in summer 2019, according to government statistics.

Some analysts have warned that growing economic pressures could leave Arab governments vulnerable to the kind of social unrest that roiled the region during the Arab Spring.

In Tunisia, where food prices have climbed as public finances wobble, President Kais Saied is struggling to maintain his popularity after seizing power last summer with promises to fix Tunisia’s economy. The government is desperate for an International Monetary Fund bailout, but such a deal would likely force it to take unpopular measures like cutting public wages and subsidies.

Egyptians ground down by the economy attempted to rebuke Mr. el-Sisi in a series of anti-government demonstrations in September 2019, only to be met with a [*swift crackdown*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/04/world/middleeast/egypt-protest-sisi-arrests.html). Still, years of government repression have persuaded many to make their peace with how things are, however hard.

“We’ll have to resort to welfare, which is basically begging,” said Osama Ezzat, 60, a day laborer who was pushing cardboard boxes in a hand cart past the Sayyida Zeinab bakery on Friday. “It’s tough, but when you compare us to countries around us, at least we’re stable.”

Vivian Yee reported from Cairo and Aida Alami from Rabat, Morocco. Nada Rashwan contributed reporting from Cairo, Ben Hubbard and Hwaida Saad from Beirut, Lebanon and Ana Swansonfrom Washington.

Vivian Yee reported from Cairo and Aida Alami from Rabat, Morocco. Nada Rashwan contributed reporting from Cairo, Ben Hubbard and Hwaida Saad from Beirut, Lebanon and Ana Swansonfrom Washington.

PHOTO: Baking bread in Saqqara, near Giza, Egypt. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Shokry Hussien/Reuters FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** February 26, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Adams Pledges Support for Gowanus Redevelopment, Boosting Delayed Project***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63C5-NRS1-JBG3-60NM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

August 13, 2021 Friday 12:24 EST

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**Section:** NYREGION

**Length:** 1073 words

**Byline:** Sadef Ali Kully and Sarah Maslin Nir

**Highlight:** Eric Adams said he would support one of the signature development plans of Mayor Bill de Blasio, as long as spending to repair public housing is included.

**Body**

Eric Adams said he would support one of the signature development plans of Mayor Bill de Blasio, as long as spending to repair public housing is included.

A long-delayed development project that would transform the banks of Brooklyn’s notoriously filthy Gowanus Canal into the home of thousands of new apartments and scores of shops appears poised to move forward under a new mayor — as long as nearby public housing developments also receive hundreds of millions of dollars for repairs.

At a news conference on Friday, [*Eric Adams*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/02/nyregion/eric-adams-new-york-flooding-ida.html), the Brooklyn borough president and heavy favorite to succeed Mayor Bill de Blasio, conditionally gave the project his blessing. Mr. de Blasio has championed the project as an important step in helping to solve the city’s housing crisis.

All told, the redevelopment would add 8,000 units of housing and shops, and remediate blighted areas. But critics of the plan, including a vocal neighborhood coalition, have raised environmental and economic concerns, and said it would push out poorer residents from an already relentlessly gentrifying pocket of Brooklyn.

Mr. Adams’s show of support for the project added a sense of promise to an initiative to revamp the area that has stuttered for years. It has been stalled by concerns ranging from the industrial area’s toxicity — in 2010 the canal was designated a Superfund site, and some areas are polluted with coal tar — to an emboldened push by progressive activists against the impact a flood of new, expensive apartments could have on the area’s racial diversity.

By tying the Gowanus plan to support for New York City Housing Authority repairs in the area, Mr. Adams appeared to be acknowledging those complaints while seeking to preserve what was among Mr. de Blasio’s most ambitious development goals.

“NYCHA needs to be part of the prosperity of the city and borough,” Mr. Adams said at a news conference outside the Gowanus Houses on Friday. “So as we look to re-envision the future of public housing, residents cannot be left behind.”

Mr. Adams said he would support the rezoning that is required to go forward with redevelopment if the city can fund $274 million to repair Gowanus Houses and Wyckoff Gardens, another public housing development nearby.

Brad Lander, a Democratic city councilman who represents parts of Brooklyn and has long championed the development, said on Friday that Mr. Adams’s announced support of the project — including the public housing funds — was a significant boost for its future and for the neighborhood. Mr. Lander won the Democratic nomination to be the city’s next comptroller in the June primary.

“We both support the concept of rezoning whiter, wealthier neighborhoods with a significant commitment to making sure that housing is genuinely affordable, and real opportunities are created for Black and brown and ***working class*** families,” Mr. Lander said of Mr. Adams.

A review of the plan commissioned by the City Council and the Fifth Avenue Committee, a local housing nonprofit, found that the initiative could[*redistribute the racial balance*](https://www.thecity.nyc/brooklyn/2021/8/8/22615910/gowanus-rezoning-could-make-more-diverse-brooklyn) of the Gowanus neighborhood — currently one of the city’s whitest — to one more in line demographically with the rest of the city.

Mr. Adams and Mr. Lander are both heavy favorites to win their respective elections in November, but their appearance together on Friday bridged an ideological gulf in the city’s Democratic Party. Mr. Lander, in his primary, ran significantly to the left of Mr. Adams, and was endorsed by progressive figures including Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who has criticized Mr. Adams.

The rezoning, which would span 82 blocks of the Gowanus neighborhood, a hodgepodge of vacant lots, artists’ studios and eclectic businesses, will include new parks and a waterfront esplanade; of the new housing units, about 3,000 of them will be classified as affordable housing.

It is part of the de Blasio administration’s ambitious affordable housing plan to create or preserve an estimated 300,000 affordable housing units by the year 2026. The Gowanus development, the city says, could end up bringing about 20,000 residents to the neighborhood.

But the proposed project has recently been hamstrung by some progressives, who are skeptical about initiatives that would significantly boost private interests: Sandwiched between the wealthy enclaves of Carroll Gardens and Park Slope, the area could be a cash cow for developers. They have been emboldened by the dissolution of other major development initiatives, like the[*commercial and office space expansion proposed for Industry City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/23/nyregion/industry-city-rezoning-nyc.html) and Amazon’s [*failed headquarters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/14/nyregion/amazon-hq2-queens.html) in Long Island City.

That resistance culminated in [*a lawsuit filed by opponents of the plan*](https://citylimits.org/2021/01/15/gowanus-group-files-lawsuit-over-citys-use-of-virtual-hearings-during-rezoning-review/), including the resident group Voice of Gowanus, which argued that the virtual public hearings on the proposal necessitated by the pandemic were inaccessible. But a judge allowed the process to move forward, and in April, the public Uniform Land Use Review Procedure, or ULURP, resumed. The City Planning Commission will vote on it in September. It is likely to come before the City Council for a vote in October.

Jack Riccobono, a filmmaker and member of Voice of Gowanus, said that Mr. Adams’s endorsement did not change his group’s position. Remediation on the Superfund site just [*began last*](https://gowanuscanalconservancy.org/superfund/) year, and the neighborhood group believes a more thorough environmental impact study of the plans is required, Mr. Riccobono said.

“This rezoning is premature,” said Mr. Riccobono, 39. “The city has created a faulty and incomplete and legally insufficient environmental review.”

But tethering the rezoning to funding for public housing, which a Brooklyn community board voted to do in June and which Mr. Adams pledged to do on Friday, could win over some residents. Of the $274 million being sought for repairs, $132 million are considered urgent, according to NYCHA.

Linda Jewel, a retired city employee who has lived in Gowanus Houses since 1959, said the capital repairs to her home were imperative. Gas outages are frequent, according to tenants, and the water sometimes shuts off for hours.

“The elevators are a nightmare,” said Ms. Jewel, who uses a walker to get around. “They break down all the time.”

Mihir Zaveri contributed reporting.

Mihir Zaveri contributed reporting.

PHOTO: A long-delayed development project on the banks of the filthy Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn would create thousands of apartments. (PHOTOGRAPH BY AMIR HAMJA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** September 2, 2021

**End of Document**



[***‘Tightrope: Americans Reaching for Hope,’ by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn: An Excerpt***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y01-GNH1-DXY4-X3R1-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 13, 2020 Monday 14:12 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 3170 words

**Highlight:** An excerpt from “Tightrope: Americans Reaching for Hope,” by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn

**Body**

1: The Kids on the Number 6 School Bus

Is this land made for you and me?

—Woody Guthrie

Dee Knapp was asleep when her husband, Gary, stumbled drunkenly into their white frame house after a night out drinking. Bracing for trouble, Dee jumped up and ran to the kitchen.

Gary, muscular and compact with short black hair above a long face, was a decent fellow when sober, a brute when drunk.

“Get me dinner!” he shouted as he wobbled toward the kitchen, and Dee scrambled to turn the electric stove on and throw leftovers into a pan. But she wasn’t fast enough, and he hit her with his fist. A lithe brunette in her early thirties, with shoulder-length hair and calloused hands, Dee realized that this was one of those times she was destined to be a punching bag. Devoted to her five children, she especially hated to be beaten by Gary because of the loathing for their father this engendered in them.

[ Return to [*the review of “Tightrope.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/10/books/review/tightrope-americans-reaching-for-hope-nicholas-kristof-sheryl-wudunn.html) ]

“Dinner!” Gary roared again. “Get me dinner!” He grabbed his loaded .22 rifle and pointed it at her menacingly. She bolted past Gary and out the front door into the night.

Gary’s shouting had awoken the children upstairs. “Mom,” Farlan, her eldest son, hissed from the second-floor window as she ran around the side of the house. Dee looked up and he threw down a sleeping bag. She grabbed it in midair and ran into the protective darkness of their two-and-a-half-acre property, seeking a place to spend the night hiding in the tall grass, waiting for Gary to sleep off his rage.

“Damn that woman,” Gary cursed from inside the house. Clutching his .22, he lunged out the front door, then looked wildly into the darkness. A white, wooden Pentecostal church was on one side, one of two churches serving the tiny hamlet of Cove Orchard, Oregon. Beyond the church was Highway 47, leading to the small town of Yamhill, three miles to the south. Dee was sheltering in the darkness somewhere between the church and the neighbor’s fence line. Gary lifted the rifle to his shoulder and fired off a volley of shots into the field where his wife was cowering. Dee stiffened, hugging the ground.

The children listened, terrified. Helpless and furious, Farlan clenched his fists and vowed to himself that someday he would kill his dad. In the field, seventy feet away, with no trees to hide behind, Dee held her breath as bullets smacked into the ground nearby. This happened from time to time, and Dee knew that her husband would soon tire of shooting into the night.

Finally, Gary stumbled back into the house and ordered a sullen Farlan downstairs to cook dinner for him. Dee could hear all this from her hiding spot, for Gary didn’t know how to speak softly. She gradually felt her heartbeat return to normal. She spread the sleeping bag and lay down inside it, listening to her husband’s curses from the house, hoping that he wouldn’t beat Farlan, praying that the other kids would stay quiet upstairs.

It was another violent, tumultuous evening, but strangely Dee says that she was still buoyed by hope that day in 1973, for despite the fear and violence, she believed that in some ways life truly was getting better—especially for her kids. Like her husband, Dee had been raised in a cramped household without electricity or plumbing. The youngest of ten children, she had grown up poor after her father, a construction worker, died when she was nine years old. Dee had dropped out of school in fifth grade, while Gary had had virtually no education and could barely write his name. She and Gary had started their married life as migrant farmworkers, or “fruit tramps,” following the harvests around California and Oregon, paid according to how many strawberries or beans they picked, living in shacks without electric light or running water. As of 1960, only one migrant worker child in five hundred completed grade school. Dee wanted better for her children, and she announced that when their kids were old enough for school, the family was going to settle down.

That’s how they ended up in Cove Orchard, population fifty, in northwestern Oregon, where the grasses of the Willamette Valley merge into the forests of the Coastal Range, where fields of grass seed, golden wheat and Christmas trees, and orchards abounding with apples, cherries and hazelnuts, blanket the earth to the horizon. Gary found regular work and at one point landed a good union job laying pipe, mostly for sewer lines, earning a solid income even if he spent much of it in the bars in Yamhill and nearby Gaston. Dee had a steady job driving tractors on a hazelnut farm near Yamhill. She couldn’t afford day care, so she brought along her youngest, Keylan, a toddler, and kept him on her lap as she worked.

The Knapps had been able to buy their property for $2,500 in 1963, and it had the first electricity they had ever enjoyed at home in their lives. Initially, there was no running water, but Dee was handy with tools, so she bought a pipe cutter and laid down pipes to bring water into the bathroom and the kitchen sink. They also earned extra money refurbishing cars together: Gary fixing the engine, and Dee upholstering the interior.

They were homeowners! They had risen from itinerant farmworkers, one of the lowest rungs on the American economic ladder, to the solid, union-fortified ***working class*** and were on a trajectory to claw their way into the middle class. Farlan in his early teens was already growing taller than his dad, perhaps a tribute to better nutrition; there was no shortage of food in the Knapp household. Dee canned beans, tomatoes, peaches, prunes and other kinds of fruit, she made her own fruit jellies, and the shelves were full. All the children—Farlan, Zealan, Nathan, Rogena and Keylan—were far outpacing their parents in education. It looked as if all five might graduate from high school, and maybe some would even attend college.

Farlan was adept with his hands and smart, a natural engineer. Maybe he would design pipelines, not lay them. Dee invested all her hopes in her kids. Yes, she inflicted punishment by hitting them with a stick on occasion, but they all knew how much she loved them. She made sure they got schooling, and she absorbed punches and black eyes to protect them from Gary’s drunken furies. In the end, she was confident they would have opportunities that she and Gary had never enjoyed.

As she lay in the dark field, a bruise forming on her cheek where Gary had struck her, she was stubbornly consoled by faith in the future, by her belief that America was the land of opportunity, by the certainty that even Gary’s drunkenness couldn’t stop the Number 6 school bus from picking up her kids each morning and taking them to get an education at Yamhill Carlton High School, learning algebra, biology, the use of prepositions and other knowledge that no one else in her family had been exposed to. For ten generations, her forebears had struggled to scratch from the earth enough to eat, and now finally in her generation there was dizzying progress. Her kids were living their version of the American dream and inheriting a cornucopia. Electric lights. Tractors and cars. Education. Television. Medicare. Social Security. Tampons. John Denver and Johnny Carson. Vaccinations. Hot showers. Twinkies. Boom boxes. As Dee lay in her sleeping bag, this certainty sustained her: Life was getting better in spite of Gary, and her children would inherit the earth. Life in Yamhill back in the 1970s seemed to echo Curly’s upbeat refrain from Oklahoma!, when he exulted, “Everything’s goin’ my way.”

Tragically, it didn’t work out as hoped. The Knapps, like so many other ***working-class*** families, tumbled into unimaginable calamity.

[ Return to [*the review of “Tightrope.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/10/books/review/tightrope-americans-reaching-for-hope-nicholas-kristof-sheryl-wudunn.html) ]

Gary and Dee were Nick’s neighbors as he grew up outside Yamhill, and the five Knapp kids rode with him each day on the Number 6 bus to Yamhill Grade School and then Yamhill Carlton High School. When Gary fired his .22 rifle into the yard at his cowering wife, the gunshots echoed to Nick’s farm half a mile away. Farlan was in Nick’s class in school; his siblings were younger.

The Knapps’ optimism at that time was shared by the entire community, and by millions of others throughout the country. We have no soggy sentimentality about those days: we recount Gary’s violence precisely to cure anyone of false nostalgia. But life had improved dramatically, and most expected that rising education levels and improved social services would give the Knapp kids and almost everyone else a much better life. The kids on the bus as it careered toward Yamhill each morning were sure that their world would be better than their parents’ had been.

Yet those kids ended up riding into a cataclysm, as ***working-class*** communities disintegrated across America, felled by lost jobs, broken families and despair. About one-fourth of the kids who rode with Nick on the bus are dead from drugs, suicide, alcohol, obesity, reckless accidents and other pathologies. A boy named Mike is dead from suicide, after struggles with drugs; Steve from the aftermath of a foolhardy motorcycle accident; Cindy from depression, obesity and then a heart attack; Jeff from a daredevil car crash; Tim from a construction accident; Billy from complications of diabetes while in prison; Kevin from consequences of obesity. There are different accounts of what Sue died of. Chris has gone missing after decades of alcoholism and homelessness. Others are alive but struggling with dead-end jobs or wrestling with drugs and alcohol. Of the two boys that Nick walked to the bus stop with each day, Mike is a homeless alcoholic living in a park, and Bobby is serving a life sentence in prison for offenses so harrowing that the family has cut him off.

The American economy has dazzled the world and its stock markets have created great riches, but the median American household is actually poorer in net worth today than it was in 2000. Median wages for the majority of the population that lacks a college degree are significantly lower today, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, than they were back in 1979. Gallup has been asking Americans once a month for decades if they are “satisfied” or “dissatisfied” with the way things are going in the United States, and for the last fifteen years a majority has steadily answered “dissatisfied.” Gallup reported in 2019 that even as the economy grew steadily, “higher levels of stress, anger and worry nudged Americans’ overall Negative Experience Index to 35—three points higher than any previous score.” Gallup concluded, “In fact, the levels of negative emotions in the past several years are even higher than during the U.S. recession years.” Gallup found that Americans were among the most stressed populations in the world, tied with Iranians and even more stressed than Venezuelans.

Life expectancy continues to rise in most of the rest of the industrialized world, but in the United States it has dropped for three years in a row—for the first time in a century. As we’ll see, American kids today are 55 percent more likely to die by the age of nineteen than children in the other rich countries that are members of the OECD, the club of industrialized nations. America now lags behind its peer countries in health care and high-school graduation rates while suffering greater violence, poverty and addiction. This dysfunction damages all Americans: it undermines our nation’s competitiveness, especially as growing economies like China’s are fueled by much larger populations and by rising education levels, and may erode the well-being of our society for decades to come. The losers are not just those at the bottom of society, but all of us. For America to be strong, we must strengthen all Americans.

We set out in this book to explore that unraveling. We wanted to understand more deeply what had happened to Nick’s friends on the school bus, how our country could have let tens of millions of people suffer an excruciating loss of jobs, dignity, lives, hopes and children, and how we can recover. The Knapps and many of the kids on the bus—and millions of Americans across the country—made terrible, self-destructive choices about using drugs or dropping out of school.

But we saw that these were compounded by terrible choices that the country made on multiple fronts. The kids on the bus who floundered weren’t somehow worse than their parents or less prepared—indeed, they mostly had more education—and they didn’t have weaker characters than their counterparts in other countries. American kids don’t drop out of high school at higher rates than in other countries because they are less intelligent. So while we look unsparingly at failures of personal responsibility, let’s also examine equally rigorously the failures of government, of institutions and of society. And let’s seek solutions.

In doing our research and reporting for this book, we came to see that life’s journey for affluent, well-educated American families is like a stroll along a wide, smooth path, forgiving of missteps. But increasingly, for those from lower on the socioeconomic spectrum, life resembles a tightrope walk. Some make it across, but for so many, one stumble and that’s it. What’s more, a tumble from the tightrope frequently destroys not only that individual but the entire family, including children and, through them, grandchildren. The casualties are everywhere in America, if we only care to notice.

Some 68,000 Americans now die annually from drug overdoses, another 88,000 from alcohol abuse and 47,000 from suicide. More Americans die from these causes every two weeks than died during eighteen years of war in Afghanistan and Iraq. Yet much of affluent America has shrugged, with elites paying little attention to the disintegration of communities across the country—or, worse, blaming the victims. In fact, plenty of blame could go elsewhere: Politicians, journalists, religious leaders and business executives were too often derelict as communities cratered and tens of millions of people endured the pain. The United States still doesn’t have a coherent plan to address the challenges.

This journey of exploration has taken the two of us to all fifty states, and we tell stories here from Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Maryland, New York, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and elsewhere. But many of the tales are from Yamhill, because it is close to our hearts and because it reflects the challenges of ***working-class*** America. Another reason to write about the people of Yamhill is that they bared their souls to us. Nick has a lifetime of attachment to local friends, and Sheryl has been visiting Yamhill ever since our engagement, when she amused people by locking the car door. Our kids grew up partly on the Kristof family farm, and our ties to Yamhill give us a deep empathy for the community’s struggles. The consequences of lost timber jobs in Oregon and disappearing coal jobs in Kentucky are not so different from the consequences of erased factory jobs in North Carolina, Maine or Michigan. In talking to our friend Wes Moore, an African American who grew up in poverty in Baltimore and New York, it struck us both how many commonalities there are between a white farm town in Oregon and a black neighborhood in Baltimore: what they share is deep pain.

This has been a wrenching book for us to write, because old friendships threatened to rob us of the protection of professional distance. In past books, we have tried to shine a light on urgent and neglected topics, such as the oppression of women around the world; now we are trying to illuminate similarly urgent and neglected crises in our own backyards. Some of these stories are of dear friends whom Nick had crushes on, passed notes to in class, danced with or competed against on the high-school track. Together we’ve covered massacres, genocide, sex trafficking and other tragedy and heartbreak around the globe, but these struggles hit so close to home because Yamhill and America are home.

The Knapp kids undertook their own Dantesque journey through drugs, alcohol, crime and family dysfunction. Farlan, a talented woodcarver and furniture maker, died of liver failure from drink and drugs. Zealan burned to death in a house fire while passed out drunk. Rogena suffered from mental illness and died from hepatitis linked to her own drug use. Nathan burned to death when the meth he was making exploded. Four siblings, once happy kids bouncing on the seats of school bus Number 6, dead, dead, dead, dead.

Keylan, particularly smart and talented, whom Yamhill Grade School recognized as a math prodigy, is the lone survivor, partly because thirteen years in the state penitentiary protected him from drugs. He soldiers on with HIV, hepatitis and more broken bones than he can remember; he says he uses drugs much less now.

Today Keylan shares a home with Dee in Oklahoma. She survived Gary and, at seventy-nine, remains sound of mind and strong of body. She gets by on Social Security, doesn’t touch alcohol or drugs, and makes daily visits to the grave site of her four dead children. Pulling out family photos, Dee pointed to her kids in happier times; over the doorway, the word FAMILY practically jumps off a wooden sign. “Our family is cursed,” Keylan said. “Something went wrong with our generation, and so there was alcohol abuse. There was drug abuse. There was prison.” He began weeping.

So many Americans have wandered off course “into a dark wood,” as Dante described his journey in Inferno, exploring the corruption and hypocrisy of medieval Florence, then one of the world’s great cities. Dee Knapp knows as well as anyone that the America of the old days was no simple Leave It to Beaver kaleidoscope of happy families passing the gravy around a dinner table. It was even more difficult for African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans and others who did not even have a seat at the table. Yet in those days the dream of advancement was real, and it sustained people like Dee through difficult times. For much of ***working-class*** America, of whatever complexion, the dream is now dead. It’s dead along with all those children on the Number 6 school bus. It’s dead along with Farlan, Zealan, Rogena and Nathan Knapp. Personal responsibility must be part of the turnaround, but so must collective responsibility, especially for children now struggling. We as citizens have failed in this, and so has our government, and that must change. The United States took a historic wrong turn over the last half century, and for the Knapps and so many others life has become an inferno. We will take you through that inferno, but also show how America can do better.

[ Return to [*the review of “Tightrope.”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/10/books/review/tightrope-americans-reaching-for-hope-nicholas-kristof-sheryl-wudunn.html) ]

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**Load-Date:** January 14, 2020

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[***Macron Closes Elite French School in Bid to Diversify Public Service***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62D3-4K31-JBG3-64Y3-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 8, 2021 Thursday 02:02 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 842 words

**Byline:** Roger Cohen

**Highlight:** The institution had become a symbol of privilege in a society where social mobility has broken down.

**Body**

The institution had become a symbol of privilege in a society where social mobility has broken down.

PARIS — There are elite schools and then there is ENA, the small French graduate college that has turned out presidents and prime ministers with such cookie-cutter consistency that it is no exaggeration to say France has been run by its “énarques.”

President Emmanuel Macron attended the Strasbourg-based finishing school for top civil servants. So did the two prime ministers he has appointed. So did his predecessor, François Hollande. So did Jacques Chirac. At a time of growing social fracture, no other institution has symbolized a clubby, mostly male French elitism as vividly as the Ecole Nationale d’Administration.

Now, it’s gone. Mr. Macron announced on Thursday the closure of ENA, and its replacement by a new Institute of Public Service, or ISP, as part of what he called a “deep revolution in recruitment for public service.”

The decision, one year ahead of a presidential election, is intended to signal Mr. Macron’s determination to democratize opportunity and create a public service that is more transparent and efficient. Earlier this year, he deplored the fact that France’s “social elevator” had broken down and worked “less well than 50 years ago.”

A statement from the presidency said that the closure of ENA was part of the “the most important reform of the senior public service” since the creation of the school and other public institutions by Charles de Gaulle in 1945. At the time, a France destroyed by war and shamed by Vichy collaboration with the Nazis needed to rebuild its democratic state in its entirety.

How much the new institute will be ENA by another name remains to be seen.

The statement said that future graduates would have to be more mobile, going to work initially in regional jobs to gain on-the-ground experience before taking up positions of “direction, control or judgment.” Promotions would no longer be based on length of experience but on performance and demonstrated willingness to move around the country.

ENA has been widely criticized as a private club offering life membership to the initiated. Only 1 percent of the last graduating class of 80 had a ***working-class*** parent.

Future “enarques” came mainly from affluent, professional families; they passed into a gilded world of opportunity in both the private and public sectors. Mr. Macron is the wunderkind of this process, becoming president at the age of 39, after graduating from ENA 13 years earlier.

But the violent Yellow Vest protests that began in late 2018, an uprising of the marginalized, demonstrated how sharp French social tensions had become. Outside a hyper-connected metropolitan world, many French people felt ignored. Denied opportunity, they were somehow invisible.

Mr. Macron embarked on a national debate to fathom the causes of the revolt, and on April 25, 2019, announced for the first time that his alma mater would be eliminated. It was a powerful symbolic gesture, but it met opposition and two years went by without any follow-up. ENA, it seemed, would survive after all.

Earlier this year, during a visit to Nantes, the president announced a program called “Talents” designed to ensure that, when it comes to elite schools for senior public service positions, “no kid from our republic ever says that this is not for me.”

Among the measures announced then was the designation of several spots a year at ENA for students from underprivileged backgrounds, particularly the dismal projects on the outskirts of big cities where many Muslim immigrants are concentrated. Thursday’s statement made clear this program would continue at the new institute.

Mr. Macron has made the modernization of the French state a priority, pushing to eliminate excessive bureaucracy and create a more efficient, performance-based public service. It is a work in progress.

The president has been criticized for focusing his energy on attracting voters to the right of the political spectrum in a bid to head off a challenge from the rightist leader Marine Le Pen. In that context, honoring a decision initially taken in response to the Yellow Vest movement and intended to promote social mobility and greater diversity in senior state posts appeared important.

“Among the vital problems in France, there is one that you are aware of every day: It’s the complete fracture between the base of society — people who work, who are retired, who are unemployed, young people, students — and the supposed elite,” Francois Bayrou, a political ally of Macron, told France Inter radio.

It remains to be seen whether some deep reform takes place, so that officials at the summit of the state begin at last to look a little more like a diverse French society.

Constant Méheut contributed reporting from Paris.

Constant Méheut contributed reporting from Paris.

PHOTO: President Emmanuel Macron attended the Ecole Nationale d’Administration, as did predecessors François Hollande and Jacques Chirac. (PHOTOGRAPH BY Yoan Valat/EPA, via Shutterstock FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 9, 2021

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[***A TV Family Returns 'Louder and Prouder'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VN-GD31-JBG3-61DP-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 24, 2022 Thursday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section C; Column 0; The Arts/Cultural Desk; Pg. 7

**Length:** 1462 words

**Byline:** By Leigh-Ann Jackson

**Body**

''The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder,'' on Disney+, revives a beloved animated series for a new generation.

When ''The Proud Family'' debuted on the Disney Channel on Sept. 15, 2001, it introduced one of TV's first animated African American families.

Over 52 episodes and a TV movie, the series offered a lighthearted depiction of a Black suburban family going about their everyday lives. The headstrong middle-schooler Penny Proud (voiced by Kyla Pratt) took the lead, with her strict but loving parents Oscar and Trudy (Tommy Davidson and Paula Jai Parker), feisty grandmother Suga Mama (Jo Marie Payton) and precocious infant twin siblings BeBe and CeCe rounding out the rest of the clan.

They bickered, supported one another, threw shade and showed love -- all of the things that typical on-screen families do. But before The Prouds, TV audiences rarely got to see a Black cartoon family doing those run-of-the-mill things, too.

Now the groundbreaking brood is back with ''The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder,'' a 10-episode revival scheduled to air weekly on Disney+ starting Wednesday.

During the show's original run, from 2001 to 2005, Penny went through the paces of early adolescence -- goofing around with her multicultural crew of friends, pouting about chores, dodging school bullies and testing parental boundaries. While many of the show's themes were universal, they were delivered in a way that was uniquely and intentionally rooted in Black culture.

The dialogue was studded with the kinds of colloquialisms and vernacular that can be heard in many Black households. The children's playground banter employed of-the-moment slang, often pulled from rap lyrics. There were personal jabs about being ''ashy'' and class warfare was waged whenever the ***working-class*** branch of the family butted heads with their ''bougie'' in-laws.

Even the body language and nonverbal cues -- a wary side-eye, an indignant up-and-down glare -- were embedded as nods to Black viewers. The humor worked on multiple levels, with silly sight gags that appeal to grade-schoolers and more subtle punch lines to keep grown-ups engaged.

''A lot of what we'd do was like, 'Wink, wink. You know what we're saying, right?''' said Bruce W. Smith, the show's creator. ''We were hiding a lot of innuendo and, frankly, family business under the guise of what our characters were saying and going through. Where the show shines is in all of its cultural references.''

Smith is a veteran animator who spent much of the '90s working on feature films like ''Space Jam'' and Disney's ''Tarzan'' and ''The Emperor's New Groove.'' By the end of that decade, he set his sights on serialized television, aiming to fill a void in the small screen's animated offerings.

'''The Simpsons,' 'Family Guy,' 'King of the Hill,' all these animated sitcoms became the rage,'' he said. ''I was just looking at them like: OK, we're not in this. We're not involved somehow, and we should be.''

At the time, live-action sitcoms like ''Moesha'' and ''Sister, Sister'' had proven that Black teenage girls could both carry a series and draw a dedicated audience. Smith set out to create a cartoon sitcom in the vein of ''Moesha'' -- one that centered a Black girl's life and experiences.

His first step was teaming up with Ralph Farquhar, a creator of ''Moesha,'' as well as its spinoff, ''The Parkers,'' and the short-lived Black family dramedy ''South Central.'' Together, they oversaw ''The Proud Family'' and its subsequent 2005 TV movie, with Smith also directing several episodes.

''The fact that there was no one else doing it was sad,'' Farquhar said, in a joint video interview with Smith. ''But for us, it was this opportunity. We wanted to tell our stories in a way that we understand. In that nuanced way that only comes from living it.''

Smith added: ''The great thing about it was there was nothing before us. There was no bar set. For us, that was exciting because then we could set the bar.''

In addition to commonplace domestic scenes -- kitchen table spats, curfew breaches, babysitting snafus -- there was a smattering of more educational story lines. These included a poignant Kwanzaa celebration and a Black History Month tribute to oft-overlooked luminaries like the pioneering aviator Bessie Coleman and Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress.

''That's what I loved about the original: We talked about things that other people shied away from,'' said Pratt, who took on the role of Penny at age 14. ''And we're doing the same thing this time around.''

The revival, which is also overseen by Smith and Farquhar, retains much of the original's flavor, but it has been updated for the 2020s. Instead of pagers, the kids use smartphones. Dated phrases like ''off the heezy fo' sheezy'' are out; ''woke'' and ''Black girl magic'' are now in.

The original featured guest appearances by popular early '00s performers like Lil' Romeo, Mos Def and Mariah Carey. ''Louder and Prouder'' is similarly star-studded, with cameos by the likes of Lil Nas X, Chance the Rapper and Lizzo. The heartwarming theme song, performed by Solange Knowles and Destiny's Child, also got a makeover -- the 2022 version is sung by the newcomer Joyce Wrice.

Penny and her friends are now solidly into their teens, with all of the body changes, heightened hormones and social minefields that entails. And a few new players have joined the returning core cast.

The former reality TV star EJ Johnson voices Penny's gender-fluid friend Michael. (The recurring character Wizard Kelly is a sly allusion to Johnson's father, the N.B.A. legend Magic Johnson.) And a same-sex couple, Barry and Randall Leibowitz-Jenkins (Zachary Quinto and Billy Porter), have moved into the neighborhood with their adopted teenagers: son Francis (Artist Dubose, better known as the rapper A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie) and daughter Maya (Keke Palmer), a fiery activist who serves as Penny's new foil.

Palmer, whose breakthrough came in the 2006 film ''Akeelah and the Bee,'' credits Farquhar with discovering her a few years earlier, when she was 10. (He cast her in a Disney Channel pilot that didn't get picked up.) He asked her to join ''Louder and Prouder'' because he knew she'd been a longtime fan of the original.

''I saw a family that reminded me of my own -- I even had boy-girl twins in my family,'' Palmer said. ''That was a show that represented what my Black American culture looked like. I thought they got it right!''

Nevertheless, Disney chose not to renew ''The Proud Family'' when the original production run ended in 2005. (Disney declined to comment on the end of the original show.) In the interview, Smith and Farquhar said they have never known why the show wasn't allowed to continue, but they made clear that they always hoped to bring it back in some form.

''From the moment we stopped doing the original version, we had been campaigning to bring it back,'' Farquhar said. ''We weren't quite sure why we ever even stopped.''

They weren't alone. ''The Proud Family'' has been a steady source of millennial nostalgia online, with fans sharing art and cosplay photos inspired by the show on social media, and revisiting beloved episodes in blog posts. Pratt said overzealous fans have frequently reached out to her in real life, too.

''People were talking to me literally every other day of my life, trying to get the show back on,'' she said.

Farquhar and Smith said they noticed a new outpouring from ''Proud'' fans after Disney+ began streaming the original on Jan. 1, 2020. Disney apparently noticed, too. The company approached the men about a revival, and then publicly announced it on Feb. 27, 2020.

Farquhar and Smith have since signed a multiyear overall deal with Disney to produce animated and live-action series and movies and to develop projects for emerging and diverse talent. Smith boasted that the ''Louder and Prouder'' staff, from the directors to layout artists to animators, ''looks like the show.'' (Like most of the entertainment industry, animation has historically offered far fewer opportunities to women and people of color than to white men.)

Smith has wanted to expand Black people's presence and influence in animation since he started working in the industry in the early 1980s, he said, a mission informed by his own experiences as a young cartoon fan.

''When I was growing up, I loved shows like 'The Flintstones' and 'The Jetsons,''' he said. But together they painted an unwelcoming picture: ''I didn't exist in the beginning of time, and I don't think they're looking for me to exist when spaceships start flying off this planet.''

''I gotta do something about that,'' he continued. ''Because I love this medium and I want to see myself in this.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/arts/television/proud-family-returns.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/23/arts/television/proud-family-returns.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: The Prouds include: from top left, Trudy (Paula Jai Parker), Penny (Kyla Pratt) and Oscar (Tommy Davidson), and above, Suga Mama (Jo Marie Payton). Below, Penny's new gender-fluid friend Michael (EJ Johnson), second from right. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA DISNEY+)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2022

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[***Cruz Knows Which Side He's On***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653P-BW31-DXY4-X23K-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 29, 2022 Tuesday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Editorial Desk; Pg. 22; THE CONVERSATION

**Length:** 1609 words

**Byline:** By Gail Collins and Bret Stephens

**Body**

Bret Stephens: Hi, Gail. I think many Americans would give President Biden reasonably high marks for his handling of the war in Ukraine so far. His speech in Poland, in which he said, ''For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power,'' may have been provocative, and it might have his advisers scrambling to soften it, but it was right, and the right message to send about what should become of Vladimir Putin's foul regime.

Yet Biden still reminds me of George H.W. Bush, who handled the big foreign policy crises of his day with aplomb but wound up as a one-termer. What do you think of the comparison?

Gail Collins: Hey, isn't it interesting to recall that when Bush was fighting to get Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait in 1991, the big American ally was Russia? Those were the days, I guess. Just noticed that a Gallup poll found that right after the war, Bush had an 89 percent approval rating.

Bret: Bush had the advantage of not having to face down a nuclear-armed adversary -- thanks to an Israeli strike on Saddam Hussein's nuclear reactor a decade earlier.

Gail: And yet he got defeated for a second term by Bill Clinton. We could discuss the possibility of Biden suffering a similar fate -- perceptions of a bad economy trump strong foreign policy. Except that Clinton's genius was in portraying himself as a Democrat who normal Republicans didn't have to fear. Very, very doubtful the next Republican presidential nominee is going to be able to turn that trick.

Do you really think Biden would be walloped if people actually had to compare him to Trump, one on one, presuming the two of them ran again?

Bret: I continue to have a hard time believing that Biden intends to run again, when he's 81. I also don't think Trump's going to run -- he's damaged himself more deeply than he probably realizes with his imbecile praise of Putin and his continued election denialism.

Gail: This scenario presumes Trump bows to reality. Hehehehehe. Sorry, continue.

Bret: Fair point.

Assuming your hypothetical turns out to be right, I'd probably place a small bet on Trump winning a rematch, awful as that is. I know Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton were able to turn their presidencies around after difficult starts. But both men were naturally gifted political figures in a way Biden just isn't. Both men were in touch with the center of American politics in a way Biden should be, but isn't, because he steered too far to the left in his first year. And both men were sailing into calmer seas, economically speaking, as they prepared their re-election campaigns, whereas I don't see inflation being tamed except at the price of a very steep recession.

Would you bet on Biden in a rematch?

Gail: Yeah, but I don't think Biden is going to run. Although he'd be crazy to formally announce this soon and turn the bulk of his presidency into a lame-duck limp.

Bret: Don't agree that he should wait to announce, but that's an argument for another time.

Gail: And I don't think his problem is steering too far to the left. His problem is that he doesn't -- never did have -- that political genius for selling the country, or even his supporters, on a big message.

Bret: Give 'em hell, Harry, he is not. But it looks like he's trying with his plan to tax the very rich. Which ... well, what do you think of it?

Gail: Ah, Bret, our most reliable, perpetual disagreement. Yeah, given the fact that the richest Americans are now paying an effective tax rate around 8 percent, I would say a minimum of 20 percent on households worth more than $100 million is not a burden.

Bret: Probably won't get past the Senate, may be ruled an unconstitutional wealth tax by the Supreme Court and is reminiscent of the alternative minimum tax, which was supposed to hit only a handful of highfliers in the 1970s but wound up taxing far less wealthy people. But the proposal could still be ... popular. Anything else you'd like to see him do?

Gail: I'd also be happy to see him lead a quest to control prescription drug prices: Let Medicare negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry and cap the cost of certain medications, like insulin. It'd be a debate people could really get into.

Bret: I think job No. 1 for Biden is to make sure Putin experiences unmistakable defeat in Ukraine. A stalemated truce in which Russia steals more of Ukraine's coastline, ports and energy riches will only entice Putin to create further crises so that he can ''solve'' them in exchange for Western concessions. I also think we should accept more than 100,000 Ukrainian refugees; we should welcome as many who want to come here with open arms.

Gail: We should talk more about the refugees long term, but of course the immediate challenge is to support them in every way possible.

Bret: If Romania can take in more than half a million refugees, we can take in at least as many.

Gail: Not going to argue, but right now back to domestic matters ...

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[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/opinion/biden-ukraine-jackson-cruz.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/28/opinion/biden-ukraine-jackson-cruz.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAHBETH MANEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 29, 2022

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[***Ted Cruz Knows Which Side He’s On; The Conversation***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:653G-R3X1-JBG3-60B9-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

March 28, 2022 Monday 00:42 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1601 words

**Byline:** Gail Collins and Bret Stephens

**Highlight:** Washington is getting extra serious and extra silly.

**Body**

Bret Stephens: Hi, Gail. I think many Americans would give President Biden reasonably high marks for his handling of the war in Ukraine so far. His speech in Poland, in which he said, “For God’s sake, this man cannot remain in power,” may have been provocative, and it might have his advisers scrambling to soften it, but it was right, and the right message to send about what should become of Vladimir Putin’s foul regime.

Yet Biden still reminds me of George H.W. Bush, who handled the big foreign policy crises of his day with aplomb but wound up as a one-termer. What do you think of the comparison?

Gail Collins: Hey, isn’t it interesting to recall that when Bush was fighting to get Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait in 1991, the big American ally was Russia? Those were the days, I guess. Just noticed that a Gallup poll found that right after the war, Bush had an [*89 percent approval rating.*](https://news.gallup.com/opinion/gallup/234971/george-bush-retrospective.aspx)

Bret: Bush had the advantage of not having to face down a nuclear-armed adversary — thanks to an Israeli strike on Saddam Hussein’s nuclear reactor a decade earlier.

Gail: And yet he got defeated for a second term by Bill Clinton. We could discuss the possibility of Biden suffering a similar fate — perceptions of a bad economy trump strong foreign policy. Except that Clinton’s genius was in portraying himself as a Democrat who normal Republicans didn’t have to fear. Very, very doubtful the next Republican presidential nominee is going to be able to turn that trick.

Do you really think Biden would be walloped if people actually had to compare him to Trump, one on one, presuming the two of them ran again?

Bret: I continue to have a hard time believing that Biden intends to run again, when he’s 81. I also don’t think Trump’s going to run — he’s damaged himself more deeply than he probably realizes with his imbecile praise of Putin and his continued election denialism.

Gail: This scenario presumes Trump bows to reality. Hehehehehe. Sorry, continue.

Bret: Fair point.

Assuming your hypothetical turns out to be right, I’d probably place a small bet on Trump winning a rematch, awful as that is. I know Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton were able to turn their presidencies around after difficult starts. But both men were naturally gifted political figures in a way Biden just isn’t. Both men were in touch with the center of American politics in a way Biden should be, but isn’t, because he steered too far to the left in his first year. And both men were sailing into calmer seas, economically speaking, as they prepared their re-election campaigns, whereas I don’t see inflation being tamed except at the price of a very steep recession.

Would you bet on Biden in a rematch?

Gail: Yeah, but I don’t think Biden is going to run. Although he’d be crazy to formally announce this soon and turn the bulk of his presidency into a lame-duck limp.

Bret: Don’t agree that he should wait to announce, but that’s an argument [*for another time*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/14/opinion/biden-age-election-2024.html).

Gail: And I don’t think his problem is steering too far to the left. His problem is that he doesn’t — never did have — that political genius for selling the country, or even his supporters, on a big message.

Bret: Give ’em hell, Harry, he is not. But it looks like he’s trying with his plan to tax the very rich. Which … well, what do you think of it?

Gail: Ah, Bret, our most reliable, perpetual disagreement. Yeah, given the fact that the richest Americans are now paying an effective tax rate around 8 percent, I would say a minimum of 20 percent on households worth more than $100 million is not a burden.

Bret: Probably won’t get past the Senate, may be ruled an unconstitutional wealth tax by the Supreme Court and is reminiscent of the alternative minimum tax, which was supposed to hit only a handful of highfliers in the 1970s but wound up taxing far less wealthy people. But the proposal could still be … popular. Anything else you’d like to see him do?

Gail: I’d also be happy to see him lead a quest to control prescription drug prices: Let Medicare negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry and cap the cost of certain medications, like insulin. It’d be a debate people could really get into.

Bret: I think job No. 1 for Biden is to make sure Putin experiences unmistakable defeat in Ukraine. A stalemated truce in which Russia steals more of Ukraine’s coastline, ports and energy riches will only entice Putin to create further crises so that he can “solve” them in exchange for Western concessions. I also think we should accept more than 100,000 Ukrainian refugees; we should welcome as many who want to come here with open arms.

Gail: We should talk more about the refugees long term, but of course the immediate challenge is to support them in every way possible.

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PHOTO (PHOTOGRAPH BY SARAHBETH MANEY/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** March 29, 2022

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[***A Chronicle of Mexico City and Its Multitudes; Nonfiction***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:62CK-3NF1-DXY4-X3XV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 6, 2021 Tuesday 17:28 EST

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**Section:** BOOKS; review

**Length:** 796 words

**Byline:** Rubén Gallo

**Highlight:** In “Horizontal Vertigo,” the Mexican novelist Juan Villoro writes with affection and wonderment about Mexico City, the vast and complex megalopolis.

**Body**

HORIZONTAL VERTIGO

A City Called Mexico

By Juan Villoro

Mexico City, a vast megalopolis of over 20 million, founded 500 years ago and erected on what was once a lake bed, is above all a place of contradictions: It is home to some of the world’s richest billionaires as well as to Indigenous migrants who live on the streets; it is one of the most progressive capitals in the Americas (same-sex marriage was legalized over a decade ago and businesses are required by law to display notices stating they do not discriminate based on race, gender or handicap) and also a place where, on average, five people are murdered every day. It boasts more museums than Paris (over 150) as well as tens of thousands of illiterate residents.

With its intensity and penchant for hyperbole, the city has also attracted the attention of writers. “Where the Air Is Clear” (1958), Carlos Fuentes’s most ambitious novel, seeks to portray the myriad social classes, professions and places that made the capital into one of the most modern urban centers in 1950s Latin America. In the 1970s and ’80s, Carlos Monsiváis explored the city’s marginal areas — from sleazy gay bars to ***working-class*** cabarets — and narrated the rise of a civic movement in the wake of the 1985 earthquake.

Juan Villoro — an accomplished novelist and journalist — has followed in their footsteps. Villoro was born in 1956 and came of age in the 1970s, a dark decade marked by corruption, economic crises and state violence against students and social activists. In his 20s, he hosted a radio program devoted to rock music and published nonfiction in La Jornada, the country’s most politically engaged newspaper. He attended concerts by the Rolling Stones, joined a radical leftist party and, when [*Mexico City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/04/world/americas/mexico-city-subway-accident.html) became the country’s 32nd state, he was invited to participate in drafting the city’s constitution.

In “Horizontal Vertigo” Villoro recounts his remarkable engagement with [*Mexico City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/04/world/americas/mexico-city-subway-accident.html) in chapters devoted to a wide array of topics: U.F.O.s (a taxi driver eloquently explains the different shapes these objects can take and details his encounters with them); the subway (opened in 1969, it transports over five million passengers per day, and functions as a full-fledged underground city); the rag-wielding franeleros who illegally rent out street parking spaces and charge a few pesos to “watch your car”; the church of Santo Domingo, where an erudite, aging priest spent decades denouncing political violence as he quoted Giorgio Agamben and the Gospels in his sermons; the 2009 swine flu pandemic; and the 2017 earthquake, which leveled dozens of buildings and left over 300 dead.

Villoro recounts his adventures with a mix of irony and empathy, with a sense of humor and a feeling for the absurd. He is exquisitely attuned to the capital’s contradictions and nuances, and he knows how to listen to its inhabitants. There are deeply moving moments in this book, such as the recollection of a social justice activist who once visited a woman in a shack: She asked him if he wanted to wash his hands or have some tea. He said he’d like both. “But I only have one cup of water,” the woman answered.

For those of us who have witnessed the evolution of [*Mexico City*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/04/world/americas/mexico-city-subway-accident.html) from what Monsiváis described as a “postapocalyptic” megalopolis in the 1980s to the global city of the 2020s, Villoro’s book is like a time machine. In its pages, the reader revisits a place that is no longer there: an urban center where the avenues were once jammed with VW bugs; a city where the secretaries of government officials would send an email, then phone the recipient to make sure it had arrived; a place where a visit to a city office could turn into a Kafkaesque ordeal after an employee announced that the matter required summoning el encargado, the higher-up.

Despite his unwavering upbeat tone, Villoro offers some glimpses of the recent transformations that have turned the city into a much darker and less humane place as the capital “became the hostage of drug dealers, tribes of vendors, distributors of pirated goods, the most speculative real estate interests, and an economy that privileged international franchises and augmented social inequality.”

One could add to this list the ravages produced by the sudden embrace of screens, apps and social media. In a city where every single person seems to be staring at a phone, will Villoro be the last of Mexico City’s chroniclers?

Rubén Gallo is the author of “Freud’s Mexico: Into the Wilds of Psychoanalysis” and “Proust’s Latin Americans.” He teaches literature at Princeton University. HORIZONTAL VERTIGO A City Called Mexico By Juan Villoro Translated by Alfred MacAdam 350 pp. Pantheon. $35.

PHOTO: Chapultepec Park in Mexico City. (PHOTOGRAPH BY MEGHAN DHALIWAL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** May 4, 2021

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[***Gossip***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:632K-2WS1-JBG3-608W-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

July 4, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section MM; Column 0; Magazine Desk; Pg. 16

**Length:** 966 words

**Byline:** By Kristen Radtke

**Body**

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

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

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

For an adolescent, gossip was about currying favor, remaining on the inside of a group as a pimply teen terrified of being pushed outside. The anthropologist Robin Dunbar has proposed that humans developed spoken language not to more effectively hunt or build or conquer but to gossip. If we're going to maintain our position within a group, we need to learn what personal behavior could jeopardize our standing there.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/29/magazine/gossip.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/29/magazine/gossip.html)

**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** July 4, 2021

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[***There's Nothing Wrong With Striving***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64JC-HC91-DXY4-X3NF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 16, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section SR; Column 0; Sunday Review Desk; Pg. 2; GUEST ESSAY

**Length:** 1366 words

**Byline:** By Elizabeth Spiers

**Body**

In a December New Yorker profile of the actor Jeremy Strong, who plays Kendall Roy on the HBO show ''Succession,'' colleagues, friends and classmates painted him as a person who, in internet-speak, ''has no chill.'' His intense and sometimes extreme devotion to his craft was extensively documented and skewered.

One critique particularly stood out to me when I read it. A classmate of Mr. Strong's at Yale, where he studied with financial aid, said, ''I'd never met anyone else at Yale with that careerist drive.''

In this respect, the version of Mr. Strong in the profile felt very relatable. Like me, he grew up ***working class***: He was the son of a juvenile jail employee and a hospice nurse in Massachusetts. My dad was a local lineman for a utilities company in Alabama, and my mom worked at my school, first as a janitor, then later as a lunch lady in the cafeteria. I also went to a fancy college on enough financial aid to rival the G.D.P. of a small European country. I have felt dismissed at times as an ambitious striver, or because I wasn't an obvious fit in a room full of wealthy, overeducated people, with my rednecky accent and teeth unmolested by modern orthodontics. My freshman year at Duke University, a lacrosse player coming from a prestigious boarding school overheard me talking and asked, ''Where the [expletive] are you from?'' It was clear that he wasn't just asking for a geographic location.

There's an unmistakably negative connotation to the word ''careerist.'' It is a dismissive insult often deployed against people who have the temerity to transcend their economic class. Every time I've heard it used, it has been by someone who has enough privilege that needing to work and worrying about advancement are alien experiences. The target is generally someone like Mr. Strong, whose path to success was long and difficult, and sometimes involved extreme displays of devotion to his craft. (As recounted in the New Yorker profile, Mr. Strong once drove to Canada as Daniel Day-Lewis's assistant on a film shoot, the great actor's prop mandolin strapped into the passenger seat like he was ''guarding a relic.'')

Only one person has ever called me a careerist to my face, and it was over a decade ago. An ex-boyfriend who was also a writer was piqued that I got a nice magazine assignment and that I had the gall to be enthusiastic about it. He was European and had gone to expensive prestigious schools, paid for by his parents. He saw my focus on my journalism career as a gaudy Americanism that carried the stench of effort. Given his sneering reaction, you would think I had murdered all of my professional peers and scaled a pile of their dead bodies in order to get the work.

In fact, I had simply been offered the assignment as part of a contract I had at the time as a columnist at Fortune magazine. I had perhaps done some Jeremy Strong-level striving to get the contract, though. After I discovered that no one in media wanted to assign me stories about business and finance, despite my having worked as an equity analyst, I started a Wall Street blog called Dealbreaker that was read by a lot of young finance professionals, and ultimately, the guy who hired me at Fortune. I was young, a woman and my background wasn't typical for a finance columnist. A colleague wanted to know how I got the gig. I hadn't even done an internship, he pointed out.

And I hadn't. Internships in media were mostly unpaid, and often won via connections or nepotism. I had no connections and no money at the beginning of my media career. Besides, starting a media company from scratch -- launching it, writing it, hiring other people, building an audience -- might be more difficult than doing an internship! It was certainly not the easy way in. My colleague's implication that I must have cheated my way in somehow, showed me quite clearly how elites often view people who they see as interlopers in their rarefied spaces.

Class resentment is often discussed as if it's a one-way phenomenon: The lower classes resent the upper classes. But it works in the other direction, too. Wealthy elites in an institution full of other wealthy elites view each other as allies. I, or Jeremy Strong, might be a threat.

A study from 2018 illustrates this problem: Researchers asked European university students about attitudes toward immigrants. When university-educated immigrants were perceived as a competitive threat to the surveyed group, they were rated more negatively than those with less education.

In the United States, we love a good Horatio Alger story, in which a person who starts out with very little applies hard work and ambition and becomes a success -- but only in the abstract. In real life, American elites abhor a try-hard as much as any European aristocrat might.

In our national mythology, class doesn't matter, but in practice, our widely held belief in the myth of meritocracy reinforces inequality. Americans tend to overestimate the nation's economic mobility, as research from Harvard University has shown, and they have great faith in the fairness of their economic system, despite ample evidence of racial and other bias. In certain circles at least, coming from a modest background and nakedly wanting more is a moral deficiency, a form of greed.

The classism of this attitude isn't always apparent because there's plenty to legitimately criticize about America's hustle culture, in which overwork is valorized and we're all expected to rise and grind. The Covid pandemic and rethinking of work culture that it forced has spawned a backlash and a slew of think pieces about the end of ambition and whether careers really matter when people are dying and the planet is burning.

But that's not a critique of striving itself; it's a critique of a corporate culture that still relies upon unsustainably long work hours, cutthroat competitiveness, and exploitative labor practices.

The real question, then, is what is worth striving for? There is a difference between pointlessly toiling away for a company and working hard because you enjoy it, or you care about what you do, or most crucially, you are trying to economically advance. There's nothing wrong with wanting to do better than your parents did. Making an effort -- even an over-the-top effort like Mr. Strong's -- should not be embarrassing. We strivers understand this because we've never been able to achieve great successes without that effort.

Elites are often socialized into affecting ''ease'' and eschewing displays of effort. But it's a mistake to see the disconnect in terms of personal style or etiquette. We strivers cannot behave as if things come easily because pretending that they do often requires resources we lack. We are ''unchill'' because we have neither the time nor the money to assemble the accouterments of chill, or to perform it.

It's worth noting that ''Succession,'' the show where Mr. Strong's remarkable performance has made him a star worthy of a New Yorker profile, centers on a striver, Logan Roy, who grew up without wealth in Scotland and built a media empire. His children, on the other hand, inhabit a world of wealthy people who disdain striving in just the way that Mr. Strong's Yale classmates quoted in The New Yorker appear to.

This disconnect is represented most glaringly in Tom Wambsgans, a much-mocked social climber who married into the family, and effectively, the family business. But in the season finale, the strivers seem to win the day: Tom joins forces with Logan in a corporate maneuver that blindsides the Roy children -- who are left with only their stunning sense of entitlement about what they deserve, without doing anything so crass as earnestly striving for it.

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**Graphic**

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

**Load-Date:** January 16, 2022

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[***This Presidency Isn’t Turning Out as Planned; Ezra Klein***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64JC-Y501-JBG3-63RM-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

January 16, 2022 Sunday 10:43 EST

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**Section:** OPINION

**Length:** 1366 words

**Byline:** Ezra Klein

**Highlight:** The problems the president is facing are an almost perfect inversion of the problems Obama faced.

**Body**

Joe Biden was Barack Obama’s vice president. His Treasury secretary, Janet Yellen, was Obama’s pick to lead the Federal Reserve. The director of Biden’s National Economic Council, Brian Deese, was deputy director of Obama’s National Economic Council. His chief of staff, Ron Klain, was his chief of staff for the first two years of the Obama administration and then Obama’s top Ebola adviser. And so on.

The familiar names and faces can obscure how different the new administration, in practice, has become. The problems Biden is facing are an almost perfect inversion of the problems Obama faced. The Obama administration was bedeviled by crises of demand. The Biden administration is struggling with crises of supply.

For years, every conversation I had with Obama administration economists was about how to persuade employers to hire and consumers to spend. The 2009 stimulus was too small, and while we avoided a second Great Depression, we sank into an achingly slow recovery. Democrats carried those lessons into the Covid pandemic. They met the crisis with overwhelming fiscal force, joining with the Trump administration to pass the $2.2 trillion CARES Act and then adding the $1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan, the trillion-dollar infrastructure bill and the assorted Build Back Better proposals on top. They made clear that they preferred the risks of a hot economy, like inflation, to the threat of mass joblessness.

“We want to get something economists call full employment,” Biden said in May. “Instead of workers competing with each other for jobs that are scarce, we want employers to compete with each other to attract work.”

That they have largely succeeded feels like the best-kept secret in Washington. A year ago, forecasters expected unemployment to be nearly 6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2021. Instead, it fell to 3.9 percent in December, driven by the largest one-year drop in unemployment in American history. Wages are high, new businesses are forming [*at record rates*](https://twitter.com/JHaltiwanger_UM/status/1481314145639309321), and poverty has fallen below its prepandemic levels. Since March 2020, Americans saved at least $2 trillion more than expected. And that’s not just a function of the rich getting richer: a JPMorgan Chase [*analysis*](https://www.jpmorganchase.com/institute/research/household-income-spending/household-finances-pulse-cash-balances-during-COVID-19) found the median household’s checking account balance was 50 percent higher in July 2021 than in the months before the pandemic.

It is easy to imagine the wan recovery we could’ve had if the mistakes of 2009 and 2010 had been repeated. Instead, we met the pandemic with tremendous, perhaps excessive, fiscal force. We fought the recession and won. The problems we do have shouldn’t obscure the problems we don’t.

But we do have problems. Year-on-year inflation is running at 7 percent, its highest rate in decades, and Omicron has shown that the Biden administration wasted months of possible preparation. It is not to blame for the new variant, but it is to blame for the paucity of tests, effective masks and ventilation upgrades.

The conversations I have with the Biden administration’s economists are very different from the conversations I had with the Obama administration’s economists, even when they’re the same people. Now the discussion is all about what the economy can produce and how fast it can be shipped. They need companies to make more goods and make them faster. They need more chips so there can be more cars and computers. They need ports to clear more shipments and Pfizer to make more antiviral pills and shipping companies to hire more truckers and schools to upgrade their ventilation systems.

Some of these problems reflect the Biden administration’s successes. (Read my colleague Paul Krugman for [*more*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/01/06/opinion/inflation-unemployment-economy-growth.html) on this.) For all the talk of supply chain crises, many of the delays and shortages reflect unexpectedly strong demand, not a pandemic-induced breakdown in production. Supply chains are built to produce the goods that companies think will be consumed in the future. Expectations were off for 2021, in part because forecasters thought demand would slacken as people lost work and wages, in part because the fiscal response was massively larger than anyone anticipated and in part because when people couldn’t go out for meals and movies, they bought things instead. Overall spending is [*more or less*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/16/opinion/inflation-economy-2021.html) on its prepandemic trend, but the composition of spending has changed: Americans [*purchased*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/16/briefing/inflation-biden-approval.html) 18 percent more physical goods in September 2021 than in February 2020.

Now the Biden administration fears that its supply problems will wipe out its demand successes. In recent remarks, Biden took aim at those who would lower prices by breaking the buying power of the ***working class***. “If car prices are too high right now, there are two solutions,” Biden said. “You increase the supply of cars by making more of them, or you reduce demand for cars by making Americans poorer. That’s the choice. Believe it or not, there’s a lot of people in the second camp.”

He’s right, but this is a practical fight, not just an ideological one, and the Biden administration is making its own mistakes. His administration is suffering right now from directly mismanaging Covid supplies. It did an extraordinary job in its first months, flooding the country with vaccines. Today, any adult who wants one, or three, can get the shots. But vaccines aren’t the only public health tool that matters, and there was every reason to believe the Biden administration knew it. The American Rescue Plan had about $20 billion for vaccine distribution, but it had $50 billion to expand testing and even more than that to retrofit classrooms so teachers and children alike would feel safe. Where did that money go?

Getting the pandemic supply chain right would help ease every other supply chain, too. If Americans could move about their lives more confidently, they could buy services instead of things, and if companies could test and protect their work forces more effectively, they could produce and ship more goods.

But the Biden administration hasn’t fully embraced its role as an economic planner. When Jen Psaki, the White House press secretary, was asked about testing shortages in December, she shot back, “Should we just send one to every American?”

Psaki’s snark soon became Biden’s policy. The administration is launching a website where any family can request four free tests. That’s a start, but no more than that. For rapid testing to work, people need to be able to do it constantly. But because the administration didn’t create the supply of tests it needed months ago, there aren’t enough tests for it or anyone else to buy now. Part of this reflects the ongoing failure of the Food and Drug Administration to approve many of the tests already being sold in Europe.

The same is true, I’d argue, about masks. There’s simply no reason every American can’t pick up an unlimited supply of N95s and KN95s at every post office, library and D.M.V. Instead, people are buying counterfeit N95s on Amazon and wearing cloth masks that do far less to arrest spread. Now the Biden administration is moving toward supplying masks. But more needs to be done: How about ventilation? How about building the vaccine production capacity needed to vaccinate the world and prevent future strains from emerging? How about building capacity to produce more antiviral pills so that the next effective treatment can ramp up more quickly?

For decades, Democrats and Republican administrations alike believed the market would manage supply. We live in the wreckage of that worldview. But it held for so long that the U.S. government has lost both the muscle and the confidence needed to manage supply, at least when it comes to anything other than military spending. So Biden’s task now is clear: to build a government that can create supply, not just demand.

This may not be the presidency Biden prepared for, but it’s the one he got.

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**Load-Date:** January 18, 2022

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[***A Groundbreaking Cartoon Family Returns, ‘Louder and Prouder’***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:64VH-F8G1-JBG3-60DV-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 23, 2022 Wednesday 14:00 EST

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**Section:** ARTS; television

**Length:** 1479 words

**Byline:** Leigh-Ann Jackson

**Highlight:** “The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder,” on Disney+, revives a beloved animated series for a new generation.

**Body**

“The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder,” on Disney+, revives a beloved animated series for a new generation.

When “The Proud Family” debuted on the Disney Channel on Sept. 15, 2001, it introduced one of TV’s first animated African American families.

Over 52 episodes and a TV movie, the series offered a lighthearted depiction of a Black suburban family going about their everyday lives. The headstrong middle-schooler Penny Proud (voiced by Kyla Pratt) took the lead, with her strict but loving parents Oscar and Trudy (Tommy Davidson and Paula Jai Parker), feisty grandmother Suga Mama (Jo Marie Payton) and precocious infant twin siblings BeBe and CeCe rounding out the rest of the clan.

They bickered, supported one another, threw shade and showed love — all of the things that typical on-screen families do. But before The Prouds, TV audiences rarely got to see a Black cartoon family doing those run-of-the-mill things, too.

Now the groundbreaking brood is back with “The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder,” a 10-episode revival scheduled to air weekly on Disney+ starting Feb. 23.

During the show’s original run, from 2001 to 2005, Penny went through the paces of early adolescence — goofing around with her multicultural crew of friends, pouting about chores, dodging school bullies and testing parental boundaries. While many of the show’s themes were universal, they were delivered in a way that was uniquely and intentionally rooted in Black culture.

The dialogue was studded with the kinds of colloquialisms and vernacular that can be heard in many Black households. The children’s playground banter employed of-the-moment slang, often pulled from rap lyrics. There were personal jabs about being “ashy” and class warfare was waged whenever the ***working-class*** branch of the family butted heads with their “bougie” in-laws.

Even the body language and nonverbal cues — a wary side-eye, an indignant up-and-down glare — were embedded as nods to Black viewers. The humor worked on multiple levels, with silly sight gags that appeal to grade-schoolers and more subtle punch lines to keep grown-ups engaged.

“A lot of what we’d do was like, ‘Wink, wink. You know what we’re saying, right?’” said Bruce W. Smith, the show’s creator. “We were hiding a lot of innuendo and, frankly, family business under the guise of what our characters were saying and going through. Where the show shines is in all of its cultural references.”

Smith is a veteran animator who spent much of the ’90s working on feature films like “Space Jam” and Disney’s “Tarzan” and “The Emperor’s New Groove.” By the end of that decade, he set his sights on serialized television, aiming to fill a void in the small screen’s animated offerings.

“‘The Simpsons,’ ‘Family Guy,’ ‘King of the Hill,’ all these animated sitcoms became the rage,” he said. “I was just looking at them like: OK, we’re not in this. We’re not involved somehow, and we should be.”

At the time, live-action sitcoms like “Moesha” and “Sister, Sister” had proven that Black teenage girls could both carry a series and draw a dedicated audience. Smith set out to create a cartoon sitcom in the vein of “Moesha” — one that centered a Black girl’s life and experiences.

His first step was teaming up with Ralph Farquhar, a creator of “Moesha,” as well as its spinoff, “The Parkers,” and the short-lived Black family dramedy “South Central.” Together, they oversaw “The Proud Family” and its subsequent 2005 TV movie, with Smith also directing several episodes.

“The fact that there was no one else doing it was sad,” Farquhar said, in a joint video interview with Smith. “But for us, it was this opportunity. We wanted to tell our stories in a way that we understand. In that nuanced way that only comes from living it.”

Smith added: “The great thing about it was there was nothing before us. There was no bar set. For us, that was exciting because then we could set the bar.”

In addition to commonplace domestic scenes — kitchen table spats, curfew breaches, babysitting snafus — there was a smattering of more educational story lines. These included a poignant Kwanzaa celebration and a Black History Month tribute to oft-overlooked luminaries like the pioneering aviator Bessie Coleman and Shirley Chisholm, the first Black woman elected to Congress.

“That’s what I loved about the original: We talked about things that other people shied away from,” said Pratt, who took on the role of Penny at age 14. “And we’re doing the same thing this time around.”

The revival, which is also overseen by Smith and Farquhar, retains much of the original’s flavor, but it has been updated for the 2020s. Instead of pagers, the kids use smartphones. Dated phrases like “off the heezy fo’ sheezy” are out; “woke” and “Black girl magic” are now in.

The original featured guest appearances by popular early ’00s performers like Lil’ Romeo, Mos Def and Mariah Carey. “Louder and Prouder” is similarly star-studded, with cameos by the likes of Lil Nas X, Chance the Rapper and Lizzo. The heartwarming theme song, performed by [*Solange Knowles and Destiny’s Child*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YH0o-zofRsA), also got a makeover — the 2022 version is sung by the newcomer Joyce Wrice.

Penny and her friends are now solidly into their teens, with all of the body changes, heightened hormones and social minefields that entails. And a few new players have joined the returning core cast.

The former reality TV star EJ Johnson voices Penny’s gender-fluid friend Michael. (The recurring character Wizard Kelly is a sly allusion to Johnson’s father, the N.B.A. legend Magic Johnson.) And a same-sex couple, Barry and Randall Leibowitz-Jenkins (Zachary Quinto and Billy Porter), have moved into the neighborhood with their adopted teenagers: son Francis (Artist Dubose, better known as the rapper A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie) and daughter Maya (Keke Palmer), a fiery activist who serves as Penny’s new foil.

Palmer, whose breakthrough came in the 2006 film [*“Akeelah and the Bee,”*](https://www.nytimes.com/2006/04/28/movies/a-young-girl-and-big-words-in-akeelah-and-the-bee.html) credits Farquhar with discovering her a few years earlier, when she was 10. ([*He cast her*](https://www.instagram.com/p/CDupNbdD5Fs/) in a Disney Channel pilot that didn’t get picked up.) He asked her to join “Louder and Prouder” because he knew she’d been a longtime fan of the original.

“I saw a family that reminded me of my own — I even had boy-girl twins in my family,” Palmer said. “That was a show that represented what my Black American culture looked like. I thought they got it right!”

Nevertheless, Disney chose not to renew “The Proud Family” when the original production run ended in 2005. (Disney declined to comment on the end of the original show.) In the interview, Smith and Farquhar said they have never known why the show wasn’t allowed to continue, but they made clear that they always hoped to bring it back in some form.

“From the moment we stopped doing the original version, we had been campaigning to bring it back,” Farquhar said. “We weren’t quite sure why we ever even stopped.”

They weren’t alone. “The Proud Family” has been a steady source of millennial nostalgia online, with fans sharing art and cosplay photos inspired by the show on social media, and revisiting beloved episodes in [*blog posts*](https://shadowandact.com/why-the-proud-family-kwanzaa-episode-is-required-viewing). Pratt said overzealous fans have frequently reached out to her in real life, too.

“People were talking to me literally every other day of my life, trying to get the show back on,” she said.

Farquhar and Smith said they noticed a new outpouring from “Proud” fans after Disney+ began streaming the original on Jan. 1, 2020. Disney apparently noticed, too. The company approached the men about a revival, and then publicly announced it on Feb. 27, 2020.

Farquhar and Smith have since signed a multiyear overall deal with Disney to produce animated and live-action series and movies and to develop projects for emerging and diverse talent. Smith boasted that the “Louder and Prouder” staff, from the directors to layout artists to animators, “looks like the show.” (Like most of the entertainment industry, animation [*has historically offered*](https://www.nywift.org/usc-annenberg-increasing-inclusion-in-animation-report-2019/) far fewer opportunities to women and people of color than to white men.)

Smith has wanted to expand Black people’s presence and influence in animation since he started working in the industry in the early 1980s, he said, a mission informed by his own experiences as a young cartoon fan.

“When I was growing up, I loved shows like ‘The Flintstones’ and ‘The Jetsons,’” he said. But together they painted an unwelcoming picture: “I didn’t exist in the beginning of time, and I don’t think they’re looking for me to exist when spaceships start flying off this planet.”

“I gotta do something about that,” he continued. “Because I love this medium and I want to see myself in this.”

PHOTOS: The Prouds include: from top left, Trudy (Paula Jai Parker), Penny (Kyla Pratt) and Oscar (Tommy Davidson), and above, Suga Mama (Jo Marie Payton). Below, Penny’s new gender-fluid friend Michael (EJ Johnson), second from right. (PHOTOGRAPHS VIA DISNEY+)

**Load-Date:** February 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[***They Come for Breakfast, 'Stay for Fellowship'***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6598-GSY1-JBG3-649D-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

April 24, 2022 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section RE; Column 0; Real Estate Desk; Pg. 6

**Length:** 1612 words

**Byline:** By Gregory Schmidt

**Body**

Shunned when they were younger, older L.G.B.T.Q. adults have found a community at a senior home create for them by SAGE, a New York advocacy group.

She was a teenager growing up in Queens when her mother kicked out of her out of the house for having a girlfriend. It was the 1960s, and being gay was ''taboo,'' Diedra Nottingham remembered. With nowhere to turn, she wound up sleeping in parks and hallways.

Over the years, Ms. Nottingham, now 71, struggled to maintain stable housing, sometimes living with friends or relatives, sometimes in a women's shelter. Epileptic seizures kept her from holding a steady job, hampering her ability to pay rent.

Weary of the harassment she faced in shelters and other transitional housing, she met a social worker who put her in touch with SAGE, a New York advocacy group for L.G.B.T.Q. elders.

In 2020, Ms. Nottingham settled into a new one-bedroom apartment in the Stonewall House, the group's L.G.B.T.Q.-friendly housing development in Fort Greene. ''There are people like me in this building,'' she said.

Aging in New York is not easy. Many older residents have little to no savings and a limited budget to pay for food, health care and shelter. Fears of discrimination can complicate matters for aging L.G.B.T.Q. Americans, many of whom lived through a time when being open about their orientation could lead to physical violence, arrest or getting fired from a job. In a 2018 survey of adults age 45 and older who identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, 34 percent said they were worried they would have to hide their identity to gain access to suitable housing, according to AARP.

''L.G.B.T.Q. folks are much more likely to grow old single'' because many never married or had children, said Michael Adams, the chief executive of SAGE. ''What we have seen historically is that elders have been forgotten and they don't have the support they need.''

SAGE was founded in 1978 to help address those challenges in three ways: support for elders, training for caregivers and advocacy of public policy. Over the years, it has grown to a staff of more than 100 and a $15 million annual budget, Mr. Adams said, but the mission is still the same: ''to lift up and honor and celebrate the elder pioneers of the L.G.B.T.Q. community.''

In recent years, affordable housing has become a priority for the organization, which opened the 145-unit Stonewall House in December 2019. Last March, it opened Crotona Senior Residences in the Bronx, which has 83 apartments. For Ms. Nottingham and other residents, the timing has proved crucial. After plunging in the pandemic, rents in New York are once again climbing to new heights, pushing many out of apartments they can no longer afford. Basic necessities are soaring as inflation hits its fastest pace in more than 40 years.

At Stonewall House and Crotona Senior Residences, roughly a third of the apartments are set aside for formerly homeless adults, and potential tenants go through a screening process to meet income requirements, Mr. Adams said.

''People are just on the edge and need a little support that comes in the form of permanent housing,'' he said. ''A building like this allows people to get on the right side of that margin.''

SAGE also has created senior community centers at the two buildings. Anyone over 60 can stop by to eat a meal, join a book club or take a dance class.

At Stonewall House, about a 10-minute walk from Downtown Brooklyn, visitors to the community center are greeted with a bulletin board that displays the history about the Stonewall uprising in 1969 in Greenwich Village, which is considered the start of the gay rights movement in the United States. The center has weekly movies, field trips and special events: Pink and blue balloons left over from a recent Transgender Day of Visibility celebration floated listlessly in a corner of one of the multipurpose rooms.

''Once they step into our center, they have a history of Stonewall and what it means to our community,'' said Odi Chigewe, the site director at the center.

Residents and neighbors start gathering in the center at 10 a.m. for a hot breakfast. ''Other centers offer lunch, but I wanted a different approach,'' Ms. Chigewe said. ''They stay for fellowship.''

In the cafeteria on a recent morning, Barbara Abrams, a 77-year-old who identifies as L.G.B.T.Q., dined on pancakes, bacon and apple juice. She walks 20 minutes from her home every weekday for breakfast and stays at the center until 5 p.m. ''This means that much to me.'' she said. ''I made friends here.''

At the next table, Howard Grossman, 66, had just arrived. ''It's a nice gathering,'' he said. ''I look forward to it every morning.'' Afterward, he returned to the one-bedroom apartment he shares upstairs with his husband, Brad Smith, 61, a night owl who gets up too late to join the ''breakfast club,'' as Mr. Grossman put it.

Their one-bedroom apartment is crowded with papers, boxes and tchotchkes. An oversize cabinet stuffed with Lladró figurines and china teacups dominated the living room. But their home has a view of the Brooklyn Navy Yard, as well as the Empire State Building in the distance, which Mr. Grossman painted in an art class downstairs. And it offered a welcoming community for an aging gay couple with few resources.

''We always thought it would be a dream to live some place where we could feel comfortable and safe and it would be accepting to us a couple,'' Mr. Smith said.

Taking a break from preparing for Passover Seder, they settled into opposite ends of the couch, with a pillow between them for their cat, Miss Ava (who is afraid of strangers and did not make an appearance). On the coffee table sat a Marilyn Monroe cookie jar, a gift from a friend who died of AIDS.

The couple met on Halloween night in 1982 in Florida. ''We had exchanged numbers, but I threw it away,'' Mr. Grossman said with a chuckle. ''I was in a strange place. Thankfully, he called. We started going out and realized we could make this work.''

They bought a house in Fort Lauderdale in 1994, and when same-sex marriage was recognized in Washington, D.C., they drove to the nation's capital to get married on Aug. 11, 2014.

But bills and stress were mounting. Mr. Smith worked hourly corporate jobs, sometimes getting laid off when business slowed. After surgery to repair an aortic dissection in 2016, Mr. Grossman left his job working in customer service for Wyndham, a hotel and resort company, and they sold their home (which they described as ''a money pit''). They had some money from the sale of the house and in Mr. Grossman's 401(k), but they had no concrete plan for retirement.

''You are on limited income but expenses keep going up,'' Mr. Smith said. ''You get to a point where you wonder what you're going to do.''

On top of health and financial worries, they wanted a safe environment with social programs for gay seniors. When the lottery for Stonewall House opened up, they applied immediately. After their names were drawn, they moved in February 2020. SAGE provides not only the housing, but the social services they need.

''We do have a social worker that is available to us through the SAGE center to help find programs that the city might offer,'' Mr. Smith said. After emergency gallbladder surgery last year, the social worker helped him arrange a home care aide, a walker and a medical alert device that monitors falls.

''This building and this concept has become a nurturing community,'' said Mr. Grossman, who joined the community center's walking club.

Five floors above them, Ms. Nottingham still has her walls up. Stonewall House, following New York law that prohibits discrimination, is open to everyone, and she fears that she could encounter residents and visitors from the neighborhood who are intolerant and even hostile toward L.G.B.T.Q. people.

''I got jumped so many times for being gay,'' she said, adding that she will not go to the adjoining SAGE Center. ''I believe there's going to be trouble, and I don't want to get caught in trouble.''

She said she had a few friends at Stonewall House, but she mostly keeps to herself. She wakes up before dawn every morning to watch reruns of ''Beauty and the Beast'' and ''Scandal,'' then goes out for a walk. ''I call it my morning brisk,'' she said.

In the afternoons, she winds down at home, catching up on her soap operas with a mug of hot orange pekoe tea.

Born in Queens in a ***working-class*** family, she moved around a lot as a child. Life at home was chaotic: Her father left when she was young, her stepfather physically abused her, and her mother shunned her when she came out as a teenager. Her childhood caregivers are dead now, but she still carries the scars they inflicted.

''I am still protective of myself,'' she said. ''I don't trust everybody.''

Despite a lifetime of being on the move, Ms. Nottingham calls Brooklyn her home. This is where she rented her first apartment in her 20s and where she started her family, raising a daughter, Ashley, who is now a nurse in Seattle. ''I wanted someone I could love of my own that wouldn't be judgmental,'' Ms. Nottingham, now a grandmother of five, said, adding that she took care of other children in the neighborhood, too, because babysitting was her only way to earn money.

She pointed at photos on her refrigerator. Framed photographs crowd the walls, too, and a jar of jelly beans sits on the counter, awaiting the next child to come over.

Life is easier now, knowing she has a safe and secure home back in the neighborhood where she built her own support base. ''I've stayed all places, but all roads lead back to Brooklyn.''

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/20/realestate/lgbtq-senior-housing-new-york.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/20/realestate/lgbtq-senior-housing-new-york.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTOS: Top, Howard Grossman, left, and his husband, Brad Smith, jumped at a chance to move to Stonewall House, top left, when they won a lottery for a one-bedroom apartment. Center row, Mr. Grossman with friends at breakfast in the SAGE Center's community room, and a variety of the tchotchkes in the couple's apartment. Left, Mr. Grossman with the community center's walking club and with Mr. Smith taking in the view of Manhattan from their building.

Diedra Nottingham has found a home in her one-bedroom apartment at Stonewall House in the Fort Greene section of Brooklyn. ''There are people like me in this building,'' she said. (PHOTOGRAPHS BY TODD HEISLER/THE NEW YORK TIMES)

**Load-Date:** April 24, 2022

**End of Document**



[***Best Sellers: Combined Print & E-Book Nonfiction: Sunday, February 09th 2020***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5Y5T-7FV1-JBG3-63BF-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

February 9, 2020 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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

**Length:** 508 words

**Body**

About the Best Sellers:

These lists are an expanded version of those appearing in the February 09, 2020 print edition of the Book Review, reflecting sales for the week ending January 25, 2020. An asterisk (\*) indicates that a book's sales are barely distinguishable from those of the book above it. A dagger (?) indicates that some retailers report receiving bulk orders. For an explanation of our methodology, visit [*http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers*](http://www.nytimes.com/best-sellers).

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|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Weeks | Best Sellers: Combined Print & E-Book Nonfiction |
| This | Last | On |  |
| Week | Week | List |  |
| 1 |  | 1 | A VERY STABLE GENIUS, by Philip Rucker and Carol Leonnig. (Penguin Press) The Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists use firsthand accounts to chart patterns of behavior within the Trump administration. |
| 2 |  | 1 | PROFILES IN CORRUPTION, by Peter Schweizer. (Harper) The author of ?Clinton Cash? gives his evaluations of members of the Democratic Party. |
| 3 | 2 | 101 | EDUCATED, by Tara Westover. (Random House) The daughter of survivalists, who is kept out of school, educates herself enough to leave home for university. |
| 4 | 1 | 22 | JUST MERCY, by Bryan Stevenson. (Spiegel & Grau) A law professor and MacArthur grant recipient?s memoir of his decades of work to free innocent people condemned to death. |
| 5 | 5 | 20 | TALKING TO STRANGERS, by Malcolm Gladwell. (Little, Brown) Famous examples of miscommunication serve as the backdrop to explain potential conflicts and misunderstandings. |
| 6 | 6 | 60 | BECOMING, by Michelle Obama. (Crown) The former first lady describes her journey from the South Side of Chicago to the White House, and how she balanced work, family and her husband?s political ascent. |
| 7 | 8 | 24 | MAYBE YOU SHOULD TALK TO SOMEONE, by Lori Gottlieb. (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) A psychotherapist gains unexpected insights when she becomes another therapist?s patient. |
| 8 | 10 | 8 | THE BODY KEEPS THE SCORE, by Bessel van der Kolk. (Penguin) How trauma affects the body and mind, and innovative treatments for recovery. |
| 9 | 11 | 91 | SAPIENS, by Yuval Noah Harari. (Harper) How Homo sapiens became Earth?s dominant species. |
| 10 |  | 1 | THE AGE OF ENTITLEMENT, by Christopher Caldwell. (Simon & Schuster) An assessment of some potential social, cultural and economic causes of our current political fissure. |
| 11 |  | 1 | WHY WE CAN'T SLEEP, by Ada Calhoun. (Grove) The cultural and political contexts of the crises that Generation X women face. |
| 12 | 9 | 10 | CATCH AND KILL, by Ronan Farrow. (Little, Brown) The Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter details some surveillance and intimidation tactics used to pressure journalists and elude consequences by certain wealthy and connected men. |
| 13 | 3 | 2 | TIGHTROPE, by Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. (Knopf) The Pulitzer Prize-winning authors examine issues affecting ***working-class*** Americans. |
| 14 | 4 | 2 | RUNNING AGAINST THE DEVIL, by Rick Wilson. (Crown Forum) The Republican strategist offers his insights on how to potentially defeat President Trump in the upcoming election. |
| 15 | 12 | 4 | WHY WE SLEEP, by Matthew Walker. (Scribner) A neuroscientist uses recent scientific discoveries to explain the functions of sleep and dreams. |

**Load-Date:** February 15, 2020

**End of Document**



[***Eileen Myles Watches Over an Ever-Changing New York***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:65GC-7F41-DXY4-X009-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

May 18, 2022 Wednesday 16:43 EST

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**Section:** STYLE

**Length:** 1885 words

**Byline:** Alex Vadukul

**Highlight:** Now guarding trees in Lower Manhattan, the poet and author of “Chelsea Girls” says: “Things that might have once been corny to me don’t feel corny anymore.”

**Body**

Now guarding trees in Lower Manhattan, the poet and author of “Chelsea Girls” says: “Things that might have once been corny to me don’t feel corny anymore.”

On a rainy spring morning, an old cherry tree was beginning to blossom in a little park along Cherry Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. Several protesters surrounded the tree to protect it from the New York City workers who were about to cut it down. Police officers moved in, arrested the activists, and the sound of a chain saw filled the air. The tree went down.

“There it goes, the last cherry tree on Cherry Street,” said the 72-year-old poet Eileen Myles, who stood in the drizzle bearing witness to the scene. “There’s been cherry trees here for hundreds of years. But not anymore.”

For more than a year, Myles, the author of more than 20 books of poetry, fiction and essays, including the cult-hit novel “Chelsea Girls,” has been an ardent crusader in the fight between a group of Lower East Side residents and the city’s powers that be. At issue is the contentious [*demolition*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/02/us/hurricane-sandy-lower-manhattan-nyc.html) of East River Park, the 50-odd acre urban waterfront green space that runs alongside the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, and the cherry tree was chopped down to accommodate the city’s plans.

Myles, who uses the pronoun “they” and was wearing tinted spectacles, lightly ripped jeans and a brown trucker’s cap, took a picture of the arboreal carnage with their cellphone and [*posted*](https://www.instagram.com/eileen.myles/) it on Instagram, where they have more than 30,000 followers.

“The trees have been talking to each other,” they said. “They’ve been talking through their roots. This tree knew this was coming.”

The city started [*tearing*](https://www.curbed.com/2021/05/east-river-park-nyc.html) down East River Park last year as part of the East Side Coastal Resiliency Project, a [*plan*](https://ny.curbed.com/2019/10/17/20918494/nyc-climate-change-east-side-coastal-resiliency-photos) that aims to improve the area’s flood protection capabilities. Once the current park is demolished, the city plans to raise it eight to 10 feet by covering it with landfill, in effect building it anew.

The activists don’t dispute the need for some kind of climate-driven action, but they oppose the city’s strategy of razing a park beloved to generations of Lower East Siders who appreciate its scruffy athletic fields, rusty barbecue pits and concrete chess tables.

Huddled beside Myles in the rain was Sarah Wellington, an artist in her 30s who wore a Democracy Now! tote bag and took video of the workers with her phone. “We believe these cherry trees were between 80 and 100 years old,” she said. “This is Indigenous land that was stolen back in 1643 and now it’s happening all over again.”

“I didn’t know so much about Eileen Myles until recently,” she added, “but I know Eileen is a bolt of lightning. You should see Eileen run.”

The prior morning, Myles was arrested after they had dashed across the same site in an attempt to [*defend*](https://thevillagesun.com/bloom-and-doom-workers-saw-down-corlears-hook-cherry-trees-as-poet-is-arrested) a tree from getting chopped down. They ended up spending much of the day at the nearby Seventh Precinct. “You need the time to get arrested and I had little to do yesterday,” they said. “But it felt good to get arrested. This is civil disobedience.”

These days, Myles enjoys the status of esteemed downtown New York cultural figure. Their career has included a poetry collection published on a mimeograph machine in the 1970s and a memoir funded by a Guggenheim Fellowship in recent years, and they are now often stopped on the street by young and deferential writers who wish to express appreciation for the work Myles produced in a grittier city that lives on only in myth. Protecting that vanishing New York is part of the reason Myles has become one of the park’s guardians.

A [*resident*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/31/nyregion/how-eileen-myles-poet-spends-her-sundays.html) of the same rent-stabilized East Village apartment since the 1970s, Myles toiled on the margins for decades before experiencing a mainstream [*revival*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/15/t-magazine/poet-eileen-myles-chelsea-girls.html) upon the 2015 reissue of their 1994 autobiographical novel, “[*Chelsea Girls*](https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/29/books/review-in-i-must-be-living-twice-and-chelsea-girls-eileen-myles-ruminates.html).” It won new admirers, suddenly appearing tucked inside tote bags at bookish Brooklyn coffee shops, and a character based on the author appeared on the show “[*Transparent*](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/17/fashion/eileen-myles-jill-soloway-girlfriend-transparent.html).”

But throughout the years of obscurity and literary fame, East River Park was the writer’s dependable urban oasis. Myles scribbled poems while smoking cigarettes and sitting on its benches. They stretched their legs on the same tree for 40 years before going on runs. And during the bleakest chapters of the pandemic they found solace by watching the river.

So when the city engaged its plan, Myles sprang into action. They’ve used their appearances at literary events to broadcast the message and they wrote an impassioned essay defending the park for [*Artforum*](https://www.artforum.com/slant/the-pointless-demolition-of-manhattan-s-east-river-park-87431). They have organized a march that brought out New Yorkers like Chloë Sevigny and Ryan McGinley, and they helped found an activist group, “[*1000 people 1000 trees*](https://www.instagram.com/1000people1000trees/?hl=en).” And although the demolition is well underway, they have protested persistently at the site, snapping pictures of chain-saw-wielding workers to post on Instagram with captions like “Tree killer.”

Thunk.

Thomp.

After the last of the cherry tree was thrown into a chipper, workers began mowing down a London plane, and its hacked limbs were now cascading to the ground. One activist let loose a harrowing shriek. Myles locked arms with three protesters and started chanting to the tree.

“Things that might have once been corny to me don’t feel corny anymore,” Myles said as they began pedaling their bike back to the East Village. “Ever since this all started for me over a year ago it has become my heart. My girlfriend at the time told me, ‘I feel I’ve lost you to the park.’”

The demolition of [*East River Park*](https://gothamist.com/news/photos-nyc-says-goodbye-east-river-park/), which [*Robert Moses*](https://www.nytimes.com/1981/07/30/obituaries/robert-moses-master-builder-is-dead-at-92.html) built in the 1930s, dates back to the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy in 2012, when Lower Manhattan was devastated by flooding.

The F.D.R. Drive became part of the East River, and there was an explosion at the Con Ed plant on 14th Street that created a blackout. Older residents of the public housing projects that surround the park, including Baruch Houses and the Jacob Riis Houses, were trapped in their buildings for days because of the deluge. Implementing flood protection into Lower Manhattan became a priority, and the city’s attention [*turned*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/01/18/nyregion/to-save-east-river-park-the-city-intends-to-bury-it.html) to East River Park.

Initially, there was a plan that the activists wholeheartedly supported. It proposed that a giant berm be built along the site’s western side, relying on East River Park as a natural sponge, without the need of radically altering the park itself. In 2018, however, when the de Blasio administration was expected to finalize the project, the city declared that plan infeasible and moved forward with its current strategy. Many community members were outraged. An opposition group, [*East River Park Action*](https://eastriverparkaction.org/), sued the city last year but has been largely unsuccessful in court.

“We’re certainly familiar with Eileen Myles and have seen what they think of and have written about the park,” said Ian Michaels, a spokesman for the city’s Department of Design and Construction. “The protesters have their right to protest. The timeline was affected by some lawsuits but the project is continuing.”

Some of the phone-wielding activists have had to contend with accusations that they are practicing the brand of civic selfishness that goes by the term Nimby-ism. “Some have said we’re just white lefty tree-huggers,” Myles said. “How is it that after 44 years here, though, I’m still just an interloper?”

On the recent spring morning, as city workers chopped down the Cherry Street trees, a longtime resident of a nearby housing complex, Elizabeth Ruiz, 55, was walking her Shih Tzu past the protesters. Known in the neighborhood as DJ Dat Gurl Curly, Ms. Ruiz performed house and disco sets at the park’s amphitheater for years until the band shell was [*bulldozed*](https://evgrieve.com/2021/12/workers-have-demolished-east-river-park.html) last December.

“At the end of the day, I’m not so mad at gentrification and change,” she said. “But I don’t get why they have to destroy the trees and everything else in the park. If you knock down a tree here, then you knock me down, too.”

After the bike ride back to the East Village, Myles sat down to breakfast at Veselka and began reminiscing about coming to New York at age 24 in the 1970s with [*aspirations*](https://www.vulture.com/2015/09/after-19-books-eileen-myles-gets-her-due.html) of becoming a poet — a time when the very notion of the city pumping money into a ramshackle downtown park would have been farcical.

Myles, who grew up in a ***working-class*** Roman Catholic household near Boston, found the scene they were searching for in the old East Village church that houses the [*Poetry Project*](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/13/style/chloe-sevigny-and-cory-kennedy-honor-the-downtown-poets.html). There they befriended greats like Alice Notley, Ted Berrigan and Allen Ginsberg, and writers smoked cigarettes in the back rooms while they talked craft. To make the rent, Myles waited tables at the Tin Palace, a jazz and poetry club on the Bowery, and worked as a librarian, a bouncer, a bike messenger and a clerk at Bleecker Bob’s, the Greenwich Village record store. Driving around town in a pink truck while working for a radical lesbian newspaper distribution company, they also delivered stacks of gay male pornography magazines and music publications.

“When I finally got here I was like, ‘Wait, you mean this city is actually real?’” Myles said. “Bob Dylan was here. Andy Warhol was here. Everyone who drove a cab was writing a novel. Every waitress was a dancer. It was astonishing to me that people in New York were actually who they said they were.”

In the 1980s, as the AIDS crisis ravaged downtown New York, Myles watched as close friends died. Spurred to embrace sobriety, Myles formed a bond with the park: jogging past litter and needles along the East River at dusk, they blasted Maria Callas singing “[*Aida*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LveSri3pyQM)” on a Walkman to honor an opera-loving friend who had died of the disease.

“I stopped drinking and drugging, and that’s when I began running in the park,” Myles said. “It became my ritual and has remained so for years. It became my tool for sanity. The park became the best writing studio I’ve ever been in.”

As Myles sees it, the park is also a downtown time capsule, a green urban ruin that preserves a city that has all but perished.

“There was time to make lots of mistakes back then,” Myles said. “There was time to waste, and that’s the thing everybody deserves. And the park is wasted space. Uncontrolled vernacular space. So the city said, ‘This can’t be.’”

After Myles left Veselka, they got ready to speak at the Strand bookstore that evening with the novelist Colm Tóibín. During the event, they mentioned their fight for the park. The next day, they were off to Marfa, Texas, where they had bought a home some years ago. They would be joining their rescue pit bull, Honey, and finishing an assignment for The New Yorker; in the story, they intended to sneak in a reference to the park.

In fact, the park now seeps into Myles’s work constantly, especially the poetry. A recent poem, “120 Years and What Did You See,” ends like this:

I look up, you’re shaking

meeting, you’re bigger you’re wiser you’re stronger

than me, and always will be. Each of us walking

around and blessing

you today

And you

will always

be TREE

PHOTOS: Eileen Myles hugged a favorite tree in East River Park, which is being demolished. (ST1); Eileen Myles, third from right, and others don’t dispute the need for climate-driven action but they oppose the city’s altered plans. (ST2); Eileen Myles, the author of “Chelsea Girls” and more than 20 other books, called East River Park “the best writing studio I’ve ever been in.” (PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARA MESSINGER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES) (ST3)

**Load-Date:** May 23, 2022

**End of Document**



[***As Johnson Draws a Happy Face, Britons Confront a Run of Bad News; political memo***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63T7-MKN1-DXY4-X314-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 9, 2021 Saturday 17:40 EST

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**Section:** WORLD; europe

**Length:** 1249 words

**Byline:** Mark Landler

**Highlight:** There’s a cognitive dissonance between Mr. Johnson’s upbeat appraisal of British life and the ills facing its citizens, including gas and food shortages and fears of rising energy prices.

**Body**

There’s a cognitive dissonance between Mr. Johnson’s upbeat appraisal of British life and the ills facing its citizens, including gas and food shortages and fears of rising energy prices.

LONDON — Britons are lining up for gas, staring at empty grocery shelves, paying higher taxes and worrying about spiraling prices as a grim winter approaches.

But to visit the Conservative Party conference in Manchester this past week was to enter a kind of happy valley, where cabinet ministers danced, sang karaoke and drained flutes of champagne — Pol Roger, Winston Churchill’s favorite brand, naturally.

Nobody captured the bonhomie better than [*Prime Minister Boris Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/boris-johnson-climate-scandal.html), who told a whooping crowd of party faithful, “You all represent the most jiving, hip, happening, and generally funkapolitan party in the world.”

The cognitive dissonance extended beyond the Mardi Gras atmosphere. In his upbeat keynote speech, Mr. [*Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/boris-johnson-climate-scandal.html) characterized the multiple ills afflicting Britain as a “function of growth and economic revival” — challenging but necessary post-Brexit adjustments on the way to a more prosperous future.

It was at least his third explanation for the [*food*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/26/business/britain-truck-driver-shortage.html) and [*fuel*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/world/europe/why-uk-fuel-shortage.html) shortages, which continued [*in some areas*](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/10/08/world/europe/uk-fuel-shortage-crisis.html) after three weeks. Initially, he denied there was a crisis. Then, he said the shortages were [*not about Brexit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/28/world/europe/brexit-britain-fuel-johnson.html) — contradicting analysts, union leaders, food producers and business owners — but were [*hitting every Western country*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/30/business/supply-chain-shortages.html) as they emerged from the pandemic. And finally, he cited the stresses as evidence that [*Brexit was doing its job in shaking up the economy*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/06/world/europe/boris-johnson-uk-conservatives.html).

“It is the ultimate in post-hoc rationalization — the idea that this is a well-thought-out plan, that we intended to do this all along,” said Jill Rutter, a senior research fellow at the U.K. in a Changing Europe, a London think tank.

Few politicians have either the indomitable cheer or the ideological flexibility of Mr. [*Johnson*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/10/world/europe/boris-johnson-climate-scandal.html), so it was hardly surprising that he tried to put the best face on Britain’s run of bad news. He remains utterly in command of the Conservative Party, which has an 80-seat majority in the Parliament, and comfortably ahead of the opposition Labour Party leader, Keir Starmer, in opinion polls.

Yet political analysts and economists said there were risks in the Panglossian tone he struck in Manchester. With inflation projected to continue at a relatively high level, and the government admitting that [*shortages*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/20/business/boris-johnson-shortages-britain.html) could continue until Christmas, voters could quickly sour on Mr. Johnson. Then next year [*come tax rises*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/06/world/europe/boris-johnson-taxes-social-care.html), after he broke his promise not to increase them last month.

In hindsight, some said, the conference might be seen as a high-water mark for the prime minister.

“A few days of disruption to fuel supplies makes the government look foolish,” said Jonathan Portes, a professor of economics and public policy at King’s College London. “Much larger fuel bills are a much bigger deal.”

Tim Bale, a professor of politics at Queen Mary, University of London, said Mr. Johnson could come to resemble James Callaghan, the Labour prime minister who was toppled in 1979 after a winter of fuel shortages and runaway inflation, when he [*did not appear sufficiently alarmed*](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/921524.stm) about the pileup of problems.

When Mr. Johnson bounded into the auditorium at the conference last week, stopping to kiss his wife, Carrie, he looked anything but alarmed. Between jokes and jibes at the opposition, he presented a blueprint for a post-Brexit economy that he claimed would deliver high wages for skilled British workers, rather than lower-cost immigrants from the European Union, and put the onus on businesses to foot the bill.

Companies and previous governments “reached for the same old lever of uncontrolled immigration to keep wages low,” Mr. Johnson said. “The answer is to control immigration, to allow people of talent to come to this country, but not to use immigration as an excuse for failure to invest in people, in skills and in the equipment, the facilities, the machinery they need to do their jobs.”

That model is worlds away from Singapore-on-Thames, the catchphrase once used by the intellectual authors of [*Brexit*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/08/world/europe/uk-brexit-estonia-business.html) to describe an open, lightly regulated, business-friendly hub that they said Britain would become once it cast off the labor laws and other shackles of Brussels. Nobody is talking about removing labor laws now (indeed, Mr. Johnson may soon move to raise Britain’s minimum wage).

Contradictions between protectionists and free-marketeers have run through the Brexit movement from the start. “I describe it as Little England versus Global Britain,” Mr. Portes said, noting that Mr. Johnson, because of his lack of fixed convictions, was well-suited to hold this coalition together.

Since Mr. Johnson’s landslide election victory in 2019, however, the gravity in the Conservative Party has shifted decisively toward protectionism and anti-immigration policies. That was the message that helped the Tories lure [*disenchanted,* ***working-class****, former Labour voters*](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/25/world/europe/uk-election-conservatives-labour.html) in the industrial Midlands and North of England.

Many of these voters want the jobs that would come with the revival of British heavy industry, not better opportunities for hedge-fund managers in London. Conservative politicians who once championed the Singapore-on-Thames model now play it down.

Mr. Johnson has embraced [*a blame-it-on-business message*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/05/world/europe/boris-johnson-britains-shortages.html) which, while at odds with his party’s traditional principles, is popular with his new base. He singled out the trucking industry, arguing that its failure to invest in better truck stops — “with basic facilities where you don’t have to urinate in the bushes,” he said — was one of the reasons young people did not aspire to becoming drivers.

“It’s all of a piece with his move toward a much more populist style,” Mr. Bale said. “Johnson is pressing the right buttons, as far as these people are concerned.”

His tough-on-business language has scrambled the traditional lines in British politics. On Friday, voters were treated to the curious spectacle of Mr. Starmer lashing out at Mr. Johnson for his attacks on business and presenting the Labour Party as the better partner for Britain’s corporations.

For Mr. Johnson, critics said, the biggest risk is a lack of credibility. His initial claim that the food and fuel shortages were not caused by Brexit sounded unconvincing, given that his own government predicted rising prices and shortages of both in a 2019 report on the potential disruptions in the event of a “no-deal Brexit,” in which Britain would leave the European Union without a trade agreement.

The report, known as Operation Yellowhammer, laid out “reasonable worst-case planning assumptions,” among them that “certain types of fresh food supply will decrease” and that “customer behavior could lead to local shortages” of fuel. Though Britain negotiated a bare-bones trade deal with Brussels, its effect was similar to that of no deal.

While it’s true that Mr. Johnson is indisputably setting his party’s agenda, it is not clear that the internal debates over the shape of a post-Brexit future are entirely settled. Rishi Sunak, the popular chancellor of the Exchequer, [*spoke at the conference*](https://news.sky.com/story/conservative-party-conference-2021-chancellor-rishi-sunak-defends-tax-rises-and-stresses-need-to-fix-public-finances-12425925) about his years in California, and how he viewed Silicon Valley as a model for Britain.

“I’m not sure that having a truck-driver shortage is part of that vision,” Ms. Rutter, the research fellow, said.

PHOTO: In an upbeat speech to his party, Prime Minister Boris Johnson called Conservatives the most “funkapolitan party in the world.” (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** November 10, 2021

**End of Document**



[***As Johnson Draws a Happy Face, Britons Confront a Run of Bad News***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:63TG-6YV1-JBG3-630G-00000-00&context=1519360)

The New York Times

October 10, 2021 Sunday

Late Edition - Final

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**Section:** Section A; Column 0; Foreign Desk; Pg. 10; POLITICAL MEMO

**Length:** 1235 words

**Byline:** By Mark Landler

**Body**

There's a cognitive dissonance between Mr. Johnson's upbeat appraisal of British life and the ills facing its citizens, including gas and food shortages and fears of rising energy prices.

LONDON -- Britons are lining up for gas, staring at empty grocery shelves, paying higher taxes and worrying about spiraling prices as a grim winter approaches.

But to visit the Conservative Party conference in Manchester this past week was to enter a kind of happy valley, where cabinet ministers danced, sang karaoke and drained flutes of champagne -- Pol Roger, Winston Churchill's favorite brand, naturally.

Nobody captured the bonhomie better than Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who told a whooping crowd of party faithful, ''You all represent the most jiving, hip, happening, and generally funkapolitan party in the world.''

The cognitive dissonance extended beyond the Mardi Gras atmosphere. In his upbeat keynote speech, Mr. Johnson characterized the multiple ills afflicting Britain as a ''function of growth and economic revival'' -- challenging but necessary post-Brexit adjustments on the way to a more prosperous future.

It was at least his third explanation for the food and fuel shortages, which continued in some areas after three weeks. Initially, he denied there was a crisis. Then, he said the shortages were not about Brexit -- contradicting analysts, union leaders, food producers and business owners -- but were hitting every Western country as they emerged from the pandemic. And finally, he cited the stresses as evidence that Brexit was doing its job in shaking up the economy.

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In hindsight, some said, the conference might be seen as a high-water mark for the prime minister.

''A few days of disruption to fuel supplies makes the government look foolish,'' said Jonathan Portes, a professor of economics and public policy at King's College London. ''Much larger fuel bills are a much bigger deal.''

Tim Bale, a professor of politics at Queen Mary, University of London, said Mr. Johnson could come to resemble James Callaghan, the Labour prime minister who was toppled in 1979 after a winter of fuel shortages and runaway inflation, when he did not appear sufficiently alarmed about the pileup of problems.

When Mr. Johnson bounded into the auditorium at the conference last week, stopping to kiss his wife, Carrie, he looked anything but alarmed. Between jokes and jibes at the opposition, he presented a blueprint for a post-Brexit economy that he claimed would deliver high wages for skilled British workers, rather than lower-cost immigrants from the European Union, and put the onus on businesses to foot the bill.

Companies and previous governments ''reached for the same old lever of uncontrolled immigration to keep wages low,'' Mr. Johnson said. ''The answer is to control immigration, to allow people of talent to come to this country, but not to use immigration as an excuse for failure to invest in people, in skills and in the equipment, the facilities, the machinery they need to do their jobs.''

That model is worlds away from Singapore-on-Thames, the catchphrase once used by the intellectual authors of Brexit to describe an open, lightly regulated, business-friendly hub that they said Britain would become once it cast off the labor laws and other shackles of Brussels. Nobody is talking about removing labor laws now (indeed, Mr. Johnson may soon move to raise Britain's minimum wage).

Contradictions between protectionists and free-marketeers have run through the Brexit movement from the start. ''I describe it as Little England versus Global Britain,'' Mr. Portes said, noting that Mr. Johnson, because of his lack of fixed convictions, was well-suited to hold this coalition together.

Since Mr. Johnson's landslide election victory in 2019, however, the gravity in the Conservative Party has shifted decisively toward protectionism and anti-immigration policies. That was the message that helped the Tories lure disenchanted, ***working-class***, former Labour voters in the industrial Midlands and North of England.

Many of these voters want the jobs that would come with the revival of British heavy industry, not better opportunities for hedge-fund managers in London. Conservative politicians who once championed the Singapore-on-Thames model now play it down.

Mr. Johnson has embraced a blame-it-on-business message which, while at odds with his party's traditional principles, is popular with his new base. He singled out the trucking industry, arguing that its failure to invest in better truck stops -- ''with basic facilities where you don't have to urinate in the bushes,'' he said -- was one of the reasons young people did not aspire to becoming drivers.

''It's all of a piece with his move toward a much more populist style,'' Mr. Bale said. ''Johnson is pressing the right buttons, as far as these people are concerned.''

His tough-on-business language has scrambled the traditional lines in British politics. On Friday, voters were treated to the curious spectacle of Mr. Starmer lashing out at Mr. Johnson for his attacks on business and presenting the Labour Party as the better partner for Britain's corporations.

For Mr. Johnson, critics said, the biggest risk is a lack of credibility. His initial claim that the food and fuel shortages were not caused by Brexit sounded unconvincing, given that his own government predicted rising prices and shortages of both in a 2019 report on the potential disruptions in the event of a ''no-deal Brexit,'' in which Britain would leave the European Union without a trade agreement.

The report, known as Operation Yellowhammer, laid out ''reasonable worst-case planning assumptions,'' among them that ''certain types of fresh food supply will decrease'' and that ''customer behavior could lead to local shortages'' of fuel. Though Britain negotiated a bare-bones trade deal with Brussels, its effect was similar to that of no deal.

While it's true that Mr. Johnson is indisputably setting his party's agenda, it is not clear that the internal debates over the shape of a post-Brexit future are entirely settled. Rishi Sunak, the popular chancellor of the Exchequer, spoke at the conference about his years in California, and how he viewed Silicon Valley as a model for Britain.

''I'm not sure that having a truck-driver shortage is part of that vision,'' Ms. Rutter, the research fellow, said.

[*https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/world/europe/boris-johnson-britain-brexit.html*](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/09/world/europe/boris-johnson-britain-brexit.html)

**Graphic**

PHOTO: In an upbeat speech to his party, Prime Minister Boris Johnson called Conservatives the most ''funkapolitan party in the world.'' (PHOTOGRAPH BY TOBY MELVILLE/REUTERS)

**Load-Date:** October 10, 2021

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